be a few growls, but that is as far as the thing will go. Nor can there ever be any genuine passion for liberty, or any organized movement against harsh laws, or any effective punishment of profiteers. Such things, to the bourgeoisie, are not evils; they are goods; upon them the whole structure of bourgeois society rests.

Only one thing will ever seriously damage that structure: unsuccessful war. The day the United States is beaten on land and sea, and the unbroken hope of 144 years suddenly blows up—that day it will be high time to look for the birth of radicalism. Until then, let us snooze in peace. We are all safe. All we have gobbled we may keep.

—H. L. Mencken, "Optimistic Note," Nov. 29, 1920

One may discount all of the elitism in Mencken's comments and still see the validity of both points in his argument—and what is more, their relevance to the 1972 election. Whether in fact crisis is once more to be resolved in "normalcy" remains to be seen. It seems to me that one very important truth of American politics is that liberalism repeatedly crashes against the outer limits of what the system can provide without fundamentally changing its character or beneficiaries, and so regularly comes to grief. Another equally important truth of American politics is that the political system normally works in a multitude of ways to scale mass demand down to the point where it can be accommodated without undue strain. This worked brilliantly during the Normalcy era. Mr. Nixon's first administration has been dedicated to scaling down again in ways relevant to the problem of Mayoral Leadership: "But what good came of it at last?" "That I cannot tell, but it was a famous victory." In the meantime, and for the present, let's leave "four more years" in the hands of Peterkin's question about the Battle of Blenheim: "But what good came of it at last?" "That I cannot tell, but it was a famous victory." In the meantime, and for the present, let's leave "four more years" in the hands of the Providence which has always watched over the destiny of these United States.

WALTER DEAN BURNHAM
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

To the Editor:

Jeffrey L. Pressman's recent article "Preconditions of Mayoral Leadership" (APSR, 66 [June, 1972], 511–524), presents an interesting case study of mayoral behavior as figureheadship. In evaluating Mayor John Reading's performance, Mr. Pressman constructs a model of an "ideal" mayor and lists a set of preconditions for mayoral leadership. Unfortunately, Pressman's model is based mainly on research in communities interpreted in the literature as pluralistic and overlooks the effect of variations in community power and conflict structures on mayoral leadership styles, strategies, and performances. By basing his model on findings from only one type of situational context, Pressman underemphasized some important constraints on contemporary mayoral leadership and may have overestimated the potential of anyone, no matter what his personality, skills, or institutional resources, to attain the "ideal" mayor's goals in many American cities. Further, by using a rarely attained model as an evaluative standard, Pressman might have been too harsh on Mayor Reading and too hopeful that someone else could be more effective in Oakland.

In every community there is some conflict associated with the management of local government. However, the structure of conflict—its participants, stakes, intensity, focus, and forms of expression—differ across communities and over time. In studies of mayoral leadership there has been too little attention given to these variations and the impact of different configurations of groups and cleavages on political institutions and leadership activities. Since political structures vary, the pluralist model of mayoral leadership must be only one of a potential set of models of mayoral behavior. Its value as an explanatory tool, an evaluative standard, and a strategic device depends on its fit with a complex, variegated reality. How well does Pressman's model fit contemporary urban realities?

In the earlier pluralist studies of mayoral leadership, communities were interpreted to be multipolar, having low or moderate degrees of conflict. Mayoral performance was assessed on four criteria: the mayor's ability to mobilize community involvement, to integrate diverse interests, to activate innovative programs, and to convert the focus of community politics from a system of multilateral competition to a system of mayor-dominated politics, an executive-centered coalition. Because of the dispersion of power and veto privileges, innovation-
mined mayors built coalitions in which they served as brokers among the competing groups and which they used to mobilize support behind broad, overarching programs. The search for feasible innovative programs—usually couched in the rhetoric of collective goods—became the major entrepreneurial task for mayors in these pluralistic communities.

In Pressman's analysis, Mayor Reading's ineffectiveness is primarily explained by the absence of certain institutional and organizational preconditions for civic entrepreneurship. Pressman's analysis is consistent with his model. However, mayoral ineffectiveness can also be explained by factors Pressman's model under-emphasized. Executive ineffectiveness can also be explained by changes in the structural preconditions of pluralist politics that affect the prospects for coalition building and civic entrepreneurship.

In many American cities increases in black populations have combined with rising black militancy and the uneasiness and hostility of white working-class residents to produce racial cleavages that are far more severe than the cleavages discussed in earlier studies of mayoral leadership. The political structure of many cities has changed from a system of multipolar competition of a low or moderate intensity to a system of bipolar or polarized conflict. Under conditions of racial polarization, both black and white leaders seek to block new programs that benefit the other racial group. The obstructionist tactics of racial politics militate against the kinds of innovative policies Pressman's "ideal" mayor might pursue and helps to explain the political immobilism of many American cities.

Since the bipolar conflict structure represents a different political reality than the pluralist structure implicitly assumed in Pressman's model, some of the structural preconditions that underpin mayoral entrepreneurship are worth examining in the context of racial polarization. Among the conditions that are said to foster pluralist politics, three are most affected by racial polarization. It has been argued that pluralist politics are more likely to occur when there is (1) an expanding set of divisible political stakes and collective goods that can be allocated without emotionally charged after effects; (2) fundamental sociopolitical agreement among a substantial majority of citizens; and (3) a commitment by officials and interest group leaders to a set of rules or bargaining conventions that lend stability and legitimacy to the policy-making process. As many cities entered the last half of the 1960s, racial polarization produced changes in each of these preconditions affecting the feasibility of entrepreneurial strategies.

