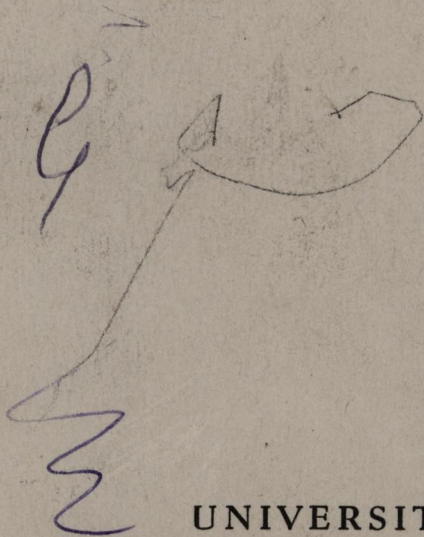


SIGHT AND INSIGHT



UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
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SIGHT AND INSIGHT



HENRY R. LUCE
Editor-in-Chief
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INTRODUCTION

DR. J. F. W. PEARSON
President, University of Miami

I find myself on the horns of a pleasant dilemma. The program says that I am to introduce the keynote speaker. But it would be superfluous of me to try to introduce a man already well known to you as one of the great journalists of all time.

So, instead of introducing Henry R. Luce I should like to say a few words about this remarkable American.

He is the dedicated son of a dedicated father. His father, the late Dr. Henry Winters Luce, was a missionary to the Chinese. Born in China, Harry Luce, while still a boy, found his own mission.

That mission which he found so early and ever since has carried out with a fierce zeal, is to seek out, find, and report fact.

I do not need to remind you of the hunger for fact which our whole world feels today. Nor do I need to tell you how vital is the function of the journalist in endeavoring to assuage that hunger. Without fact, freedom will starve to death and our world will perish.

In the search for fact, in the reporting and interpretation of fact, I see a noble similarity between the purpose of a university and the purpose of a journalist.

As Mr. Luce wrote to me four years ago, and as he often has been quoted as saying: Journalism and education have a staunch alliance. Therefore, on behalf of the University of Miami and the world community of scholars to which we belong, I bid Henry R. Luce warm welcome, as a fellow educator and a fellow fighter for freedom of the mind.

"This is an exciting age. Good therefore for journalists. Let us take joy in it—and communicate our joy. This joy, this religion of the journalist, is not lessened or gloomed, it is deepened and made more sure, by remembering always that ours is a very special responsibility to truth in the urgent search for wisdom in our time."



SIGHT AND INSIGHT

by

HENRY R. LUCE

IN JANUARY, during the days of the Inaugural at Washington, D. C., Poet Robert Frost attended a small dinner party. He had a good time. And as he was leaving he said something which has stuck in my mind. He said, "A good evening with friends is, like the definition of a poem, something which begins in delight and ends in wisdom."

We who are devoted to pictures, to photographs — would we not wish the same definition to apply to our work? For delight, we may sometimes have to read "shock" — the shock of horror or tragedy. But this too has the power to "stab the spirit broad awake." And whether a picture begins with pleasure or with shock, we would wish that it should always end in wisdom.

The wisdom that a good picture conveys is so profound or so elusive that it cannot be put into words. And that's just what pictures are for — to say things to us that words can't — or hardly can. Unless they are a poem. And that's why photojournalism is so hard to talk about. But let's try.

A few weeks ago there was that picture of nurses with babies in prams outside of 10 Downing Street, London. That was a picture that surely demanded to be looked at. It spoke some deep wisdom about England. Just what? If I were to say that the

nurses in their starched, very British uniforms having fun with their very British prams under the eye of the tolerant London bobby—if I were to say that that simple scene proved the continuity of English tradition—"There'll always be an England"—would I be saying too much? Well, a colleague of mine, John Osborne, has just written a book about England—one of the best books ever written on any country. As I read that book—describing British character and British institutions—I kept thinking of that picture of prams at 10 Downing Street.

Of course, you cannot derive all of Osborne's scholarly wisdom about Great Britain just from looking at that picture. A picture is at one and the same time self-evident *and* wholly dependent on what you bring to it. You and I know something about human life and about the world—but our knowledge is continually being scattered, misplaced, disorganized—and then we see a great picture and all at once our knowledge of a thousand facts is *reassembled*.

