

THE HUMANE TEMPER

To determine the causes of the decline of the humane temper in the United States—and throughout the world, for that matter—might be considered the task of a clinical psychologist, but the fact of the decline is as evident to the laity as to the experts. The quality that is becoming rare is the tolerant yet discriminating spirit that is still found in the works of Robert M. Hutchins, George Sarton, Joseph Wood Krutch, and Albert Guerard, to name a few contemporaries—individuals who are keeping alive a great tradition that was known to an earlier generation through the writings of Arthur Symons, Lowes Dickinson, Macneile Dixon and a few others.

What is the humane temper? It is difficult to define. Essentially, perhaps, it is the respect for human beings, not merely as units of a political order, but as sensitive intelligences, as beings capable of compassion, sympathy, generosity, and understanding. The man of humane temper does not require infallible dogmas to live by. He thrives on a kind of uncertainty—that is, he is sure that the human race needs to remain uncertain about matters which are naturally obscure in intellectual terms, and which require a special sort of serenity to be successfully discussed.

What the humane temper is not is more easily established. An article on censorship in the May *Progressive* (an exceptionally fine issue of this magazine) by Nathan Glick, repeats the observations of David Reisman, a lawyer turned sociologist, on this subject. Mr. Reisman was approached by a movie producer's representative who sought the former's approval of the film, *Home of the Brave*. Wasn't the picture good for "race relations," and worthy, therefore, of endorsement? Mr. Reisman countered with a question of his own: Did the producer's representative think *Symphonie Pastorale*, a beautiful and compassionate film based on the novel by André Gide, was good for race relations? The rest is in Reisman's words:

He did not understand me—what did this movie about a pastor's family tragedy have to do with race relations? In his attitude, he patronized both his own craft of moviemaking and the movie audience: he assumed that people get out of a movie a message as simple as the fortune-teller's printed slip in a penny arcade. The notion that the art form itself, over a period of time, could affect *the quality of American life*, and hence of its race relations, is forgotten in anxious concern for the presumed immediate results. This producer's representative did not ask himself what kinds of movies he himself enjoyed seeing, but looked at his product from the stance of an outsider—this is the hallmark of the public relations approach. But it is evident that a person who seems only to patronize others also patronizes his own human reactions and, while he thinks he manipulates the emotions of the audience, also manipulates, and eventually causes to evaporate his own emotions.

Curiously enough, what Mr. Reisman calls "the public relations approach" has had its highest political development in Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, and its most effective commercial application in the United States. This strange alliance of psychological attitudes between the great totalitarianisms and the great democracy of the twentieth century calls for some explanation, which will probably be found by forgetting, for a while, the extreme differences between these European States and the American Republic, and examining the cultural traits held in common. First of all, there is angry, militant self-righteousness. Consider the state of mind of the American Congressman who proposed recently that a no-man's-land of lethal atomic radiations be established between North and South Korea—a sterilized and death-dealing strip of countryside—in order to "keep the peace" in Asia. Then there is the U.S. Government official who said, in connection with the McCarran Act:

The first padlock in the control of disloyalty in speech should be put on the mouths of teachers and scientists. . . . the man who fears that his thinking

will be curbed by a check on his loyalty may be thinking things that tend to be disloyal to his country.

Physical poison and psychological padlocks—these are hardly the approved methods of democratic control. Not all Americans believe in these things, but the spirit of distrust, of suspicion and fear, is sufficiently dominant to make common proposals of this sort. Of course, reliance on fears as the enforcer of "order" is by no means as advanced as it was under Hitler, nor as it is among the Soviets, today, and this difference in the "public relations approach" may be attributed to the fact that America still proclaims its belief in democratic processes of government, while public relations, until recently, has been only a department of merchandising, in which persuasiveness is more competitively effective than threats; but the public relations approach is making rapid progress in the political sphere of American life (see Carey McWilliams' series in the *Nation* for April 21, 28, and May 5, "Government by Whitaker and Baxter").

Another aspect of the decline of the humane temper is discussed by Hanson W. Baldwin, New York *Times* military expert, in the *Times* of April 23. The article is about the extraordinary reception accorded General MacArthur on the occasion of his homecoming, and while Mr. Baldwin is candid in discussing the popular military leader, his primary concern is with understanding the psychological reasons behind the emotional outburst that has greeted the General wherever he has appeared. The reasons the *Times* writer proposes are several, but the first and perhaps most important one given is the transformation suffered by the United States from civilian to military psychology. Increasingly, the people are led by military influence, and this means that a commanding presence, on the one side, and a dutiful obedience on the other, are becoming accepted and expected qualities in human behavior. In evidence of this trend is Mr. Baldwin's comment:

For the first time in history a soldier last week did what would have been unthinkable some decades ago: he challenged and criticized his President in a public speech on Capitol Hill.