Of those substantive stakes usually associated with urban politics—public office or employment, money, and governmental services—even the casual observer notices their increased scarcity in most major cities. Even when some slack resources can be found, or when symbolic rewards can be substituted for substantive programs, mutual suspicion between white and black leaders often makes any form of brokering or innovation impossible. Under conditions of racial polarization, issues that might be considered public or collective goods and conform to the model of the overarching policy—like urban renewal, pollution control, recreation programs, and law-and-order policies—are often interpreted for their distributional impacts, seen as favoring one racial group at the expense of the other. In communities beset by racial polarization, "community wide" programs are interpreted in terms of their secondary impacts and in terms of their symbolic significance. Even broker-oriented coalitions are extremely difficult to assemble because racial group leaders are continually on their guard against the threat of co-optation. In short, under conditions of racial polarization: (1) programs are interpreted for their psychic effects on the self-image of the contesting groups; (2) the distributional impacts of new proposals come under close scrutiny; (3) proposals are evaluated for their opportunity costs (i.e., What other program might better benefit either the black or white communities?); (4) the long-run political consequences of an innovation are carefully analyzed (i.e., Will a new program ultimately strengthen one side at the expense of the other?).

The well-publicized frustrations of big-city mayors who possess Pressman's preconditions and are committed to civic entrepreneurship pose some serious questions about the utility of the pluralist leadership model as an explanatory tool and as a strategic device. Constraints rooted in the social structure of American cities inhibit mayoral leadership, and a mayor's strategy of leadership must take into account the degree and form of community conflict. Mr. Pressman's model of mayoral leadership has implicitly assumed a low or moderate degree of conflict, and he fails to emphasize community conflict patterns as a crucial contextual variable or constraint on mayoral leadership. In polarized communities a mayor's pursuit of the
liberal program goals Mr. Pressman's "ideal" mayor might promulgate would hardly "maintain within the political system a process of constructive dialogue between diverse groups which would contribute to harmony in the city" (p. 512).

CHARLES H. LEVINE
University of Maryland

TO THE EDITOR:
Professor Levine is quite right to emphasize urban social structure as a factor which can influence the exercise of mayoral leadership. Indeed, I made exactly that point in my discussion of the difficulties posed for a mayor by Oakland's lack of politically-interested groups. And far from ignoring racial polarization, I sought to demonstrate how black-white confrontations in Oakland served to depress and immobilize the mayor.

My purpose in creating a model of mayoral leadership was not to initiate yet another round of debate about community power. Rather, I wished to construct a standard which might be used to evaluate the exercise of leadership in a variety of social and political settings. Levine argues that I may have set the standard too high, but an evaluative model which corresponded with the experiences of numerous mayors would not be capable of distinguishing effective from ineffective performance.

In any event, I did not say that shortcomings of mayoral leadership in Oakland were solely due to Mayor Reading's personality. I argued that social structure, governmental institutions, and personality factors were all important in limiting political leadership in the city. Instead of debating whether or not the evaluative standard is too high or too low, we ought to concentrate on identifying and studying those elements which enhance or inhibit mayoral leadership. And in this regard, Professor Levine offers a number of helpful insights.

JEFFREY L. PRESSMAN
Dartmouth College

TO THE EDITOR:
Isaac Kramnick, in his recent essay "On Anarchism and the Real World: William Godwin and Radical England," (APSR 66 [March, 1972], 114-128), missed and distorted the political essence of at least one anarchist theoretician and perhaps of anarchism itself. Moreover, he indicted a complex and diverse political tradition on the basis of the ostensible shortcomings of one thinker and a few contemporary actors, the latter whose connection to the rich tradition of anarchist theory is at best superficial.

While anarchists opt for a nonpolitical society as the only society in which people can achieve freedom and human fulfillment, most anarchists agree that such a society can only be achieved by decisively political means, namely, a social revolution. To be sure, education is important. The people must be shown, as serious revolutionaries have discovered, that their misery is neither a necessary nor an inevitable condition of social life. But education can only raise the consciousness of oppressed people who must themselves revolt to achieve human freedom.

One anarchist thinker, Peter Kropotkin, observed that a social revolution would be necessary to facilitate an anarchist society, a society marked by the right to well-being for all. He was obviously optimistic in his belief that the revolution was at hand and utopian in his faith that people can abruptly reorient their lives, let alone societies. But he was quite realistic in his understanding of the political qualities of a social revolution and the inherent bias of parliamentary regimes against fundamental social and political changes. For Kropotkin a revolution is an abrupt, violent, and destructive political activity.

Revolution . . . is not a simple change of governors. It is the taking of possession by the people of all social wealth. It is the abolition of all the forces which have so long hampered the development of humanity. ("Revolutionary Government," in Roger Nash Baldwin, Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets, N.Y.: The Vanguard Press, 1927, pp. 247-248.)

A revolution is a swift overthrow, in a few years, of institutions which have taken centuries to root in the soil, and seem as fixed and immovable that even the most ardent reformers hardly dare to attack them in their writings. (The Great French Revolution, N.Y.: G. P. Putnam's and Sons, 1909, pp. 2-3.)

. . . a revolution [means] the demolition by violence of the established forms of property, the destruction of castes, [and] the rapid transformation of received ideas about morality . . .

("Revolutionary Government," in Baldwin, op. cit., p. 238.)

The means of revolution are forceful expropriation, and Kropotkin claimed that this expropriation must be total: It must apply to everything that enables any man—be he a financier, millowner, or landlord—to appropriate the products of others' toil. Our formula is simple and comprehensive.

We do not want to rob anyone of his coat, but