

The Camp Farthest Out and World Problems

by Glenn Clark
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Society is a living Whole, and it must become conscious of this wholeness and integrate itself as a Whole, or it will never be at rest. Moreover this consciousness and this integration must come from within or it will rot and die.

The Mediterranean age was the most striking example of this. Aristotilian philosophy gave wholeness to the world of Truth; Medieval Art gave wholeness to the world of Beauty; the Roman Church gave wholeness to the world of Goodness. “No religion after Rome,” says Waldo Frank, “enlisted the entire man—personal, political, social; no art after the Medieval forms of Bach, El Greco and Shakespeare created the whole man; no science after Aristotle and Plato created a whole microcosm.”

But as soon as the emphasis in science, art, and religion shifted from the inner to the outer, the Mediterranean age died. When the papacy came to be bought and sold in the marketplace and great cathedrals were paid for by “indulgences”, when art turned from painting Messiahs and Madonnas to painting wealthy patrons and matrons, when science turned its attention to alchemy and black magic, the end of an Era had come. Dante sang its ultimate final swan song before Medieval Europe, and its precocious wholeness passed away.

The Modern Age began when the savage hordes which came out of the Earth only to come under the sway of medieval Rome, returned again into their jungle. This jungle in our modern age differs from the jungle of ancient days only in that instead of being infested with beasts it is infested with machines. But after a season in the jungle mankind is again tired and lonely and yearns for peace and rest. Mankind is again attempting to find Wholeness. But unfortunately man is trying to fight his way to the goal of Unity with the same weapons which drove him into the jungle—the tools of Power rather than of Love. Unity is the fruit of Love and the goal can never be attained until the means be of the same substance as the goal. It is pathetic to see the world struggling so hard to become a true society with weapons so ill adapted to achieving its end. It legislates, it organizes, it marshals loyalty to institutions. The Fascist salute and the goosestep are more frantic substitutions of an outer Power in lieu of an inner Love. Hate is but a mask of love, so in this blind seeking, society enlists hates against minorities in a futile attempt to create by contrast greater loyalties to majorities. Everywhere we see nations invoking outside coercions as a substitute for inward cooperation.

Nor can we as a nation laugh at the mistakes of the totalitarian powers. In our desire to overcome sin, we also turn to the outside of the platter rather than to the cup of the spirit. Thus we enact laws, regulating morals, we try to legislate prosperity, we regiment the unemployed in battalions, we gather into Rotary Clubs and Klu Klux Klans. Thus we strive to escape Chaos, not by means of Love and Prayer, but by means of Power. And as Power is a child of Chaos, our every attempt but thrusts us deeper into the Whirlpool of Chaos.

As Dante coming from his wilderness of despair, seeking to find the way to the Mountain of Peace found three beasts barring his way, symbolized of his own three cardinal sins, so mankind as it starts its climb from the jungle of Chaos to the Mountain of Unity and Wholeness finds its path barred by three

giant evils: War Poverty, and Sin. "These three are all necessary evils that we will never outgrow," is the common verdict of mankind. We of the Camp Farthest Out do not believe any evil is necessary evil. The bubonic plague, yellow fever, human slavery were all once called necessary evils.

There are three steps that if taken with the right spirit in the right way and at the right time will always overcome any so-called necessary evil that ever exists. But we do not believe that all three steps can be taken in the short period of a Camp Farthest Out session of ten days or two weeks. The first two steps, however, can be taken at a camp session, and these two steps we intend to take with all our mind, with all our strength, with all our heart, and with all our soul.

The first step is to see the evil definitely and clearly in all its implications and inter-relations, in all its entirety and wholeness. We believe that good diagnosis is half the cure. The second step is to give the problem completely to God with complete faith in His power to bring a solution in His own way and in His own time, using us if he so desires, as contributing instruments in any way that we are qualified to help to bring it about. The third step, the step we do not feel that any group is competent to take in a ten day period, is to work out the perfect solution in all its specific and practical details and set it in operation.

In other words, the Camp Farthest Out can furnish the experience of inner wholeness and prepare the SPIRIT, but it does not pretend to furnish the technical training in methods and skills by which the problems are to be overcome. In other words it does not provide the FORM. Both are necessary, but the FORM cannot come until the SPIRIT is prepared.

While we believe that ten days or two weeks are far too short a time to work out a definite solution for any of these major evils, if we must arrive at them through our little argumentative human minds.; nevertheless, we do not believe that ten days are too short a time for God to create solutions through His Cosmic Mind. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Camp Farthest Out to avoid as far as possible the debate and partisan discussion of specific remedies for these major evils, and to concentrate upon the first two steps of visioning and praying the solutions into fulfillment.

Lest the Camp be accused of shirking its responsibility in not trying to take this third step, we have undertaken as one of our major prayer projects the praying into being of a great and adequately equipped foundation for spiritual and intellectual researching the entire field of the Science of Man, the chief object of which is to be the concrete, specific solving of all the problems in a sound scientific, spiritual, and permanent way.

One of the most constructive, creative and far reaching things the Camp Farthest Out can do toward solving world problems is to create conditions in which those who are interested may pause in quietness before these problems, contemplate them in their entirety, accept them as God's problems rather than ours, and recognize the fact that only as they are solved in faith and love can they be permanently solved. The Camp Farthest Out can provide the training in prayer and furnish the opportunities for us to concentrate the finest and highest quality of prayer of which we are capable, upon these problems. We believe that God who is all powerful, ever present, and instantly available, can solve these problems in His own way with power far surpassing the power of man far sooner than any of us dream, if we are only capable of trusting Him with the faith that can move mountains.