The impropriety of this, democratically speaking, seems to have occurred to very few,

although Mr. Baldwin is able to trace in recent history the psychological grounds for public indifference:

This transition from what used to be the firm tenet of our democracy—that the military were strictly subordinate to the civilian—has been a gradual, almost imperceptible one. World War II greatly hastened the process, and the reorganization of the Defense Department after the war, the weak quality of some of our civilian leadership in Washington, and the Korean war and the years of crises through which we are passing all have contributed to expanding the influence of the military. The Unification Act reduced materially the authority of the civilian service secretaries and tremendously increased the power of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The results were obvious in the MacArthur homecoming.

Another explanation of the enthusiasm for MacArthur is found by Mr. Baldwin in the "frustration" of the American people. The general's removal created a "natural" occasion for the people to blow off steam. Baldwin speaks of the "semi-hysterical quality of some of the greeting to MacArthur," and adds that there was, "as some Canadian writers here in Washington have noted, in some of the demonstrations a characteristic new to the United States. The frenzied enthusiasm was so great and at times so unreasoning that it seemed to carry a 'man-on-horseback' quality about it."

Whether or not MacArthur is a "great man" is not even at issue. The point is that submission to emotional enthusiasm of this sort for *anyone* is the mark of personal weakness and a sense of helplessness. For a while, people let themselves think that the President had taken away their "savior." (There is irony in this, for Mr. Truman is reported to have said, after he decided to replace MacArthur, "Well, I guess I have to relieve God!") Even the respected Herbert Hoover seemed to lose his perspective, for he publicly declared MacArthur to be a "reincarnation of Saint Paul"! No one has yet compared the General with Saint Francis, but this may be merely an oversight.

The MacArthur ovation, called by Hanson Baldwin the nation's "biggest emotional binge in many years," is chiefly important as a symptom of insecurity. It illustrates the role played by a passive

populace at a time when so many are longing for infallible leaders who will make the Right Course plain to all in short, staccato phrases. It seems to say, "We do not know what to do, ourselves; we are befuddled, timid, and without guidance; but *we know how to be loyal.*" The equation is a familiar one to all movie-goers. The blind adoration of the simple underling for his master, his first-in-command—this is one of the most frequently exploited "virtues" in the films. It may be an eccentric old desert rat expressing his devotion to the lithe young hero who is "the brains" of the outfit; or the fun-loving butler's worship of his gentleman-about-town; it may be the little boy's reverence for his Dad—the variations on the theme are endless, and they all have a place in human life, but their charm is in their *immaturity*, and that we are so easily fascinated by the characteristic virtue of immaturity is an ominous sign of the times.

The ugly, other-side aspect of this psychological immaturity is represented in the unreasoning resentment aimed at those who dare to criticize the admired one. Blind loyalty creates ferocious and fanatical warriors—warriors who seldom think about whether their loyalty is justified or not, for to do so might expose their immaturity. Sensing this, they become more ferocious than ever, in self-defense. This, doubtless, is the explanation of religious persecution, of every "slaughter of the innocents" that ever took place in human history. Men who fear to reason generally want to kill—anything to avoid the horror of having to think for themselves, to be leaderless and free.

It is natural that when the more intelligent and astute members of society adopt the "public relations" approach, the majority of people, less capable of analytical thinking, react by adopting the virtues of immaturity—which is just what the manipulators of feelings want. And then the natural leaders have a choice of becoming either men-on-horseback, or the champions of tiny, unpopular minorities, and of wearing out their lives in a struggle to restore a little sanity to the people at large.

Thus the problem inevitably becomes one of basic attitudes. Why do we give in to the beating

tom-tom of blind loyalty, and its accompanying diabolism of hate? Why do we adopt the startle-pattern of militant reaction against anyone who questions *our* virtue, *our* wisdom, or even proposes that such matters may be open to discussion? It is the loss, basically, of the humane temper, which makes us vulnerable.

To understand ourselves, we have to keep the problem simple. If we set the problem up in terms of what the communists, foreign or domestic, may do to us, we shall never solve it at all. It is fear that makes us sick, not fear of communists. It is fear that will make us brutes, or cravenly cruel, not fear of aggression from without. There will always be antagonists, real or fancied, to be feared, so long as we can be made afraid.