This parable of The Picture and The Book suggests what I mean by the title of these remarks: Sight and Insight.

Let me elaborate one point about Sight and Insight in the 20th Century. Many names have been given to our age: The Age of Anxiety, The Age of Electricity, The Atomic Age, The Age of Democracy, The Space Age and so on and so on. Without excluding any of these names, I would call it The Age of Knowledge and Awareness. Knowledge is not the same as wisdom. Knowledge comes and wisdom lingers. Nor is awareness a guarantee of truth. One can know all the sights and sounds and *smells* of Russia—and still be a Communist dupe . . .

There is more to be known today—far, far more than ever before. There is so much to know that the mind of man may just black out. Can men keep up with their own knowledge? Can they impose upon the explosion of knowledge some patterns of coherence and meaning? Ultimately, can men control what they have caused?

Such are the ultimate questions of our age. And photojournalism stands smack in the center of this creative maelstrom.

For all this vastitude of knowledge must be communicated, not only from one group of experts to another—but, in principle, to all men. This is journalism; this is education; and in all the many branches of journalism and education, none stands forth with livelier hope than photojournalism.

My father had a definition of education. He said: The aim of education is to make a man at home in God's universe. Whether or not it is God's universe, it is indeed a universe, and not a globe only, which today invites or challenges men to make themselves and their children at home.

And the beginning of the response to this challenge is to learn to know as much as we can, by all possible means. And the means today are incomparably greater and more effective than ever before. So that, whether it is the world of scientific fact or the touchy, nervous world of people of all races, we Americans already know incomparably more than was known by past generations.

But just how do people come to know things? Of all our senses, the sense of sight is the most potent. This is the physical fact that we photojournalists trade on. The question is how does sight become insight? And how is insight fed, and corrected, by actual sight? I venture now on another parable.

How did I first come to know about America? I was born in China. I never saw a foot of American soil until I was seven. And yet at seven I knew a good deal about America. America was to me a reality—not just a dream or a fairy story. How come? The answer may be obvious. But it might be useful to spell it out a little.

My eyes of early boyhood opened on a scene that was wholly Chinese. There were the raucous, chaotic streets of a little city—donkeys, mules, carts, wheelbarrows creaking, people cursing and laughing. There were miles of open food shops—Chinese food, of course—covered with swarms of flies. There were naked children, beggars, lepers, hustling housewives and now and again a mandarin in a sedan chair. There were sounds—cacophonies of Chinese sounds—which came naturally to my ears. Sight and sound. I was born into a wholly Chinese scene. Almost—not

quite. There was the small missionary home in a small compound of five or six other missionary homes and a couple of little schools. But even here most of the scene was Chinese. My parents spent most of their time, of course, with Chinese. As for the little American boy, he had an amah—a woman easily provoked to angry outbursts against her little foreign devil. There was also a dog—the only breed I knew, a mongrel cur.

So, how did I come to know about America? My father and mother told me about it—yes. They told concrete things—like about uncles and aunts and about the home-church back in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and about New York and the slums and the millions of immigrants and the great mansions on Fifth Avenue. But there was more than all this—without which all the details, however personal, would be mere disjointed facts or illusions. Consider what was the more. First of all, language. They spoke English to me—as well as Chinese. Perhaps not quite the language that Shakespeare spoke, but something close to it—let's just say American. My mother read to me—the Bible, of course, and also Mother Goose and nursery rhymes, and a child's history of America. My mother taught me songs—childish ones, but also the great folk songs and the songs of love of country. And my father spoke to me often as a companion—about many things, and much about America. Theodore Roosevelt was president. My father admired him; he became of course my hero—cowboy hat and all. And, to summarize it all, I cannot remember a time when I did not know about the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution.

Then, the great day came when we went home, a five-week trip through the China Seas and across the ocean. The excitement of steaming through the Golden Gate (no bridge) and debarking into Market Street, is beyond description. There and then began, for the seven-year-old boy, a year of the most intense visual excitement. As I look back it seems to me that for a year I did nothing except look. Hours through train windows across the prairies. Happily terrified in the Chicago Loop where horse-drawn vehicles slipped on the ice and into the jumble of telephone poles and wires and violent death seemed ever imminent.

