

THE
MEREDITH



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COLLEGE

APATHY A Disease

Although there are many illnesses that may cripple and impair the physical body, perhaps none does more damage than the disease that attacks the attitude: apathy. Its crippling effects are not displayed in outward deformity of the individual, but in the inner tendencies toward indifferent behavior, creating a general nonchalance about life in general.

Apathy carries several distinct symptoms. One of the most obvious is neglect of detail. Apathetic persons avoid any sort of activity that requires careful attention to specific instructions or facts. They take on a "slack" posture with regard to such trivialities as dorm cards and telephone messages, finding them too petty for consideration. Details require concentration and a person suffering from apathy finds ignoring them the easier route.

Another tell-tale sign of apathy is the tendency toward non-involvement. When faced with an invitation to join an organization, the apathetic person simply has no relish for group fellowship and service. Things generally found exciting or interesting cannot motivate or stimulate someone who has succumbed to the disease. Rather than take an active stance on a committee, the apathetic person says "Who cares! Let them participate. What they're doing doesn't concern me anyway." Voting and other means of voicing opinion are conscientiously avoided. Consequently, the apathetic person begins to stagnate, the non-activity of her lifestyle having become the controlling factor.

Furthermore, lack of consideration for others is a prime characteristic of the disease. The apathetic person does not intentionally abuse or harm others in a premeditated manner. She simply lacks feeling as expressed in the word itself - "a-pathos" equals "without feeling." The need for a roommate for quiet study time may often go unnoticed. Also, goods taken from rooms or hall refrigerators are most likely the result of lack of consideration for personal property rather than common theivery. This indifference for the rights of others is perhaps the greatest detriment of the disease.

Nearly everyone suffers from apathy in some form. Yet the danger arises when it goes unchallenged. Only when personal awareness, involvement, and consideration become part of the attitude can the illness of apathy be remedied.

MKP

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Deadline: October 31

CONTEST RULES AND RESTRICTIONS:

- Any student is eligible to submit his verse.
- All entries must be original and unpublished.
- All entries must be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the page only. Each poem must be on a separate sheet and must bear, in the upper left-hand corner, the NAME and ADDRESS of the student as well as the COLLEGE attended. Put name and address on envelope also!
- There are no restrictions on form or theme. Length of poems up to fourteen lines. Each poem must have a separate title. (Avoid "Untitled"! Small black and white illustrations welcome.)
- The judges' decision will be final. No info by phone!
- Entrants should keep a copy of all entries as they cannot be returned. Prize winners and all authors awarded free publication will be notified immediately after deadline. I.P. will retain first publication rights for accepted poems. Foreign language poems welcome.
- There is an initial one dollar registration fee for the first entry and a fee of fifty cents for each additional poem. It is requested to submit no more than ten poems per entrant.
- All entries must be postmarked not later than the above deadline and fees be paid, cash, check or money order, to:

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Communist countries contract a "Capitalist Disease"

by Regine Nickel

For years now Communist propagandists have been proclaiming inflation, unemployment and all the other economic problems that develop along with it, the symptom enabling them to diagnose what they consider the innate flaw of capitalism. That way Western capitalism lent itself beautifully to the propagation of the Communist system. By now it has become painfully evident that this was only a game with terminology. The energy crisis has fully hit the Eastern bloc. According to some pessimists - or are they optimists? - the unity of the bloc may be threatened.

The Soviet Union, which has been providing the bloc countries with natural gas and oil, has not been able or willing to keep up with the demand. Its allies had been asking for a six percent increase this year, only a four percent increase was granted. It is being argued that the CCCP was unable to increase production of oil sufficiently. Another argument is that the country was forced to export large amounts of oil to the West in order to obtain enough hard Western currency to buy on the World market, its own allies being unable to provide

it because of the double money standard.

Whatever the reason, the let-down allies had to get the lacking oil. They turned to the Arab nations. The great disadvantage was the latter's request of payment in Western currency, something which is lacked greatly in the East. This put an unprecedented strain on the economy.

The results of this were, and are, devastating. The prices of gasoline were raised drastically; Hungary by 34 percent, Czechoslovakia by 50 percent, and Rumania, itself oil-producing, has raised it twice since last June, in all by over 50 percent. Also, governmental cars are no longer permitted to be used on the weekends.

Not only oil prices were raised, even the most basic consumer goods became more expensive. Hungary raised the price of all consumer goods by nine percent, the wages by only five percent - the difference was pocketed by the government. Shoes, bread, vegetables, and meat prices were raised from 27 to 45 percent. It is evident that the hardship of the "non-existing" Communist inflation has to be borne by the masses, a very unsocialist way to

handle things in a socialist society.

Rumania used another way to deal with the situation. Not burdening its people, but its socialist brothers-in-arms The Rumanian government announced last July that from now on visiting members of other bloc nations would have to pay for their gasoline in Western currency. As a result thousands of tourists were left stranded in Rumania. This action infuriated the other governments, provoking them to protests and threats of retaliation.

Due to the previous ways of calling inflation a capitalist disease the communist governments can't blame inflation for the economic hardship. In communist thinking a personalized scapegoat has to be found, and a Soviet journal for economic affairs did just that. According to the journal the reason for the dilemma is to be found in the "desorganization, irresponsibility, and inherited laziness" of the managers and workers. That closes the circle of propaganda forced on the people. The next question is, inherited from whom? The logical answer would be, from the capitalist fathers!

The Meadowline Tales

by Ann Stringfield

"BEOWULF!" I heard in the distance, vaguely feeling like I was in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Tentatively, I entered 218 F.

"BEOWULF!"

"Nan! What are you doing?"

"My circuits are overloaded, so I'm releasing nervous tension."

"By making noise?"

"I beg your pardon. We are cultured people around here. We do not simply make noise; we howl in literary terms."

"So sorry. I didn't realize."

"You are forgiven. By the way, would you care to come to our album hour tonight at 10:00?"

"What's playing?"

"Burl Ives sings 14th century dirges."

"Is that the feature?"

"Sure is. The main attraction, of course, we will have a cartoon."

"Which is?"

"Woody Woodpecker goes to Stonehenge."

Jack Anderson

Headlines and Footnotes

Several members of the Carter Cabinet are upset over a Justice Department order that forbids their bodyguards from carrying guns ... The Arms Control and Disarmament Agency published a map depicting the effects of a nuclear blast on any city in the country, and it's free for the asking. Write to the agency at 21st St. and Virginia Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20451.

"Sounds very entertaining, but I have a conflict."

"Your priorities are not in the right place because nothing, but nothing, comes before literature, with the possible exception of sleep."

"Blasphemy!" her roommate yelled from across the room.

Nan calmly turned to me and said, "I didn't say that, did I?"

"What's this book?"

"I picked that up in the library by mistake; however, it looks considerably more interesting than the English reserve books."

"The New Setting Your Table!"

"Yes. It's quite enlightening. I'm trying to find a copy of *The Old Setting Your Table*. My real ambition, however, is to find the

book which preceded *Entertaining Without A Maid*."

"Speaking of entertainment, where is ole Khaki pants?"

"On safari in Africa."

"How do you feel about that?"

"I prefer hunting in the wilds of Belk Dining Hall."

"What do you hunt there?"

"Food with flavor. Yesterday we bagged some jello."

"Jello?"

"Well, it's hard to ruin Jello."

"I thought you said Mr. Packer was working out well?"

Well, it's nothing that holding him hostage for a few days won't cure."

"Where will you keep him?"

"In cognito."

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