This is not a sentimental analysis. There is no solution in trying to make ourselves think that the Russians really have hearts of gold and deep down inside want to be friends with us. They *might*, if they could overcome *their* fears, but right now, if wishes were bombs, the United States would doubtless be blown beyond the Milky Way; but if wishes were bombs the Kremlin would get blown there, too, and we should have to work things out on that frontier as well.

To stop fearing, we shall probably have to stop trying to inspire fear in others; and this means to regain the humane temper—to stop *wanting* to inspire fear in others. It means a revolt against the "public-relations" approach to our fellows, and giving up our intemperate loyalty to "saviors," whether in heaven or on earth. It means to stop "pushing" our ideas, as though ideas, if they are good, cannot win their own way. An idea that is pushed with force or fear is a betrayed idea, just as a pushed man is a betrayed man. Real ideas need no pushes or pulls; they have the inherent energy of truth; and real men will neither push nor be pushed—they have too much respect for themselves and for their fellows. And this, after all, is the humane temper.

Letter from ENGLAND

NOT for centuries have the people of Britain rebelled against their rulers. Perhaps the catastrophes that engulf the world with modern warfare have taught us to face national hardship with forbearance. We stand dazed and amazed, like people in a Greek tragedy, wondering what fate has in store for us, and what further in the way of sacrifice will be expected of us. At the back of our minds is the hope that with time, conditions will improve. But when, towards the end of 1950, the Korean conflict suddenly involved military operations against China and we were thereby threatened with a third world war, the people of Britain decided to be patient no longer. Worms do turn eventually: to-day we have become a nation of indignant worms.

Protest became articulate early in December last. The lead was given by Kingsley Martin, editor of *The New Statesman & Nation*, Norman Bower, a Conservative MP, Reginald Sorensen, MP, Ritchie Calder, and the Reverend Henry Carter, who formed a Council called the *Peace with China Council* and called a meeting which filled the Kingsway Hall to capacity. The Council, hereafter called PCC, was interparty and non-Communist. Its aims were an early and equitable settlement in Korea, acceptance of the Cairo and Potsdam decisions on Formosa, admission of China to the Security Council and full collaboration with India, Pakistan and other Asian countries to solve political problems peaceably.

The result of this meeting was tremendous. All over the country, from the south of England to the Highlands of Scotland local PCC groups were formed and meetings organized. It was a chance for the ordinary man and woman to voice their protest against a policy of aggression. From December to the present day people have been meeting in town halls, in village schoolrooms, in each others' houses, from meetings thousands attend to the small discussion group. Resolutions,

variously worded, that a policy whereby Great Britain would be dragged into war by the United States against China would not commend itself to the people, were passed, signed by a group of representative citizens, and forwarded to the Prime Minister or local MP. Today PCC groups are meeting to express satisfaction at President Truman's dismissal of General MacArthur, and to urge the Government to oppose any extension of the war to the Chinese mainland.

The PCC is not the only active body protesting against a drift towards war. There is the Socialist Europe Group founded by the pacifist MP, Mr. Silverman, and, among MP's, the Peace Aims Group; the former a new group, the latter newly re-formed to meet the fresh problems that have arisen since its earlier formation.

But apart from the PCC the greatest stir to individual action was made by G. D. H. Cole, the eminent economist and author, and Victor Gollancz, the publisher who, it will be remembered, organized the sending of food parcels to Germany and Austria after the war.

Cole's article *As a Socialist Sees It* appeared in the *New Statesman & Nation* of Feb. 3. This was a courageous statement of his own views on the United Nations action in going to war against North Korea, and on the rearming of Germany. He opposed both policies unconditionally, contending that the Asian countries are able to manage their own affairs, and asking how they can put their trust in the White countries while Americans are openly supporting Chiang in his determination to reconquer China.

On Feb. 12 a letter appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* headed "Working for Peace" and signed by Victor Gollancz. This was very different from the cool and reasoned statement of G. H. D. Cole. Victor Gollancz is nothing if not sincere, and his letter was a clarion call, almost religious in fervor, to everyone to waste no more time but to act at once if we wanted to avert war. He suggested a two-point programme. Immediate conference with Russia,

throwing overboard all "hack diplomatic routine," getting together on anybody's ground and making a desperate effort to achieve agreement. He advocated organizing a great international fund for improving the lot of those, whoever they may be, who are starving, destitute and in despair—a variant of the plan already proposed by Walter Reuther. Thus England would challenge the world to a new rivalry, a rivalry in the works of peace. Finally Mr. Gollancz concluded by asking all those in agreement with what he proposed to send him a postcard with the one word YES on it, and their name and address. The result was ten thousand postcards and the formation of the Association for World Peace with Gollancz as Chairman and Canon Raven as Vice-Chairman.

