

Like the god Janus, Kiwanians have the capacity to look two ways at once!

I note that your convention theme this year is "Dedicated Community Service". It would be superfluous for me to comment on the remarkable success that you have already had in your endeavours to help your respective communities. I know your President has reviewed your achievements in his speech yesterday and that you are discussing these matters in your workshop meetings.

Closer, however, to my own personal responsibility is the other Kiwanian outlook - the one in which you look beyond the borders of your immediate community into possibilities of service to your state or province - beyond that again to areas of service to your nation, and then to the whole prospect of service to the cause of international goodwill, with more particular attention being paid to relations between the United States and Canada. Goodwill is not a sterile commodity. If you try to lock it up in a vault it withers and dies. By its very nature goodwill must grow and expand. Goodwill must have an objective toward which it is directed. So it is that goodwill among Kiwanis of its very nature leads you to look ever outward. I noticed in the Kiwanis magazine of several months ago that you described this convention as "a forum wherein Kiwanis examines its relationship to the community, the nation and the world". I assure you that no statement of objective could more endear you to one in my position than such a simple and direct formula as that.

It is of the very essence of our democracy that individuals should group themselves together in a voluntary organization such as Kiwanis in order to accomplish as a group what could not be done as individuals. You seek no government grant, no special privilege. Your views are not dictated by government. Your programmes are not in any way supervised by government. This heritage is far too often taken for granted because we do not see at close range the alternative to it. The strength of any government can be gauged by the strength of voluntary organizations in the nation. Individual members may put forward proposals and, as everywhere in a democracy, each of us enjoys the right to be wrong. As a matter of fact, I am sure that all of you will agree with me that in seeking the truth there are usually three sides - yours, mine and the actual truth. Indeed, in many voluntary organizations, although probably not in any of your branches, one can find the five-H man: you know, the man of whom all others say: "Heck, how he hates himself." Yet, all these people, whether they are right or wrong, or whether you or I agree with them, are permitted to put forward their views, which can then be examined on their merits, and each of us then is at liberty to come to our own conclusions. Out of your consideration of what is most important to you and what as Kiwanians you should do, may I again say how pleased I am that you have chosen to examine your relationship to the community, the nation and the world.