

The Bogy Word Will Get You

JACK HAYES

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Writing in the British publication, "Left," Major Lyall Wilkes, M.P., states that political labels mean nothing. Labels have about the same meaning in the United States. Every politician in this country claims he believes in democracy. And every politician does, for everyone in the United States does believe in democracy. And politicians being part of the people must believe in democracy. If democracy had the same meaning to everyone our state of affairs would be rosy indeed. But conceptions of democracy, not unlike plant life, vary; some ideas of democracy are beautiful and useful, and others ugly and poisonous. A man can quite honestly state that he believes in democracy and simultaneously spread the doctrines of hatred of Negroes, anti-semitism, and anti-catholicism. He can believe in democracy and be against collective bargaining rights for labor, hire scabs to break strikes, and oppose any plan to clear slums in order to build modern homes. Such a man believes in democracy and he calls himself a Democrat, Republican, or Christian.

Other men believing the very antithesis of such ideas claim they too believe in democracy, and they do. Everyone believes in democracy. And these other men also call themselves a Democrat, Republican, or Christian. Everyone must believe in democracy; it is a beautiful word like ice cream and cake. But unlike ice cream and cake many sins have been committed in the name of democracy. That is because when anyone says that he believes in

democracy we assume that he is talking about the same democracy that we believe in and, we do not bother to learn otherwise.

Democracy has not always been a beautiful word. Aristotle hated it. American revolutionists did not use the word. Lincoln did not use the word. Maybe they meant what I mean, but they did not use democracy to describe it. Woodrow Wilson made democracy a political euphemism during World War I with his slogan to make the world safe for democracy. Today democracy is our god and object of worship. Hate everybody, but believe in democracy. Suppress free speech, but believe in democracy. If you do not believe in democracy, you may get mobbed.

I believe in democracy.

I believe in equal rights for everyone and that includes Negroes. I believe in job opportunities for everyone, and I do not exclude Negroes or anyone else. I believe in collective bargaining rights for labor. I believe free speech includes the right to speak against me or my ideas. I believe in stating what I mean. If I am against the government paying to have wheat plowed under when men are hungry, I do not say I am against government bureaucracy. I say I am against the government paying to have wheat plowed under when men are hungry.

People who disagree with me say I am a Communist or a Fascist or an Eskimo, whichever is the worst word they know. But I am not afraid of their big bad words. People who agree with me say I am a

Christian or a Socialist or an Eskimo, whichever is the best word they know. But I am not flattered by their word, because I know if they ever disagree with me I will change into a bad word.

I am not in favor of Communism, Facism, Individualism, Paternalism, Totempoleism, or Free Enterprise. Like democracy such words have a different

meaning to every individual. Nor am I against those words. How can I be? They have no rational meaning that everyone accepts. They are only words that people hate or love. They describe emotions of fear or hope. I want to know those actions a word of hate or fear describes and those actions which would inspire a word of hope.

London Tower

CHARLES J. HORNBAACH

I could hardly say that I was disillusioned as at last we stood outside and viewed for the first time the famous Tower of London, for I really didn't know exactly what to expect. From stories I had heard I knew that the Tower couldn't be just that—a tower; but what else? The name is misleading.

We had hailed the cabby back in Trafalgar Square in the heart of the city and had had indeed a great deal of sport in issuing lavish directions into the large mouth-piece and hose-like contraption which served the rear occupants of the cab as a device for communicating with the driver seated up forward in that incongruous position on the right side. Whether by chance or circumstance the cabby seemed quite congenial about the whole situation and assumed rather an air of mild gaiety, (which blended with our own spirit of frolicsomeness) in contrast to many another somewhat more austere composure we had met with in similar circumstances. He drove us in the general direction downstream alongside the Thames, pointing out as he went objects and places which he thought might be of interest; for he now realized that his was no longer merely the

role of "hackey," but also that of guide for the transient "tourists." Occasionally we could see a smile twist the corners of his mouth in gratification for the reward of our laughter produced by the hand-operated "squawk" horn which seemed to us ancient, but typical.

Soon a bridge loomed ahead to our right, stretching across the river, and we were told that this was indeed London Bridge of childhood rhyme and melody, standing now very firm and upright in spite of the words of the song giving opinion to the contrary. We turned right, crossed to the other side and continued on downstream until we arrived at the impressive and picturesque sight of the great Tower Bridge. The sight turned my memory back many years to a page in a history, or a literature book, where, though the print was blurred, the picture was almost as distinct as the one now before me.

Here we turned left, recrossing the river, and now immediately on our left again, standing grimly, gray and austere, was the ancient sentinel of the historic city—The Tower of London.

In describing the Tower of London as it stood upon its completion and as it