Briefly, then, the people of Britain are passionately opposed to any aggression that might lead to universal disaster, but it is a mistake to suppose that because they are anti-war they are anti-American; they are anti-MacArthur only in so far as General MacArthur's policy seemed to be a threat to the peace we all desire. Since that desire has become articulate indignant letters from America in the *Manchester Guardian* accusing us of "sinking to unblushing appeasement" and threatening a boycott of British goods and a refusal to send us any more parcels have become our portion. More invidious has been a tendency with a minority here to associate the very word peace with Communism, and any activity or protest becomes immediately suspect, as though peace were the sole prerogative of the Communist. Nevertheless, with the horizon so dark, protest itself must be accepted as an extra discipline, an exercise to be carried out with resolution. Professor Toynbee's "ultimatum," *No annihilation without representation*, is the slogan of the British people today.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

THE MICHENER ERA

THERE is something almost mysterious about the way an author can travel directly to the heights of unreserved popularity. It is as if the man, whether consciously or no, is able to take the pulse of man's aesthetic and passionate life and synchronize the beat in his verbal music. In any case, it comes as no surprise that James A. Michener's *Return to Paradise*, sequel to *Tales of the South Pacific*, is a Book-of-the-Month selection.

Michener has been a very busy fellow. Between *Tales of the South Pacific* and *Return to Paradise* came *The Fires of Spring*, a 550-page novel published in 1949. And here, in this obvious attempt at "the great American novel," we may find clues to Michener's extraordinary success. The best characterization we can think of for Michener is that he is the Great American Boy. He tries to be and do everything, and is buoyed up with such indefatigable energy and resilient pride that he is never dismayed by temporary failures nor by the extravagance of his attempts.

The Fires of Spring is literally a fantastic novel. Michener is determined that his leading character, David Harper, should encounter every vista and shade of experience conceivable on the American scene. Harper is born in a poorhouse. He loves the kindly quiet of the men who have been financial failures and who are no longer striving to gouge each other. In adolescence, fleeing a job in a pants factory, he becomes a general handy man and petty criminal at an amusement park. A gangster regards him as a protégé, while he is simultaneously being fêted by the household of his young Quaker girl friend, and admired in the community for his prowess as a top athlete. The gangster, as an unknown benefactor, sends him to college, and the Quaker girl waits while our hero struggles through his love for an undernourished prostitute and experiences an exciting affair with an actress-singer. In college, also, David is remarkable, to say the very least. He becomes a virtual mathematical genius, and is given special tasks in the astronomical laboratory.

All the worthwhile professors in David's small college, as a matter of fact, seem able to spare hours or days for this remarkable young fellow, instructing him in literature, art, etc. But David, now a summa cum laude graduate, turns down a teaching fellowship, with a promised professorship ahead, in order to travel with one of the last of the summer stock companies—thus he becomes an actor plus truck driver. Then comes the period when all his women desert him. (This is quite unique for Michener's heroes, incidentally.) Later, David struggles to become a writer, via the stepping stone of an editorial assistant's job in a thoroughly trashy pulp factory, where the principal aim is to debauch the public with stories of sex and murder more successfully than its rivals. Finally, David and his Quaker girl friend are reunited, she helps him find his integrity, and—curtain. . . . It's clear, isn't it, why we called *The Fires of Spring* "fantastic"?

Even if Michener's devices creak a bit, the devices of most novels do the same, and *The Fires of Spring* is a good try. It should be a thoroughly satisfactory book for anyone who shares David's (Michener's) philosophy. The idea is to get to know all the goodness, truth and beauty there is in the world by getting experience wholesale. But the limitation in all of Michener's work—and it seems to us that there is considerable limitation—is the basic weakness of *any* purely epicurean outlook, however accurately this may be also called typically American. Here, in a passage from *The Fires of Spring*, is the same amoral fascinated testing of "experience by the gross" which stands behind *Tales of the South Pacific* and *Return to Paradise*:

He was a prisoner of his sensory memories, and he would not have it otherwise, for through them he lived deeply, carrying with him to each new experience the full burden of his life up to that moment. He had never realized before how dependent his brain was upon its senses, and he loved the tangible world in which he had lived. He thought: "I'd like to see Paradise again on a rainy night. I'd like to smell the poorhouse once more. I'd like to see that old couple dashing at one another in the morning light." The world was upon him and in him, for he was one of the fortunate ones who carry their worlds with them. He was the man who as a boy had seen and listened and touched and smelled

and tasted with love, and the treasure trove was with him forever.