But the eyes were busy too in the quiet homes of relatives and friends.

We did a lot of travelling. There were many aunts and uncles and kissing cousins to be seen, and missionary business to be done. And that's perhaps why I took to collecting railroad timetables. Also, they were free. The collection got bigger and bigger, and filled a suitcase — the Union Pacific, the Santa Fe, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul, the Pennsylvania, the Delaware and Lackawanna, the New York, New Haven & Hartford. Great names in those days—now fallen from fame. In those timetables were all the names of all the places in America — more names than Walt Whitman knew — and over these I pored, as if to fix in my mind the sum of all the parts that make this country. At year's end the timetables filled a whole big trunk — trunks were used in those spacious days. Then the visit home was over, the moment came when father took the boy firmly in hand and explained that the trunk-full of timetables simply could not be transported back to China.

But that's not the end of the story. In China the boy grew older and read grown-up books — and magazines — about all sorts of things and about politics up to the thundering Bull Moose election of 1912. Because the boy had seen America, had travelled its roads, had sojourned in its homes and looked into the faces of a million Americans — because he had seen America, everything he read and heard from his father took on meaning, became real and ever more real.

There is my parable! If you consult a technical philosopher, he will tell you it is an illustration of the problem of epistemology — the most difficult problem in philosophy unless it is the problem of art or aesthetics. The human psyche achieves knowledge and awareness not only by what the senses *perceive* but by what the mind *conceives*. Today we are so abundantly beguiled by *sense-perception*, that we neglect the *nurture* of concepts. Herein lies the greatest danger to Western civilization. In other ages, the fault may have been too much concept, too much unverified assumption, and not enough perception. Today, that is not the danger. Today, to put it crudely, our danger is sensationalism. The pun on journalism is intended. Our danger is sensationalism

—and its twin, triviality. Sensationalism and triviality threaten to overthrow reason and the capacity to reason.

The challenge then to the photojournalist is to know that he, like his readers, is a human being in the highest sense — that is to say, that he is endowed with reason and with the awesome knowledge of good and evil. This sense of reason and judgment he must carry into every picture he takes—to every story he prints. Every picture must *say* something; in fact, every picture *will* say something; it is the responsibility of the photojournalist to know what his picture says—and whether it speaks for good or for evil. . .

And so we photojournalists have a tremendous part to play in adding to knowledge, in enriching its meaning, in correcting it, in making it more sensitive. Start anywhere in the vast sweep of America, look close and deep, bring out the joy, the glory, the excitement or the shame of whatever you see. Let us try like Robert Frost to make each of a thousand stories of America begin with delight—or shock—and end in wisdom. So we shall make the knowledge of America the lifelong love of the men and women of this mighty generation now coming to their rendezvous with destiny. And if they love America enough, knowingly as a mother knows her child or a sailor his ship, then there is a sure answer to Abraham Lincoln's question "whether this nation or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated can long endure." It will endure, greater and more beloved than ever, and will lead all of mankind confidently into the future.

The future! That is my concluding theme. The future, not only of America but of mankind. My title must be expanded: Sight, Insight and Foresight.

We take off into the future from a fact of the present, a fact which has been with us for, say a century, and which grows bigger by the minute. That is the fact of the terrific speed-up in the rate of change in the conditions of human life. Change is a law of life. The oldest saying we have from Greek philosophy is *panta re* — all things flow and you never step into the same river twice.

While there has always been change, I think we can safely say that most of mankind has at most times and places been against it. The more primitive the tribe, the more it resists, and the more it is alarmed by change.

