

deepest imperatives of Western civilization, which we like to think is distinguished from other human cultures by its profound sense of social and moral obligation.

The question we are driven more and more to ask ourselves is whether, in our two-car homes, with our cradle-to-the-grave security, our frenzied efforts to amuse and excite ourselves - our "North American a-go-go" - whether we are betraying the sources of our real strength for the future in favour of immediate material satisfactions which themselves soon fail to satisfy us.

We are confronted today by tests more crucial than any that challenged our forefathers. Have we the moral fibre and a sufficient sense of social responsibility to meet them?

The answer will certainly be no, if we are unable to resist the pressures - which have succeeded over more than half the world - that would make man a digit in a table of government statistics.

The history of man is his slow growth from a place in a tribal group, huddling together for protection and survival, to membership in a society of self-reliant individuals, each with a soul and an existence of his own.

Are we reversing - or at least slowing down - this evolution in order to escape from the duties and responsibilities that flow from it as life becomes more complex and challenging. Are we coming to feel that government is not something maintained by the citizen to protect and promote his dignity and worth, but merely something to increase his pension, give him "bread and circuses" and free him from his own civic responsibilities?

If that happens, the Family of Man will become nationally a flabby affair and, internationally, a cockpit of confusion and division.

The remedy? It is not in our stars but in ourselves, in the individual's heart and mind and the impact he can make on the mass.

I conclude with a story which tells what I mean:

A Canadian diplomat once reached a boundary barrier between two Asian countries in a tense and sensitive area. There was a chain across the road and, on the other side of it, a sentry who carried a rifle and, around his waist, several cartridge belts. He looked belligerent and formidable.

The Canadian was not too sure what would happen if, in spite of his diplomatic credentials, he crossed the frontier. So, standing firmly on his side of the chain, he held out his hand across it. The sentry was only a youngster and, in face of the smile and outstretched hand, his military bearing collapsed. He put his rifle on the ground, broke into a broad grin and invited his new friend to step over the chain; he did and shook the young sentry warmly by the hand.

When the time comes that this sentry would be commended by his superiors for a warm human gesture, instead of punished by them for dropping his rifle, the world will have become safe for the Family of Man.