Michener shows love, compassion, and courage in nearly all that his characters do. But one has a feeling that because he jumps around so much he never has a chance to get to show any of them well. Again, like *The Great American Boy*, Michener is a keen observer of any thing involving excitement. We may even say that Michener's "American primitivism," his revelling in the sensuous, helps him to appreciate the inspiration of the eternal symbol of "the South Seas." Michener is a true appreciator of nature and adds aesthetic knowingness to tolerance for all types of attitudes and actions among human kind. In *Return to Paradise*, Michener puts his simple-life-close-to-burgeoning-nature philosophy in this way:

I learned what I believe is the secret of the South Pacific. Here nature is so awesome that it compels attention. Other things being roughly equal, that man lives most keenly who lives in closest harmony with nature. To be wholly alive a man must know storms, he must feel the ocean as his home or the air as his habitation. He must smell the things of earth, hear the sounds of living things and taste the rich abundance of the soil and sea.

The South Pacific is memorable because when you are in the islands you simply cannot ignore nature. You cannot avoid looking up at the stars, large as apples on a new tree. You cannot deafen your ear to the thunder of the surf. The bright sands, the screaming birds, and the wild winds are always with you. The great writers, Conrad, Maugham and Melville, spent only a few years in the South Seas, but their memory of those waters was indestructible. . . . This part of the world sharpens the perceptions of a man and brings him closer to an elemental nature.

On social and political situations, also, Michener is something of a philosopher:

The South Pacific was once the playground for ship-sick European sailors. Then it became the roistering barricade of the last great pirates. Next it was the longed-for escape from the canyons of New York. Then the unwilling theatre for an American military triumph. But now it has become the meeting ground for Asia and America. There is only one sensible way to think of the Pacific Ocean today. It is the highway between Asia and America, and whether we wish it or not, from now on there will be immense

traffic along that highway. If we know what we want, if we have patience and determination, if above all we have understanding, we may insure that the traffic will be peaceful, consisting of tractors and students and medical missionaries and bolts of cloth. But if we are not intelligent, or if we cannot cultivate understanding in Asia, then the traffic will be armed planes, battleships, submarines and death. In either alternative we may be absolutely certain that from now on the Pacific traffic will be a two-way affair. I can foresee the day when the passage of goods and people and ideas across the Pacific will be of far greater importance to America than the similar exchange across the Atlantic. Asia must inevitably become more important to the United States than Europe. That is why we must do all that we can to understand Asia. That is why it is stupid folly to look upon the South Pacific as a lecher's paradise or a wastrel's retreat. It has become, especially as it leads to New Zealand and Australia, one of our highways to the future.

Though Michener does not himself say it, can we not call this the Greek Nemesis, or the Indian Karma, catching up with the Western world? Michener's sense of justice is his strongest point, by the way, whether he is writing a novel, describing a war in which he himself was involved, or talking about the sort of people he personally likes least. And if all "American Boys" grow big enough hearts to hold a real concern for justice, they will then discover they have gone in for Abstractions, Ideals, Metaphysics, etc., however unfashionable such a course may be. We hope that if Michener ever does turn to philosophical or religious ideas, he picks the right kind, for he is very effective and very much alive. We also hope those who read *The Fires of Spring*, etc., will not feel they have to duplicate all of the hero's experiences "to find themselves."

COMMENTARY

PLATO'S WORDS FOR IT

THERE is this week an overlapping of themes in MANAS. Mr. da Silva (Frontiers) speaks effectively of the "Science of Engineering Consent," while David Reisman's remarks concerning the "public relations approach" are quoted in the lead article. For some years, now, public relations, advertising, and the preparation of propaganda have been regarded by clever people as a pleasant way to make a living. These clever people are quite willing to admit, among themselves, that they are a lot cleverer than the rest of us—in fact, the rest of us are little more than targets and matériel for the practice of their art.

Public relations, in these terms, is indeed an art—the art, as Plato phrased it, of making "the worse appear the better cause." The quick and handy defense of the PR experts is that they never further the worse causes, but only the better ones—and what can be wrong with that? To be right, and to have PR experts to convince us that we are right: surely, this is the same as having guns *and* butter!

There are two difficulties with this defense. First, the experts may get a better offer from the Other Side, and, under the moral strain of deciding what to do, get very confused, even failing to tell Right from Wrong. Second, the rest of us may fall into the habit of depending on the experts, and then, should the experts not be around when we need them, we, too, would get confused.

