

Tyranny

William Phelps

TYRANNY is something which we in America think of as existing only in a foreign land. When we speak of a tyrant, we nearly always think of Benito Mussolini, or Adolf Hitler, of Nikolai Lenin, of Joseph Stalin, or of some other person who has dictatorially driven a nation of people. Then later, we think of that tyranny as inevitably leading to the mental destruction of some, the physical destruction of much, and the death of many. Tyranny also exists in this country, but since what tyranny there is in this country is on a much smaller scale, and since the major manifestation of such autocracy has been either in Europe or Asia, the connotation of the word quite naturally leads us to pursue a study of the subject with that particular kind of tyranny in mind.

What is the nature of a man who desires to be an autocrat? He is a man of vision, for he must visualize his goal; he is a man of intelligence, for he must intelligently pursue a course of action in order to raise himself from one position to another; he is a man of insight, for he must be able to know the innermost thoughts of the people of the nation which he aspires to lead; he is a man of persuasion, for in the early days of his journey he must gain support only through persuasion; he is a man of deception, for deception of the people in relation to his ultimate goal is essential to the use of his persuasion; he is a man of brutality, for there are those along his path who can be dealt with only through the use of brutality; he is a man of malevolence, for history should show him the final outcome of the execution of a desire such as his; he is a man of all these attributes and many more, but these are a few of the qualities necessary for his success.

Give a man who possesses all of these a group of people who are weak and dissatisfied, and the embryo of the tyranny is conceived. Let him persuade one weak person to follow and support him, or one strong person to help him, and the tyranny is born. It develops through infancy, childhood, adolescence, and youth by the addition of more and more of the weak who have a desire to be strong; and finally it reaches manhood when the band of people is strong enough to overpower those of the country who have heretofore failed to participate in the nefarious scheme.

What, then, leads to the downfall of the tyrant? The lust for power eventually causes him to attempt to broaden his field of operations. When this happens, he begins to tread on people who have had a chance to compare the lives of the oppressed with their own lives. These people find that their lives are far superior to the one which would befall them if they were forced to join the oppressed.

Therefore the struggle begins, and those who are opposing the tyranny realize that their fight is one of survival; and to defeat the man who is fighting such a fight has, to this date in history, been an impossibility. As long as there are free men to compare their lives with those of a people who are subjected to such a life of despotism, I feel certain that tyranny on such a grandiose scale can not exist for too long.

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The Cloak Room

Kenneth L. Finehout

THE cloak room was cold on this early Monday morning. I stood near the door waiting for the other students to hang their coats and enter their class room. The last person to arrive was Joanne. She was short, dark, and the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. Joanne was the girl I wanted for my wife, and today I was going to propose to her.

The clock at the end of the hall seemed to be running fast this morning, and I knew that in a few minutes the tardy bell would ring. My proposal would have to be short and direct if we were to reach our classes on time.

As I walked toward her, there was a smile on her lips as if she knew what I was going to say. For a moment I stood still, looking at the sunlight glowing in the dark brown hair that hung down over her shoulders. She was beautiful! There was so much I wanted to say to her, and yet there was only time for a few words. I became afraid. The tardy bell rang, and before I could speak, she had gone through the door to her class room.

Day after day I tried to speak to her, but each day became just another disappointment. Soon the semester would be over, and maybe I would never see her again.

On the last day of school before summer vacation, I knew I must ask her to marry me. Once again I waited in the cloak room. As she came through the door, I became tense and nervous. Today was my last chance. Resting my hand on her shoulder to steady myself, I opened my mouth to speak. But before I could say a word, the door swung open. As we stood there, stunned by the sudden intrusion, our first grade teacher said, "Children, class is about to begin."