automobile transportation), probably the end of large cities in locations where the climate requires year-round air-conditioning.

And, 2, sooner or later—but the sooner the better—an end to the growth syndrome. There is room for argument as to the exact date when the human race will have to kick the growth habit. There is not much room for arguing about the fact that sooner or later it is inevitable. There is no escape from Generales's heat curve.

I have spent a lot of space on this one argument because my conscience makes me do it. Half the politicians, and nearly all the business leaders, are telling us not to worry. I don’t believe we can afford to do that, and so I want to get my message across as clearly as I can: WORRY. Worry that we may, in our folly, go on trying to make each year bigger than the year before, more GNP, more per capita wealth, more gadgets in more homes, more people, more of everything. Worry most of all that the people who tell us not to worry will prevail.

But I don’t want to paint too black a picture. I believe with all my heart that we can’t go on having More and More. But I would not suggest for one second that we can’t have Better.

Let’s assume a condition worse than anyone believes to be true. Let’s make believe that we have as of this bicentennial year reached the absolute maximum of energy production for all time, and that effective immediately the 4% annual increase stops.

Can we deal with this situation without seeing all the comforts and joys of our lives dwindle away?

You bet we can! For openers, probably half the energy generated in the world is purely wasted. If we put our minds to it—if there was any real incentive to do it—we could reduce our use of energy 4% a year. The first steps would be as simple as turning off unnecessary lights, walking or bicycling on short errands in nice weather instead of taking a car, setting the thermostat a couple of degrees lower in cold weather, and higher in warm. We know we can do that much; we did it, in the brief flurry of concern after the Arab oil boycott.

The next steps are a little harder, but still not really painful. When you buy a new car, trade down instead of up; smaller cars use less gas. Make the old car do a year or two longer (the energy involved in building a new compact is around 44,000 kilowatt-hours—as much as you spend in driving it for a year.) Design new buildings to be energy-conservative (glass-fronted skyscrapers are only possible if you consider energy so cheap as to be not worth worrying about). Enforce the 55 mph speed limit. (The amount of gas used to overcome air resistance goes