The matter was well put by Dr. Hutchins about a year ago, in a Great Books panel discussion here on the Coast. A member of the panel, himself in a profession involving considerable public relations, had said: "But I believe in those principles—I always speak of them in my work." To which Dr. Hutchins replied: "Are you sure that you really believe in them, or do you only want to win with them?"

These are days when a lot of people confuse the public relations approach and the science of engineering consent with Education. This was the mistake of the California Board of Regents, which tried to impose a special loyalty oath on the state university's professors. It is the mistake of a number of people who are trying to honor God and Country without honoring Man. This can be done, of course, but only at a price—the price of obtaining a jealous, irrational God, and a tyrannical country peopled with obedient nonentities.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

ONE of our acquaintances is fortunate enough to be earning part of his living doing some janitorial work. For those—perhaps all of us—who may be inclined to wonder exactly why the word "fortunate" is used, explanation is in order. We are not really so crazy about janitorial work as crazy about its potential in parent-child training. The man of whom we speak is fortunate, not just because he does janitorial work, but, more accurately, because he has a five-year-old daughter *and* does janitorial work. For, in a city, janitorial work is one of the few things you can get paid for and for which you can choose a five-year-old as an assistant. And, in a city or anywhere else, one of the best things to do with five-year-old-and-upwards children is to let them work with you on some remunerative task.

Think of the advantages of such an opportunity. In the first place, if the child has any preference for cooperative endeavor over aimless play, she or he may be a whiz at emptying wastebaskets. The five-year-old size can get into and out of the smallest under-desk caverns. She can jump up and down in the papers to tamp them, because both feet fit at once. Then, if the work is thus ably forwarded by such special capacities, the father can *pay* his small assistant. Some may think it better to get assistance for nothing, or, better still, for the Love of Family, but it is not always so.

In our society, the value of money, and knowledge of just what it takes to earn how much is a major step toward that sense of responsibility about property which all parents devoutly pray their children will come to possess. But prayers, no matter to whom addressed, do not encourage a sense of responsibility in children, small or large. The man who exists for a long time on charity, or capricious largesse, is apt to think that the world owes him a living, or to chafe at the feeling of economic dependence. Children are not superior

enough to other people to escape falling into one of these states of mind. Having money of their own, which they legitimately earned, gives a true "learning-by-doing" introduction to the mechanics of the society we live in. If the parent is wise, at this point, no attempt will be made to control the expenditures of such money. Even bubble gum is better than withholding the freedom a child should possess when he has earned his own pennies. Suggestions may be offered, but the final authority must reside with the Owner of Wealth. (That Owner will soon learn you cannot have your ice-cream and eat it, too.)

We understand that the child whose venture into the labor mart occasioned this piece has now become a budding genius in mathematics, and mathematics is, according to both Plato and Pythagoras, a most important discipline. The answer, of course, is that when we are vitally concerned about something—when it has real relevance to our own lives—we give all calculations pertaining to it our undivided concentration.

The janitorial combine, moreover, promises to create a very good human relationship. A *working* relationship is always the best, whether between friends, brothers, lovers, parents and children. In this instance, too, the child escapes exclusion from that particular world of money-making to which the parent belongs. The economic structure of life is comprehensible, at least in part, to this child's mind. Readers who recall our descriptions of Gandhi's school at Sevagram will note the importance Gandhi attached to providing young children with a simple economy, so that they may feel themselves a part of it. This was sage counsel. The establishment of some connection between a parent's work and his relationship with his young can never start too early. Usually, if it ever starts, it is not until far too late, with the father inviting his favorite son into an apprentice partnership at the age of 21. So, if you own a filling station or a store, are a gardener or an independent carpenter,

or if you or your wife does piece-work at home, there may be important compensations for the shortage of money that you may also expect. (If you manage to be poor enough, you may not even have to own a television set and buy your offspring Hoppy clothes.)

Some parents try to move toward family work-sharing by purchasing and operating farms or small businesses as a side-line, after they have acquired sufficient capital. Others keep waiting for sufficient money to accrue and finally lose the spirit of initiative before the time or the money have arrived. The man who lives in a sparsely settled area has a much easier time of setting up more than one way of earning money to support his family. He can sell insurance and still farm an acre or two. The city dweller has either to seek nothing but part-time work—a hazardous livelihood—or he has to add part-time work to his chief occupation. Even when one of these courses is followed, it is still difficult to find work which his children can understand and assist. But it is not impossible. The man who owns a small store can employ his children usefully for small periods of time, and the man who works eight hours a day for a large corporation may devise for weekends an entirely different sort of gainful employment which, far better than mere recreation, he can share with his children.

