



# The Ecological Vision: Reflections on the American Condition

*Peter F. Drucker*

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Periods of great social change reveal a tension between the need for continuity and the need for innovation. The twentieth century has witnessed both radical alteration and tenacious durability in social organization, politics, economics, and art. To comprehend these changes as history and as guideposts to the future, Peter F. Drucker has, over a lifetime, pursued a discipline that he terms *social ecology*. The writings brought together in *The Ecological Vision* define the discipline as a sustained inquiry into the man-made environment and an active effort at maintaining equilibrium between change and conservation.

The chapters in this volume range over a wide array of disciplines and subject matter. They are linked by a common concern with the interaction of the individual and society, and a common perspective that views economics, technology, politics, and art as dimensions of social experience and expressions of social value. Included here are profiles of such figures as Henry Ford, John C. Calhoun, Soren Kierkegaard, and Thomas Watson; analyses of the economics of Keynes and Schumpeter; and explorations of the social functions of business, management, information, and technology. Drucker's chapters on Japan examine the dynamics of cultural and economic change and afford striking comparisons with similar processes in the West.

In the concluding chapter, "Reflections of a Social Ecologist," Drucker traces the development of his discipline through such intellectual antecedents as Alexis de Tocqueville, Walter Bagehot, and Wilhelm von Humboldt. He illustrates the ecological vision, an active, practical, and moral approach to social questions. Peter Drucker summarizes a lifetime of work and exemplifies the communicative clarity that are requisites of all intellectual enterprises. His book will be of interest to economists, business people, foreign affairs specialists, and intellectual historians.

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