

Notice To My Countrymen

by Marvin Cheiten

I now feel that since everyone else has stated his views on the subject of our present crisis, that I, too, should set forth my opinion of this vital subject. At this very moment, men are sitting in our nation's capital, discussing in full earnest the possibilities of standing firm in our position and supporting our allies until the end; the result of which policy almost unquestionably will be war, and such terrible war as to make the past war seem, perhaps, small. I deem it, therefore, time to state my views.

If we resolve to stand firm, looking neither left nor right but remaining absolutely bolt upright in this situation, war and killing must be the net and only result of our efforts. It is inevitable that if we are niggardly enough to carry this thing further, the other power shall certainly push us, or we the other power, into war. And war for what? Men say that we are carrying out a moral obligation, supporting our friends in time of need, and maintaining our traditional position of friendship and aid towards small pieces of autonomy in trouble. Why, I wonder, should we support these people? What have they ever done for us? I have no love for them nor does anyone else with whom I have conversed. I do, however, have a love for our boys and my countrymen, a love which, it seems, is shared with me by everyone else in this great nation. Why should we, therefore, sacrifice our men for these people? That part of Europe means almost nothing to any of us!

To this men often retort that this piece of insignificant land is strategic, of value to us if there should be a war. Here I find so many faults as to laugh. Firstly, there will never be a war. That nation which is so fain now to act without consulting us will certainly never attack us; we are, as it stands now, impenetrable, with almost every new weapon and great strength to match. Secondly, if there should ever be a

war, which I strongly doubt, why must we worry about a little piece of exposed land when we have a practical circle of allied and associated lands around the enemy? Are we to worry over every piece of land that is in danger? Furthermore, this land is claimed almost justifiably. I, personally, would support the idea that the Germans of the East should be united. As far as the people go, it's every man for himself and all for peace! We have nothing to fear; overwhelming strength is ours and our friends are ever vigilant. All we need do is wait until this whole thing blows over which will certainly be but a short question of time. We will lose nothing; it is not we who are being attacked, if one may call this any sort of attack.

There are, however, some people who call this sensible plan one of retreat or appeasement. Apparently, they do not comprehend the meaning of the word compromise, compromise to prevent our bloodshed and the bloodshed of our young ones. Let us therefore join in this sane plan for peace and permit the other nation to have its way, a way which may almost be called justifiable and poetically correct. Let us call the whole thing an error made in a treaty which was wrong from the start and shall now be corrected. For no one can possibly say that any harm will ever come from this, and in return for a small sacrifice, we may all live together in security and peace forever.

Sir Edward Walteson
Austerfield, Nottingham
September the Fifteenth,
Nineteen Hundred and Thirty-Eight



The Moon

by PETER WILSON

*A mute mandolin – many
monsters green, blue.
An icicle of cream
on a summer's night –
do lovers love, do dogs bay?*

... GAMESMANSHIP ...

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"Gamesman: (calling): Wait a minute.

Opponent: What's wrong?

Gamesman (turning to look at a child walking slowly along a path a hundred yards behind the court. Then turning back): Those damn kids.

Opponent: Where?

Gamesman: Walking across your line of sight.

Opponent: What?

Gamesman: I said 'walking across your line of sight.'

Opponent: I can't see anyone.

Gamesman: What?

Opponent: I say *I can't see anyone*.

Gamesman (continues less distinctly) ... bang in the line of sight

... ought to be shot ... etc."

Filled with up to date theories and applications such as the one above, *Gamesmanship* is a constantly funny and extremely readable book, and an almost inexhaustible source of practical strategy; there is more to it than appears on the surface.

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... REFLECTION ...

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The townfolk do not always work in the brewery. In the evening there are folk music and tempting German dishes around the fire. While the wide-eyed children peek into the room from their beds, the parents are relaxing. The men, with pipes and something to warm their stomachs, talk over the serious matters of the day. The women, on the other hand, exchange small town gossip about the new milk cows Hans Kreidler got that day. Although these people live a hard physical life, their mental existence is that of ease.

Pop came over to talk to me, and the picture faded away. I asked him if I could keep the bottle. He paused, momentarily puzzled, then smiled knowingly, nodding his approval. That bottle lies on my kitchen shelf to remind me of my trip to another world. Now, whenever someone says that he has just come back from a thrilling trip to Europe, I feel that my life is not so dull and filled with routine tasks. I know that I have been to Europe and that my experiences were more exciting than anyone else's — for I created them.

. . . SNOW . . .

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This difference made them beautiful. This individuality made them interesting, made them each a variation of a great theme. It was hard to believe that these "individualists," these snowflakes, once they settled on the ground, united into a single unit, in which they lost all of the individual characteristics, all of their individual beauty — everything except their outer appearance of white. They formed a Mass.

At first this Mass would be a good, beautiful, and beneficial medium, a sort of community. It would provide a means for skiing, adorn the parched and frozen earth with a beautiful mantle of sparkling white, and would even add splendor to the green pine trees and to the frozen branches of all others. Soon, however, this unit of snow would grow past the stage of a "community," and become so powerful, so uncontrollable, that it would turn into a destroyer. It would act like a Mass which, swayed by emotions like wind and sound, would form into snowdrifts and avalanches, and become a potential or even a real killer. As a Mass this snow would lose the last characteristic of the individual, the color of white, and then into the dirty, melting, muddish medium that is often seen in city streets; or it would discolor itself by ripped up dirt and stones when rolling down in the form of an avalanche; or it would become covered by a layer of soot when in snow drifts.

What would become of this innocent, beautiful, little snowflake—this impotent creature which in its pureness and beauty could only resemble a part of the wonders of Nature? How could this little being, in its own identity and goodness, become a killer, a destroyer? It does not seem possible! There is, however, an answer: by itself it could not do anything but be beautiful, but after losing itself in a Mass, it would not have any control over itself, not any individual power, for it would move with the Mass. All of its individual characteristics gone, there would remain for a time only a semblance of the individual in the outer color, but even this soon would change.

This thought sent shivers down my spine. I turned around and quickly walked back to the warm room. Somehow my joy at seeing the snow had disappeared. I felt sorry for the poor snowflake, which had no choice but to join the others and to form a Mass, the destroyer of everything that is beautiful, the *destroyer of the individual*. And then a thought—I saw a strange relationship which made me feel even more sorry for some human beings, for the poor snowflake *has* to join the Mass while those human beings *want* to join the Mass. And with this thought I slammed the door.