Coming back again to the first two steps which the Camp Farthest Out feels responsible to take, let us consider the first one, the visioning of three major human problems. A clear diagnosis, a clear exposure of a problem to the healing sunlight of inspired prayer, we believe is half the cure.

I. War War has three root causes: 1. Greed, 2. Racial Prejudice and 3. False Propaganda. The solving of world problems by means of killing children of God we recognize as perfectly absurd, perfectly futile, and perfectly unchristian. We can't call it pagan—this would be an insult to the best in paganism. We can't call it brutal, for even brutes don't kill except when hungry, and then they never kill their own kind. We recognize the fact that most wars of men spring from economic jealousies and cupidities, separations into have nations and have nots, tariff barriers, discriminatory compacts, and above all the ruthless seizure, holding and exploiting of the more peace loving nations by the great Powers.

We agree with Muriel Lester that the holding of a nation in subjection against its wishes (such as India) is almost as heinous a sin against civilization as the seizure of a nation against its wishes (such as China). But as these cupidities and jealousies are so deep seated and of so long standing, and as we are as far removed from them, we realize that discussion will have little or no effect upon the nations interested, but the “effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man (or group of men) availeth much.”

We are convinced that this problem can only be solved on a totalitarian basis but that totalitarianism must be a totalitarianism that is within and not without. The totalitarianism must be applied to the wholeness and unity with which we look upon the world, and the wholeness and unity with which we look with faith toward God.

II. Poverty We consider poverty, especially in a nation like the United States of America, is perfectly absurd, and perfectly unchristian. Acceptance of Christ's principles that we are real branches of the vine would ensure proper distribution of all the supply for everyone's need, the adequate employment of every idle hand.

We recognize that when this totalitarianism rests in the hands of the state, it degenerates into dictatorship, whether fascist or communistic; when resting in the hands of capitalists in the past it has resulted in unemployment, cycles of unemployment, slums and other evils.

As we cannot look to either as a final solution, therefore, we pray with faith for a totalitarianism of love and cooperation and mutual good will in the world to offset the totalitarianism of selfishness and greed. How and by what means this may be implemented, we leave to the will and working out of God through any channels He appoints. Moreover, we do not believe that we shall have to await this solution for a hundred years. Indeed, if we place this problem completely in God's hands, we see no reason why He cannot open his storehouse of plenty to us tomorrow.

III. Sin We realize that this is the evil that has been with man from the beginning of time and will probably stay by him long after war, poverty and other so-called “necessary evils” have long been done away with. However, we feel that this is fundamentally also not a necessary evil either. The approach to eradicating this evil, the deepest and longest living of them all, is also to clear the pathway between us and God, let Him have complete sway in our lives, and then attempt to achieve that wholeness of expression of our lives, which more than anything else prevents sin getting a foothold.

Sin takes three special flagrant forms: A. Drink B. Gambling C. Sex. Each of these is a perverted form of the desire and craving for an experience of wholeness.

A. The drink habit is the morbid expression of man's desire to “step outside himself”, to drink deep of the true fount of inspiration, from the cup of the Spirit, rather than the cup filled with spirits. Failure of our churches, and schools, and ourselves to open the true passageway to inspiration, to show man how to immerse himself in the great Spirit of the Lord, tends to throw open this spurious doorway to losing one's self in an evil spirit outside one's self.

B. Closing of our frontiers, ending the mystery of chance in life by reducing most of Man's work to routine and drudgery and making man into a machine, has burst open the doorway to the morbid and unhealthy craving for adventure in the field of chance and uncertainty in the field of gambling. Opening new doors to adventure in serving of men, and finding new adventures in the realm of the spirit will do much, and perhaps is the only sure cure for this form of sin.

C. The highest form of love, as described by Jesus in the closing chapters of John's gospel is the sense of oneness, like the branch and the vine. Blocked from normal, wholesome expression of the sense of oneness in a spiritual way, this craving finds perverted outlet in sex indulgences, an expression which destroys the very purpose which essentially and originally prompted it. When our whole educational system is based upon training man as a regimented and compartmented individual, when our religious system continues to stress credal differences and argumentative attitudes, when it fails to adequately show how he can be integrated within himself and unified with others, he is fertile soil for such perverted cravings to take root in him. Here the Camp Farthest Out can unify his spirit within himself and with God, here again the foundation for the study of man as a unified spiritual being can have a very authoritative word to speak at the right time.

Second Step: Giving the problems thus exposed and clearly seen, completely into the hands of God. To do this in an effective, creative, irresistible way is the chief aim and purpose of the Camp Farthest Out.

Third Step: Specific solutions: The Camp Farthest Out will pray for the solution of a permanent foundation that will work out the correct specific and permanent solutions, with power to bring them into effect with love, justice, and fairness to all.

CONCLUSION:

Reverting to the beginning of this paper, let me state again that the purpose of the Camp Farthest Out is to create an atmosphere and lay the foundations for experiencing that wholeness that all mankind seeks. Here we combine all the tools of science, art, and religion that we possess to get a clearer understanding of this wholeness. The wholeness of Science differs from the wholeness of religion, in that while both predicate the universe as a whole, the man trained in science remains outside the whole he strives to know. The man trained in prayer, on the other hand, experiences the wholeness of religion, and this sharing or identifying himself with the universe is the process which converts his wholeness into Holiness. Art also builds a whole, but the artist's purpose is not primarily to Love or to Know, but rather to enjoy his wholeness. He, like the religionist, also enters into his whole and experiences it. The one enters by the door of the Good, the other by the door of the Beautiful, but when they finally enter into the holy of holies, each finds the other and each becomes Holy. Through means of creating rhythm, art appreciation, and spiritual orchestration, we hope to bring the kingdom of heaven into more vital expression in the hearts of men.