Finally, those who want neither themselves nor their children to be engulfed by devitalizing specializations can always reserve some portion of their energy for the simplest kinds of manual labor. The man who improves his own piece of property, even if only to sell it at a profit, gains in innumerable ways over the man who simply hires work done. It is helpful for the parent to disregard entirely the dogma that the man who shifts constantly from one type of work to another is a social failure. He may actually be a great *human* success, if his passage from one field to another is inspired by the desire to further that general deepening of contact with the incredible variety of life's experiences which may be called a

fundamental objective of living. Devotees of these doctrines, however, would also have to be devotees of the simple life. The truly independent man today will never, or scarcely ever, have much money, but he may be happier, have more initiative, and a better home life than the majority of those who follow the accepted roads to affluence.

FRONTIERS

Where Howard da Silva Stands

HOWARD DA SILVA, lately called before the Congressional Committee on Un-American activities, is one of America's finest performers. We learned of the Committee's interest in Mr. da Silva's political associations, if any, from the newspapers. The reports were very brief. What the newspapers did not report was what Mr. da Silva wanted to say to the Committee, but was not permitted to say. His statement finally appeared in an English periodical, but so far as we know has not been published in the United States. For two reasons, (1) Mr. da Silva has a right to be heard, and (2) what he says is worth repeating, we print below his statement in its entirety.

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I've been an actor for twenty-two years. They have been years of hard work and some achievement. Years of learning about the world through the works of honest playwrights and of bringing to the roles I've played something of what I learned in life. . . . Whatever talents and abilities I have are rooted in my linkage with the people of this country.

If this link is strong I cannot be blind or deaf to the problems of the people, and inevitably I must form opinions on the issues which spring from these problems. My opinions may not always coincide with those of the majority of the people. But my obligations as a citizen require that I express these opinions when and where I choose. And as a citizen I have the further responsibility to resist being forced to express my opinions or intimidated into changing them.

I hold an opinion to-day. It is shared by the overwhelming majority of the American people. It is that peace must be achieved; that another war is unthinkable. I hold another opinion. It is not shared as yet by the majority of the American people. It is that there are men in high places in our government who prefer war to peace. I also

believe that those who hold this preference are trying to stifle discussion or contrary opinion by branding every expression of peace as subversive. I think that's why I am here.

This is my honest belief. And I cannot escape it by taking the "easy way" that has often been recommended to me: "Read your lines, pick up your check and lie in the California sun." I am unable to comfort myself with the childish fantasy that whatever happens won't happen to me. I cannot convince myself that when A-bombs fall, they will fall far enough away from my place in the sun so that they won't disturb me—or you. And I cannot forget Dr. Albert Einstein's words: "I don't know what weapons will be used in World War III; I do know that World War IV will be fought with clubs."

This is my opinion on the most vital issue of our day. It differs from that of the men in high places who are engaged to-day in a very difficult project. The newspapers have referred to it as the "Science of Engineering Consent." To engineer consent. To take a slide rule and calipers to the human mind. To forge a mould in a single design and cast all thought in its pattern. To achieve conformity. And to bludgeon people into conformity with a threat of the black list.

The pattern is tragically familiar. And the pretence that the bludgeon is aimed at the Communist becomes thinner and thinner. For as the word "Communist" is stretched to include all progressives, it is also stretched to include all who do not conform in word, deed, association and thought with the pattern set in Washington. And no one in Washington or in Hollywood believes that the present objective of this Committee is to uncover some fantastic attempt to overthrow Southern California by force and violence. No, their objective is to "Engineer Consent" in every facet of American life.

But we Americans still believe in something called private property, and we have always extended it beyond our immediate possessions. Our homes are our castles. Our ideas and our

instincts are also our castles. They belong to us. We make up our minds and we change our own minds as we see fit and without the "Engineering of Consent."

The men in Washington have had some success. They have frightened people, but they are frightened too. They are frightened by what Dorothy Thompson called "the hiatus between government policy and the instinct of the people." The people do not want war and they will not be bludgeoned into it.

Nor will I. I love my work. But it can wait for a while. I will not be intimidated by the threat of a black list. I will not be intimidated by the threat of slander, smoke-screens or stool-pigeons. I will not help destroy our Constitution or surrender its guarantees to me. In short, I will not be shoved around.

