TIME
THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

EXPLORING THE SOUL
A Challenge to Freud

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$6.00 A YEAR
evidence supports the official judgment in Washington and Taiphei. This judgment of the Formosa crisis has been reached, very evidently, by calculating what we would do if we were the Chinese Communists ruling in Peking. But it is always well to remember that we are not they. Those who hold this conviction somehow manage to overlook both Red China's warlike preparations and warlike declarations. The forces for an attack are in place. Meanwhile, the Peking government has been promising its people to take Formosa this year at the top of its voice. The Peking leaders have also been assuring leaders of neutral nations, like Burma and India, that they mean every word they say about taking Formosa.

It is really hard to see why the brilliant Chou En-lai should thus engage Peking's prestige to the very hilt if the threat to Formosa is a mere vainglorious maneuver, intended to extract some other concession from the West. In fact, if Washington and Taiphei are right about the real Communist intentions, you have to conclude that Chou En-lai is a mere boastful muddler. Such is the conflict of evidence. It is an even bet either way for this year. But a Communist grab for Formosa is a virtual certainty next year or the year after that if we do not strengthen our shockingly weakened defenses on this side of the Pacific and if we fail to find some better Asian policy than piecemeal retreat.

**AIRLINES NEED A LESSON IN TRAVELER RELATIONS**

**BERNARD DEVOTO in HARPER'S:**

I am a veteran and expert traveler, and I am getting fed to the teeth. You learn not to deal with representatives of airlines in small towns. They were chosen for their looks and have taken courses in charm, but they misinform you about routes and connections, which may throw your whole trip off or lengthen it 50 per cent, and the reservations they make may not stick.

The triumph of considerate service, however, is the asininity called "reconfirmation" at the point of departure, again at your first destination, and a third time some hours before you are due to take off again. But you can never be sure. Last year I was twice thrown off planes on which the airlines had contracted to fly me because the gate had no record of my reconfirmation, though I did, American bummed me in particularly annoying circumstances, giving me the bum's rush at LaGuardia, and so making me a day late for an important meeting, while it sent my bags on to Knoxville and left me to spend a night in New York without pajamas. My reconfirmation was acknowledged in grease pencil on my ticket-envelope but no était record. Who, sir, and would I please step over with the stand-bys. At Knoxville the next day I reconfirmed to Washington when I landed and two days later the boys pulled the same gag on me. This time I blew up and bad temper got me on the plane. Blowing up, by everyone, on every occasion, must be the temper of this one. Business management's first solution to every problem, frequently its only one, is to increase the budget for advertising and public relations. The principle is that if you keep on saying your service is magnificent, the sucker will believe you against the testimony of experience. The millions of dollars spent on the traveler's credulity would be better spent getting him where he wants to go with reasonable dispatch.

**HIGH TARIFF MEN USING SCARE TALK**

**BALTIMORE EVENING SUN:**

**TALK about selling America short!** The prize exhibit on this score is the testimony of some of those who are opposing renewal of the Trade Agreement Act at the hearings before the Ways and Means Committee. To listen to these gentlemen, this country is just about washed up. Foreign competition has our boasted industry on the ropes, and the coup de grace will be administered if Congress extends the act under which we negotiate tariff bargains with other nations. This sort of defeatism has been heard from other groups opposing the bill. To judge by such talk, this country is not the greatest industrial power in the world, but an inefficient producer struggling to maintain itself against the ferocious competition of other countries which are just waiting to topple us over. To judge by such talk, the high standard of living in the United States can be maintained only by a policy of economic isolation. Not even in the days when some New Dealers were saying that the American economy had ceased to expand has there been such pessimistic talk.

Of course, this is largely for effect. The trade-agreed program has been conducted with great regard for the needs of American industry. Negotiations are begun only after those affected have been consulted. And concessions are made on a modest scale. The idea that the Eisenhower Administration, or any administration, is going to do something to "liquidate" an industry is just preposterous. It is one of the battle cries raised to scare those who may be wavering in their support of an essentially sound policy. Those who sell this country short even in this rhetorical manner should not be taken too seriously.