

## A Widening Horizon

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## A WIDENING HORIZON

**D**OWN through the years the study of government has engrossed the attention of men. The problems of government have a habit of recurring. We are surprised to find that the ancients struggled with our problems and did not find the answer. Dictators are not new—wars of conquest, revolution, fill the pages of history.

An ideology becomes the goal of a people, something to die for, to sacrifice for. People grope their way upward in travail and hardship. Russia, China, India are examples. Their destiny is unknown to them or to us. It is idle to think that we can control the destinies of a billion people in flux. We may influence destinies by our example, we cannot direct, or control, or police them.

What should a government bring to a people? A consensus would probably be that the essential elements of an acceptable government must include these features:

Ability and willingness to fight for country in war in spite of an intense desire for peace.

Ability to produce munition of war.

Great productivity in times of peace.

A high standard of living for citizens.

Opportunity for advancement and improvement of conditions by work and education.

Administration of adequate standards of justice and maintenance of guaranteed right by independent courts.

Good municipal or local governments.

A solvent government.

Any system of government which grants or produces these elements may be an acceptable government regardless of its nature, be it an autocracy, a state socialism, a pure democracy or a republic of self-governing people.

If we apply the foregoing acid test to ourselves we find a highly creditable record in all elements except the extremely important last three. It is a singular thing that it is in those three the legal profession should make its greatest contribution. We have made a good start in the improvement of the administration of justice in recent years and the growing consciousness of our joint responsibility in this field of good government is producing results. But we cannot have good administration of justice in poor or corrupt systems of municipal government. We have brilliant sporadic instances of leadership and participation in local governments—Detroit, Essex County, N. J., Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Kansas City, New Orleans, New York. We have tolerated Long, Tammany, Hague, Kelly, Pendergast and many lesser lights.

We have not been deeply concerned with the science of good government. We have permitted our students in high schools and colleges to complete their courses without the study of history, government or constitution and then wondered why we did not produce more active citizens. We have unctuously boasted that we do not participate in politics. We have acted as though we were contaminated by politics, forgetting that government is politics. We must participate actively in government—good government—if we are to win in the fight for improved judicial administration.

Our lives are now governed by war, we are disciplined and tested, we are absorbed by actual participation in the struggle of the human race for freedom, we fight for our lives. But we can think this tremendous problem through, we can widen our horizon of thought in preparation for a widened horizon of action. We can be better citizens, we can influence others to be better citizens. It has been said that our profession must have an intellectual awakening. It must have an awakening in government and its responsibility for it.

Our splendid sons are the messengers of democracy through the world, carrying to harassed and struggling people everywhere an opportunity for freedom. As a result of their work, governments will be instituted among men. Shall it be state socialism or democracy? Shall there be freedom of thought in the world?

American industry and labor are winning the fight for production. Our soldiers will win in war with that production. What are we winning? Good government in all its aspects must be our goal. We must make democracy work if we want others to adopt it. We must widen our horizon.

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