

A Word With You

IS THERE anything more appealing than a three-year-old child? And is there anything more disastrous than a room full of three-year olds?

Why should this be? Why is not the whole, in this case, the sum of the parts?

Or take mankind at large. When I was in the Army in World War II, Germany was the wicked enemy. Yet when we got into Germany, all we saw were ordinary human beings, good for the most part, and as friendly as could be expected.

Russia nowadays is the big menace. Yet those Russians I've met, and the people described by visitors to Russia, also shape up to be pretty decent men and women, hearty and outgoing.

An even more serious problem is posed by China; yet as individuals the Chinese are seen as good, hard-working, polite people, with a wonderful cultural heritage.

What went wrong? We cannot successfully blame the world's woes on "bad people," nor promote as a remedy, "get rid of the bad people," as is still seriously propounded. The key is in the social order—the relationship of human beings to one another.

Those three-year-olds — each one playing by himself, or performing before grown-ups, can be charming. When one of them meets another, there might be a friendly start, but a crisis soon develops over who wants what, and who is encroaching against

whom. It takes a great deal of friendly persuasion before a child understands what he can have and do, and what he can't.

But we never really learn, or finish learning, do we, because we have the same problems as grown-ups. Everybody has a story, and I daresay that nine out of ten will, if you let them, tell you the same story: they are not appreciated, their virtues and talents go unrecognized, they're not getting the good things they deserve; and on the other hand, they have to take a lot more nonsense and bad things than they deserve. In fact, there is a modicum of truth to this epidemic lament, in that our economic system does not reward according to effort—but not knowing where to fix the blame, it becomes a matter of a wife who doesn't understand, a cruel boss, the wicked world.

The process of the three-year-old learning about social relationships is something that has to be carried further into life than it is, and applied. For it is basically a matter of human rights. A social order that neglects or denies basic human rights and essential equality of opportunity, is doomed, no matter how skillfully it is arranged, no matter how impressive its achievements. And it is not a question of "good" or "bad" people, but of finding the right formulas for social relationships.

—Robert Clancy

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The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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