I am an actor who is more talented than some and less talented than many. But I have neither the talent, the information, nor the imagination to aid this Committee in its present inquisition. I have no ambition to play the informer. I see no future in pointing everywhere and endlessly, in surrendering my friends and my conscience, in destroying my own integrity and living out my days like a forlorn begging dog. That is not my idea of a role for an actor or a citizen.

My love for this country is deep enough for me to be able to distinguish between its people and its policies of the moment. I will always identify myself with the interests of the American people. I will support or oppose my Government's policies to the extent that I understand them to serve or harm the people of this nation. This is my position. And here I stand.

HOWARD DA SILVA

Has it Occurred to Us?

ON the matter of history's economic basis, we may as well leave the scholarly authorities to wrangle in the terms that delight them. Let us betake ourselves to the *argumentum ad hominem*, which is succinctly described as an argument directed at one's prejudices rather than at one's intellect. Whether or not we abstractly believe in Marx, Lincoln, Jesus, Confucius, or Li'l Abner, have we ever posed ourselves the conundrum: How would my attitude change toward an acquaintance or a friend who suddenly offered me, for no particular reason and as a free gift without obligation, the sum of one thousand dollars? Has it occurred to us that here, in the private relationship of two people, we would "prove" one side or the other of the Marxian controversy?

Would we begin our thoughts on this conundrum by repeating an old adage, "A thousand dollars is a thousand dollars"? And would we mean by this that, however fantastic the circumstances, we should not intentionally jeopardize the possibility of our actually receiving the miraculously-arriving sum? Suppose, in spite of everything our strangely-generous friend assures us, that he really *has* a reason for dispensing largesse. Since this is strictly between ourselves and ourselves, we can first consider the most flattering interpretation to be put upon his action—that the gift is a tribute to our sterling qualities, our selfless services, our cheery face, or our good heart.

It may cross our mind that a rather large number of people owe us A Certain Sum for sterling qualities, etc., etc., except that, in the way of greedy fools, they might just possibly enter a claim against *us*. Our fancy leads us inexorably on, picturing a world where sterling in character had to be matched by sterling in silver.

Better that we take the money and forget how we got it. Let us go about our business, small or large, spend the money as we see fit—and ignore the mystery of its *raison d'etre*. Our friend would still be our friend. The dollar sign would not dance on his nose when we looked at him, nor would our future services be any the less unselfish. All would be as it was, as if the thousand dollars had neither been given by him nor received by us, but merely passed between two persons with no bearing and no effect upon their feeling for each other. The fact that a thousand dollars is a thousand dollars, is neither here nor there. We do not defer to the dollar-donor any more than to our non-dollar-donating friends; we do not modify our theoretical differences with him out of "gratitude," nor

deliberately set ourselves to pleasing him instead of enjoying his companionship.

In the wilderness, with the two or three odd lots whom we find acting on the same theory we happened to demonstrate, it is imperative that we cudgel our non-commercial brains over the question of what would happen to civilization if there were more than a handful of Conscientious Ignorers of \$1,000? (In the wilderness, physical or theoretical, one must always consider the great masses who might suddenly take it into their heads to pick on one's own example as the "new thing" to be followed.) We begin composing our opening speech to the first multitude that comes our way rejoicing: "Friends and fellow outcasts," we will say, "a thousand dollars is *not* a thousand dollars . . ."

As the wilderness fills up in spots, we meet all the kinds of people it takes to make a world, the new world. Old and young are distinguished by the lives they are living, rather than the homes they are living in; by the character, and not the salary, they are making; by what they teach their children instead of what they settle on their heirs. A penny may not be a penny, in the old-fashioned sense, but competence is competence, graciousness is graciousness, and conscientiousness does not depend upon "ability to be paid." Household chores have disappeared with the mean, miserly spirit that associated them with pocket money, and planted little wage slaves where children were supposed to be growing up. Also left behind with those who still admire or require them, were the fever for possessions, the airs of ownership and the personal assumption of the divine right of economic dictatorship, and all the arguments beginning, "This is *mine*, therefore. . . ." But, unless one is extremely careful, he is likely to over-simplify everything altogether, and invent a new adage, something like, "Friends are friends, and a human being is a human being." . . .

Has it occurred to us that if we do not want to go into this or another commercially unorthodox wilderness, we should do well to keep up a rousing argument pro or con Economic History? Unrelenting argument will hold the facts before us, and leave us no time to take the risk of acting up to our intellectual position. Marxian, non-Marxian, and middling-Marxian might otherwise find it too difficult to be themselves all day long.