

Editorial — Comment — Bulletin

Ridicule or reason

What every man thinks depends upon his previous associations, his studies, his environment, and the way he evaluates the facts he acquires. Since no two men have lived identical lives, the world is full of conflicting schools of thought, each person with his own beliefs, confident that he alone is right and assured that another with somewhat different training and somewhat different reasoning is a poor misguided individual.

Of course it is self-evident when one thinks about it that nobody can be altogether right, and no one can be altogether wrong. Perfection just does not exist. As a recognition of this fallibility of man's judgment we treasure democracy which is based upon the assumption that the conclusions of the majority are more likely to be right than the conclusions of the other divergent groups.

If the premises that nobody is right at all times and that democracy is based upon this belief are true, then the success of that democracy depends upon every person being given the opportunity to freely and openly express his views. If he speaks in good faith, we as democratic people should listen to what he says and challenge it, if we feel it should be challenged on the basis of reason and not upon prejudice.

Whether or not what Mr. Lindbergh believes is right or wrong is immaterial. He is a citizen of this country. And his opinions should be taken as the opinions of a patriot.

People don't have to agree with him. They can debate him fairly and squarely and bring forth evidence with which to refute him. But they need not as they have chosen to do try to tear down his arguments by throwing bad reflections upon the mental ability of the speaker. By ridiculing Lindbergh and by slurring his intelligence they seek to shut off the effectiveness of part of public opinion. Though one of the elementary principles of debate ethics is to attack issues and leave the individual alone, these men revel in the sarcasm they can cast upon his name.

Too many think that Lindbergh in as much as he doesn't agree with what they believe must be one of the misguided men of the country. Too many won't seriously consider what those disagreeing with them have to say. Too many forget that maybe they themselves are the ones that are wrong.

At any rate since we are unable to distinguish truth from error, let's listen to all arguments, and encourage all expression. And censor only such material from our presses that is written or spoken with malice. Then we will have a democracy of which we can be proud.

Commentatorials

... from our readers

Editorial contradictions

Dear Editor:

Your editorial "Aim at Happiness" of May 7, 1941, is so full of contradictions and misstatements that I cannot resist the temptation to answer it. I am sure that with a little more thought and after a search for factual proof you will not permit yourself or any member of your staff to publish again in your paper such generalizations about American life as the following: "America fought one war for ideals. We have none of those today."—better speak for yourself; "Men are dying of disease because our medical service is not available where it is needed." Though improvement is possible, the United States health record is better than that of any other country; "And a faulty legal profession lets the rich control the poor and the crime rings control the governments." This is silly; certainly a few isolated examples do not justify this generalization. "We never think of spending billions of dollars to alleviate these conditions." Where have you been since 1933? Let that be enough.

Turning to your philosophy, so contradictory in its simultaneous optimism and pessimism, I assure you that you do not have a monopoly on the goals of justice and happiness; I, too, who disagree with you fundamentally on the means to achieve this goal, and even many of the "politicians" whom you denounce so summarily believe sincerely in these ideals. We see, however, the problems which you rather lightly ignore.

How are you going to achieve justice and happiness in the United States when the world is dominated by the Axis powers? Do you believe that we won't have to build up our armaments? Do you believe that internal divisions financed by the Axis powers will cease? Do you believe that Hitler and the United States will live happily ever after? Weigh the alternatives, but do not ignore them. Ignoring them is not fair either to yourself or to your readers.

R. A. Winnacker.

Facts stand by themselves in spite of professorial labels

Labeling an article with such words as "contradictions" and "misstatements" does not in itself tear down an argument. Nor is the assump-

tion valid that a person who doesn't have the same prejudices and who doesn't give facts the same weight as another is either "lightly ignoring" or coloring the truth.

Despite Professor Winnacker's general attack upon your editor's swing into philosophy nothing has been advanced to refute the argument itself. These points we believe still stand.

●In every age there are dreamers bent on creating at great cost Utopian orders insuring permanent happiness, peace and power.

●History shows, however, nothing is permanent. Dream bubbles have swollen for a time but have always burst. War and destruction are as common today as at any time in the past.

●The main values that men are striving for, and to this Prof. Winnacker agrees, are happiness and justice.

●Though freedom is a part of that justice and wars may be necessary to bring happiness to a people, wars for vague ideals are too costly.

●Wars always bring depression, economic collapse and burden a people with heavy taxation. The heavy death toll and huge expense to fight such wars have seldom been compensated by actual gains from them. People are no happier today nor more secure than before America fought in 1917-18.

●There is much in the way of clearing up slums, of raising the standard of living of a large portion of our population, and thereby increasing the sum total of happiness in this country that is a challenge to any man. And even Mr. Roosevelt has not produced the results in this field since 1933 that Professor Winnacker suggests.

●Though this is a most controversial issue, and though our status doesn't give our beliefs the weight of a professor's, we cannot believe that freedom in this country must go down before a nazi-dominated Europe, if such domination is either secured or if secured after the war ends, is lasting. America has been the arsenal of freedom in the past when Europe has been ruled by the tyrant.

●In view of these things therefore, we still contend that America's best policy to achieve the maximum of happiness, is an internal policy. Her efforts should continue to be directed towards rehabilitation, improvement of health services and towards improving what Edwin H. Sutherland, professor of sociology at Indiana university says is a legal profession in which money talks, and in which criminal rings even in the better cities are able to exert deciding pressure on officials.

Editor.



Ordal

Behind the News



Olson

In the capitals . . .

The English House of Commons voted confidence in Prime Minister Churchill, by the resounding majority of 447 to 3. The test came after David Lloyd George, England's key man in World war I, voiced blunt criticism of the English government's prosecution of the war.

In a speech on the status of the war, and in reply to the criticism, Churchill disclosed that General Sir Archibald Wavell has nearly half a million men under his command in the Mediterranean area. The Prime Minister expressed confidence that Suez, Egypt, and Crete could be defended from the axis. Churchill also said that the assurance of construction of merchant ships in America plus the building program of the English would carry them through the Battle of the Atlantic in 1942.

In the air the German luftwaffe sent waves of big bombers to Glasgow, and to Liverpool for the sixth consecutive night. Ulster was also bombed. The English claimed to have downed 19 of the German planes, and admitted losing 7.

In Moscow, Josef Stalin took over the premiership from Molotov, who remains commissar of foreign affairs. The significance of this move is not yet apparent, but it is suggested by some that it is a preliminary move toward more active participation in the war. Just how or where is a matter of conjecture.

In Washington, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson made a forthright plea for the use of the navy to make sure that American supplies reach Britain. After describing the grave emergency in which this nation now is because of the German threat to our civilization the secretary went on to say: "We have at our hands a naval instrument prepared and ready for just such an emergency in our defense.

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The Daily Nebraskan

FOURTEENTH YEAR.

Subscription Rates are \$1.00 Per Semester or \$1.50 for the College Year, \$3.50 Mailed, Single copy, 5 Cents. Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice in Lincoln, Nebraska, under Act of Congress, March 3, 1879, and at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917. Authorized September 30, 1922.

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