

A Word With You

THERE is so much phoniness in the world, it is difficult to imagine how things would be without it. We have gotten so accustomed to lies, fakery, pretence and illusions, that we might well ponder how we would fare without them.

Just try to visualize a society in which scrupulous honesty in all things were universally observed. (Shall we call it the *antiphony* society?) What would this do, for instance, to international diplomacy? Or to political speeches? You see what I mean when I say it's almost unimaginable!

The questionings of little children would not be silenced, and just think then of how many consecrated absurdities the world would have to give up! The whole panoply of pious frauds—whether economic, political or religious—could not be tolerated in the antiphony society.

The effect on advertising could turn our economy upside-down—or right-side up. Cigarette companies, instead of offering Nirvana, would say, "As long as you insist on ruining your lungs, you might as well do it with our weeds." Cosmetic manufacturers, instead of promising wedded bliss, would say, "Since you are not satisfied with the face God gave you, why not smear it with our colored grease?"

There would certainly be a revolution in personal relations. All our secret dislikes and resentments would

be fully ventilated. We would say frankly to our behated ones, "Just this or that in you disgusts me"—as the Duke of Ferrara did *not* say to his last duchess, with disastrous consequences. The consequences might be disastrous anyway. And what of all the secret *likes* and infatuations which would also be aired? Oh, Santa Lucia, what are we getting into?

The whole human hierarchy would be shaken up terribly. No longer could the high-and-mighty ones strut in superiority because of the kind of clothes they cover their backs with, or because of how much they are able to steal from others, or because of their ancestors or other such nonsense. All fake, fake, fake! The only real mark of superiority left would be *service*. He who rendered the greatest service to mankind would be at the top of the antiphony heap; in short, "he that is last shall be first."

So far-reaching are the implications that I'm not at all prepared to recommend the "antiphony society." It might prove catastrophic! Not that there is any immediate danger of its coming about. But if—mind you, *if*—we could manage to shake off our precious illusions and delusions, suppressions and repressions, hypocrisies and lies, fakery and phoniness—then we might find something much more wonderful beyond.

Anyway, it's worth a thought, isn't it?

—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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