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Keeping Free in Prison: In the Presence of My Enemies

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from more than passing mention, and does not try to include this area in his polarized analysis.

Further, in discussing international tensions between white and colored peoples, an importance is assigned to a feeling of common identity among all colored peoples which overlooks the actual strong antagonisms which exist within both white and colored national and ethnic groups. The relationships between Japan and some of her neighbors, the national feelings against the overseas Chinese, the bitter struggle between Indians and Pakistanis are cases in point. And the historic prejudices of Central Europe show that not all white prejudices and feelings of superiority are directed against colored peoples.

Still, the author has ably undertaken a serious discussion of a most serious and far-reaching subject. The reader will certainly profit by reading the entire essay, and adding the author's insight to one's judgment of international relations.

GLEN H. FISHER

KEEPING FREE IN PRISON

IN THE PRESENCE OF MY ENEMIES. By John W. Clifford, S.J.
New York: W. W. Norton, 1963. 239 pp.

This book could be entitled, "How to Block a Brainwash." Fortunately, there is little likelihood that Filipinos will be forced to undergo brainwashing of the Red Chinese variety in its most intense, prison form. Unfortunately, the danger does exist in Laos, north Vietnam, and elsewhere. For men at all liable to face the ordeal, this book should rate as *must* reading, so that they may learn what lies ahead of them and how to combat it. In this sense, the book is a sort of anti-missile missile; the far-sighted will appreciate its worth.

The author does well to point out that, despite its name, brainwashing consists not so much in draining *the mind* of its ideas and convictions in order to refill it with a new set. It is a rape of *the will*, by the deliberate inducing of a psychosis which leaves the volitional faculty utterly flaccid and servile. Time, environment, and techniques acquired from experimentation on millions of human guinea pigs are marshaled to heighten the debilitating emotions of guilt, despair, fear, loneliness and uncertainty. The prisoner loses his freedom, because his will itself is systematically rendered sick.

The book contains many paragraphs which a reflecting reader (or prospective lecturer) will want to underscore. He will say to himself:

"This is an insight; here is a synthesis that I have been searching for. This is a strong statement of significant truth." Many of these passages transcend the practical situation under direct discussion.

Father Clifford was subjected to the full force of the brainwashing process in Shanghai prisons from 1953 to 1956. In a readable and cheerful way he sets forth his principles and techniques for resisting the baneful process. He draws these up thoughtfully, with a transparently sincere desire to help others, and he supports his case with experimental evidence acquired not in laboratory tests but in living combat where religious and human values of supreme worth to him were at stake.

Many men, to some degree lacking the toughness of Fr. Clifford's mental and moral discipline, will be unable to apply his counter-brainwash program in all its details. But he gives several indispensable rules which no one, hoping for success in this kind of trial, can ignore. These are summarized in the book's final chapter, *Total Victory is possible*.

The effectiveness of brainwashing depends ultimately on the reactions of the individual prisoner himself, on the creation of desired responses within him. These, essentially, he *can* control.

He must avoid any antecedent notion that the system is unbeatable; it is not a tactic of unflinching efficiency or mystique. Resolute opposition to every Communist maneuver can thwart it.

One must not believe that cooperation in prison will help him. He does not really buy safety or better conditions by concessions, but often invites contempt, worse treatment, and further pressure for more collaboration. The captive should rather keep in mind, not what he might gain, but how much he will surely lose by yielding. There is no room for bargaining; an initial mistake is extremely hard to correct.

Regarding present prison pressures, a man must know that he has reasons for resisting them; war with Communism does not end with capture. Human dignity and freedom are worth any sacrifice; Communism does destroy human values; a man with nothing in which to believe will be miserably poor. The stakes include the prisoner's mental well-being in prison; weakness leads to years of a guilt-sense and self-hatred after release. Love of country and of freedom, love of God and neighbor demand firm resistance and counter-attack.

[Regarding the past], hold your mind implacably to its comforting and strengthening experience, to the sunny and tender episodes of the past which you can recall. A sense of humor is indispensable.

Deliberately, constantly strengthen every human attribute which Communist treatment seeks to weaken. Drive the brain to new imagery; keep it constantly in motion, even to planning counter-strategy. Keep it alert to exploit flaws in Communist procedure and treatment, or inconsistencies of argument by interrogators.

There can be no compromise on the basic issues of unjust detention, and the purposes for which the authorities intend to use the prisoner. He must keep his eye on these points and never lose sight of them.

I found that the best defense against entrapment was complete silence, and I am convinced this is best for the average prisoner. By this I mean avoidance of debate or any consequential conversation, particularly of an informative nature.

[To take a strong stand against gregariousness] I deliberately cut myself off from any group influence as an essential measure of self-preservation. I was obliged constantly to regard my cellmates and authorities alike as enemies, and to force myself consciously to maintain this attitude, however pleasant they attempted to be on occasion.

On this last point, it seems to this reviewer that Father Clifford through the three years sustained a suspicion more intense and universal than is possible to most men. Not seldom it seems to have been un-

founded and perhaps unjust. Likewise, he occasionally resorted to the cry of "religious persecution" in a manner not always consonant with the gravity of so sacred a theme. But he was acting under enormous strain, and emerged from it with an integrity and unbroken spirit deserving the utmost admiration.

"How to Block a Brainwash" does not come in "twelve easy lessons." The challenge admits of no easy approach. But anyone who would meet it with success will derive wisdom and inspiration if he reads and re-reads, and then reads again, the book under review.

CHARLES J. MCCARTHY

A LITERARY EVENT

THE AUTHENTIC VOICE OF POETRY. By Ricaredo Demetillo. Diliman, Q.C.: University of the Philippines, Office of Research Coordination (U.P. Development Project CP-6230-A), 1962, ix, 337 pp.

A reassuring voice amid the growing waywardness of our criticism reaches us in Professor Demetillo's first book of critical essays, *The Authentic Voice of Poetry*. The author is a disciple of such eminent New Critics as Richard Blackmur, Allen Tate, and Kenneth Burke, and his criticism is in the tradition of his mentors whose common stress is on poetry *qua* poetry. No arid formalist, in spite of his treatment of poems as art objects rather than biographical or historical documents, Professor Demetillo re-asserts the value of the disinterested study of literature.

The title essay analyzes the works of five poets represented in Leonard Casper's 1955 anthology, *Six Filipino Poets*, and demonstrates that poetry is a literary mode which involves "rich, original, condensed and memorably suggestive or allusive language" often infused with ironic wit. Professor Demetillo praises Carlos Angeles' sensitive handling of language and use of objective correlatives, and Dominador Ilio's awareness of "insights [that] may be sifted through the colloquial." He chastises Amador Daguio for the clichés and the sentimentality of his love poetry and Oscar de Zuñiga for the "*fin-de-siècle* melancholy which prevents him from being more affirmative or more widely aware of the social setting of his predicament." Edith Tiempo is commended for her power of psychological penetration although her style is found lacking in verve and excitement.