

# A Word With You

**I** WONDER if it would ever be possible to establish the Rule of Reason in human affairs. Reason is the best instrument man has for solving problems, so why shouldn't it be used at all times? Instead, it is used so seldom that you'd think man had found something better. But he hasn't!

Reason evidently requires a qualitative effort that most people shun most of the time. It shouldn't seem like too difficult a task to quietly pursue a logically connected series of thoughts. But rather than undergo this mild business, people will suffer and whine, commit acts of violence, and go on wasting their substance and their lives.

Suppose we could set things up in such a way that the still, small voice of reason would not be drowned out, as it is in the world today. Every utterance, every proposal, every deed would have to pass the test of reasonableness. What a difference that would make!

But first there are numerous pitfalls that would have to be overcome.

First, we would have to abolish the Rule of Rant, wherein he is the winner who interrupts the most and raves the loudest and longest. According to the Rule of Reason, every sentence uttered would be analyzed and the speaker (or rant-er) would be held accountable.

Another pitfall to overcome is the great bogey of Face Saving. More counterfeit reasoning is done to serve this false idol than perhaps for any other motive. The way to overcome this is to let it be known that reason is impersonal, that a person's dignity and honor are not at stake when we are probing, that all questions are permissible but none are accusations.

Still another booby-trap is The Group. Belonging to a clique, cult or caste frequently has a damaging effect on the quest for reasonableness. The pack must run together, and that stifles independent thinking. This is a tough problem, for no one likes to risk the displeasure of his "gang." The remedy (after all, we are imagining the ideal setup) is to only form associations that can hold together in the face of reason, and to grant everyone the independence to pursue reason to its utmost limits. The only penalty should be that everyone must be subjected to the reasonable discussion of others.

You may contend that I am asking for the impossible. But if it is possible for me to conceive it, then it is possible. If you don't like my reasoning, I'd be glad to discuss it with you—under the conditions outlined above!

—Robert Clancy

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The Henry George News, published monthly by the Henry George School of Social Science, 50 E. 69th Street, New York 21, N.Y., supports the following principle:

The community, by its presence and activity, gives rental value to land, therefore the rent of land belongs to the community and not to the landowners. Labor and capital, by their combined efforts, produce the goods of the community—known as wealth. This wealth belongs to the producers. Justice requires that the government, representing the community, collect the rent of land for community purposes and abolish the taxation of wealth.

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