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The Foe Within - -

There is nothing we would like better than to print here a calm, deliberative, restrained and scholarly argument against the passage of the Findlay resolution now before the legislature of the sovereign state of Iowa. But it is the particular advantage of an amendment like that to fill its opposers with such incredulity, indignation, and disgust as to render their arguments almost inarticulate. To be brief it makes us sick.

But still there are many facts with which to bombard such a suggestion. You see, Mr. Findlay, we happen to know whereof you speak. We've been living for a year with what you call "a serious problem." We have Japanese-American students on Grinnell campus. It is only such actions as yours which call to memory the hyphenation. To us they have been, are, and shall continue to be, kids we go to school with.

Has there been trouble? Not since they came. Please note that: not since they came. Before they arrived there was discussion, argumnt, and a terrific excitement because here was a real chance to test those high-sounding principles of democracy to which we have been rendering detached lip-service since the Civil War.

There were some people who thought it wouldn't work. With pleasure, we delegate them to your camp. Those of us who did not graduate last spring, who remained here and actually met the "problem" have found it doesn't exist. The students in question have proved themselves, they have improved us.

The Japanese students in Grinnell have become an integral, valuable, enjoyabl part of our student body. Semester grades came out a month ago, Mr. Findlay. Every one of our Japanese students was on the president's list of honor students. They live in our dorms, and we like them. They are part of our social life, and we don't want to lose them. Since theoretical analysis of the situation has sent you off on such flights of thought, we suggest you spend a week-end on Grinnell campus to get back to realities.

That is our personal stake in the defeat of your amendment: the fact that it would take from us some people whom we know, admire, enjoy and do not want to lose.

The "impersonal" stake—if anything so vital to our nation can be called impersonal —is a larger one. You are stirring up rather a bitter brew, Mr. Findlay. We suggest you take an experimental sip now to avoid being drunk on it later.

Suppose your amendment passes. Then these students will be yanked out of colleges like Grinnell and sent back hastily to those centers which have already proved badly organized, poorly housed centers of waste. There isn't much for a collge student to do in a relocation center. Physical labor, yes; but that leaves a remarkably blank mind. The students we know aren't going to go into an intellectual vacuum. They are going to think, hard. And we think their thought will gradually impress upon them that they have been so treated and segregated because of certain racial and physical charactristics they in no way control. You see, Mr. Findlay, they shall become conscious of their race. In Grinnell we have not been smitten by any differences We've forgotten about them. They have not made us conscious of race. But if we remove them from colleges like Grinnell, we shall make them conscious of race. That's a dangerous firecracker. If we win this war we are naturally going to try to return as quickly as possible to "normalcy." Pre-war normalcy meant a definite—but not a distinct—place in our life for all Americans, and please skip the hyphens. Just how, Mr. Findlay, do you propose to regain the confidence, the respect, and above all the efforts of these people in peace time if you have so obviously marked them as a thing apart in war? They are valuable to us as every person in this nation is valuable. We need their intelligence, their skill, their hope for America. Making them aware of a false, but powerful spirit of "difference" is a poor way to insure their help in post-war America. If you won't think of America at war in 1943, Mr. Findlay, think of it at peace in 1963!

In our opinion there is no more serious threat to American democracy than that amendment pending today in Des Moines. Worse than the threat of segregating certain people is the threat of elevating othrs, inherent in your amendment. If a state legislature begins to judge who shall not be allowed participation in community life, we think there is an intrinsic danger of the selection of those who can participate, and more important, who can lead.

In America, we talk of selection by talent. Yet we have failed in many ways to live up to the principle of equality. This country is shamefully full of racial, religious, and economic intolerance. War usually has a nice way of eliminating some of that feeling. Witness England today. If America fails to erase the intolerance she has, that is a bad thing. But if she adds to her intolerance at the time we are supposedly fighting to end a racial myth—that, Mr. Findlay is pure dragon seed.

We are sure that if you chose to answer this argument, you would harp upon the thread-bare phrase of "military expediency." Such pharses as "fifth column," "Pearl Harbor," "treachery" and "prevention" are sure to figure largely in the conversation of such a man as you. So before you start, let us explode that argument now. If you fear fifth columns, Mr. Findlay, we would like to point out that of all persons with whose original nations we may now be at war, the Japanese are more recognizable than any other. They bear a mark of color and characteristic which can be distinguished. They call attention to their activities by that very quality. If you worry about fifth columns, remember that to be effective they must be unsuspected. Remember that they must fit without special notice into the pattern and stream of everyday life. A Japanese in Iowa does not. Many an American—without benefit of hyphen—does. If you want to perform a service to your nation think of a way to detect the true strangers within our gates—persons rendered different from us, not by color, but by spirit.

We didn't like to say those things in the above paragraph about color and race. We at Grinnell have largely forgotten about them. But you forced us to say them. Already you have brought race consciousness into the field of necessary attention. We have been reminded. We don't like it. We think such reminding renders you a man who endangers this nation, this people, this ideal we are seeking, and which we call America.

MASS MEETING

A mass meeting for all women students will be held Monday morning, March 29, in Herrick chapel. Social budget, quadrangle treasury, and league re-

Freshmen Sponsor Meal

The St. Patrick's day dinner, a project of the social budget, was handled by the freshman commission with Geraldine Warren, Mears freshman, as chairman. Green crepe paper and candy decorated the tables.

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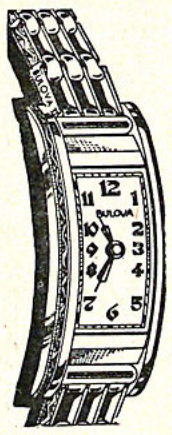

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