

**ROBERT A. DAHL**

**AUTHORITY IN  
A GOOD SOCIETY**

AFTER THE  
REVOLUTION?



# AFTER THE REVOLUTION?

AUTHORITY IN A GOOD SOCIETY

by Robert A. Dahl



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**"If I may use a bold new revolutionary expression, 'things will never be the same again.' The old patterns are losing out, paradoxically, because old ideas about authority, particularly democratic authority, encourage demands for new systems of authority. The paradox vanishes if we realize that because democracy has never been fully achieved, it has always been and is now potentially a revolutionary doctrine."**

**"So let us put away our infantile fantasies, the yearning to return to an infancy of the species that never was, where mankind existed in small and totally autonomous units like tribes or villages and practiced primary democracy and knew peace and harmony. It may be that if most inhabitants and the technological know-how already existing on humanity's fragile and crowded space-ship are consumed in a thermonuclear Judgment Day, the survivors might be able to exist, for a time, in tiny, fully sovereign, widely separated units. Only a madman would think that a solution. No, because the species is interdependent, giant political systems are a necessity."**

— from **After the Revolution?**



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