

society cannot be run without a good deal of pushing around. The maximum amount of free choice for the individual can only be preserved if every law, every regulation, every executive act, which has the effect of pushing people around is freely discussed, freely approved, freely criticized and freely changed when the need arises. The criterion must always be the good of society.

To protect that end there must be in every community people whose training and outlook extend beyond the profession or craft or skill by which they earn their living. A community may have a high standard of living, but it needs as well to have a high standard of thinking. A good many years ago that detached British statesman, Benjamin Disraeli, expressed in a trenchant sentence some of his doubts about the modern industrial age: "The European talks of progress because by the aid of a few scientific discoveries he has established a society which has mistaken comfort for civilization". A high standard of living should be much more than ample food and clothing and automobiles and plumbing and so on. These are the comforts, the useful, desirable and welcome comforts, but they are not the essence of civilization.

It is of peculiar importance, in these days of the cold war, that the study of the humanities should continue and flourish. Our humane tradition is threatened more gravely than ever before. It is not so much threatened by force, by overthrow in war, as by an opposing philosophy which denies the soundness of its foundations and goes in for a great deal of pushing people around. If the opposing philosophy should triumph, our civilization would disappear. The Nazi doctrine was not so dangerous, for it did not travel well outside the German boundaries, whereas the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist dogma is readily exportable and keeps for a long time. It can also infect even those whom it does not convert. The best guarantee of immunity is to set beside this ruthless, militant, and narrow creed the rich heritage of our own culture.

I conclude by quoting a passage from a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay, to which she gave the title "St. George Goes Forth to Slay the Dragon - New Year's, 1942". Though the dragon she wrote of was Nazism and Fascism, her words are applicable to the dragon of today:

"Not to be spattered by his blood - for what, should he be slain,
Done to death by my hand, and my hand be stained
By him, and I bring infection to city and town
And every village in our land - for he spreads quickly -
What then, shall we have gained?
Why then, I say, sooner than that, why, let him live, and me
Lie down!
For it is fitter that a beast be monstrous than that I should be."