One great exception to this rule occurred in Europe about two centuries ago and came to its climax at the beginning of our century. Generally speaking, the Western world before World War I believed that change meant progress, that progress had become almost inevitable and that of course progress is good. We still have with us this concept of progress. We speak of building a better world. But in the last 50 years change has become ominous. The rate of change has continued to speed up. It will keep on speeding up. Not change, but the rate of change becomes frightening—and with good reason. The world, instead of becoming better, may just blow up. That is one extreme of our current awareness. This fantastic speed-up in the rate of change is having, we are told, consequences in the depths of the human psyche. Individual anxiety, angst, becomes more and more related to dark fears for the world itself. Most of us, to be sure, seem to go about our business in a fairly relaxed manner. We are even accused of complacency and apathy. That may be the most dangerous symptom of all. Consider this diagnosis: people *seem* complacent—and they *are* apathetic—because they just don't think anything can be done about it, the world, the future. *Che sera, sera.*

Well, what can be done about it? I am not primarily concerned today to offer my views on foreign policy — on Cuba, or Laos, or NATO, or the U. N. But I am here to say this: that what we need most of all today is a vision of the world of the future — a vision of the world as we want it to be, of the world we intend to bring into being.

I say this for its own sake and because it is what I most deeply believe, but I say it here more especially as the challenge to photojournalism. By definition, the future does not exist. Can you photograph what does not exist? Answer: No. Can you photograph a vision? In the sense of a fantasy? Yes. A phantom of delight? Yes — you have the tricks to do that.

But a vision — that vision without which a nation perishes — can you photograph that? I believe that photojournalism can be the greatest single instrument, not only for bringing a true vision of the future to the people, but for actually creating it.

And this is why and how. First of all, the vision we are talking about is not fashioned out of fantasies and phantoms. It is fashioned out of reality and the potentials perceived in reality. An obvious example is Science. We can photograph the wonders of Science *now*, which presage the wonders to be. This is perhaps the service which photojournalism is uniquely best able to do.

But now let's take a tougher example. For example, the United Nations — an institution of which I have never been enamored, an institution in my opinion flawed at birth by stupidity and cynicism. Nevertheless, here it is in our midst. And the U. N. does speak of one thing; it speaks of the growing American consciousness of the need for world order. And so, a true vision of the future includes a U. N. reformed by trial and error, or abolished and something better put in its place. And so, there is the utmost need that the people of America should *see* the U. N., should become closely familiar with it, able to discuss and judge among themselves what's good about it, what's bad.

And they have seen it. They saw Cabot Lodge on television and cheered when he was nominated for Vice President. And they saw Khrushchev's shoe-pounding which told them not only a lot about Khrushchev but also a lot about the primitive crudity of the U. N. Such behavior would obviously not be tolerated in any decent parliament of man.

We must tell the people, through photojournalism, more about the U. N. — we must show them all the delegations of all countries and colors, how they live in New York, how they live back home, and by this means, how they think, and what the nations of the earth are like.

This can be an endlessly fascinating story. But — and this "but" is my point — we must not tell the fascinating story just for fascination's sake. In telling it, in our pictures, in the way we

play them, and in our captions, we must keep our minds on the main point: what to do about the U. N. Something must be done. And if we don't do it, Blind Circumstance — or worse — will do it. And my point is furthermore this: that if we keep *our* minds on the main point, the minds of our readers will be drawn to do the same. So, don't worry about your readers; worry about yourself, about your own attention to what is important. Do your duty. The rest will follow.

Take as one other huge, world-wide example, the matter of material prosperity. A true vision of the world of the future is a prosperous world. No extrapolation from reality could possibly be clearer than that. We have got to get that fact more clearly into our heads and imaginations than it is now. Actually a great part of the world is already enjoying enormous prosperity. And much of the poverty of the world results not from brutal economic facts, but from the viciousness of various forms of politics. I do not say that the vision of world prosperity will solve tough technical economic problems; but it will inspire and speed their solution. Nor do I say that when all men are prosperous they will be happy. They won't. I do say that poverty is essentially an outdated problem and should be so shown and seen. We must continue foreign aid, we must also be much tougher in insisting that the nations of the world do more to put their own houses in order.

If, on the whole, it is good to be prosperous, then photojournalism, better than economic tracts, can bring home to us our great good fortune to be living in an age of prosperity. And hopefully we might give thanks. Photojournalism can also bring home to us the poverty that remains — and evoke the resolve to end it.

For fifteen years since World War II, America has been doing a big job not only of contending with day-to-day trouble in the world, but also in fashioning the elements of a true vision of a better world. It is true enough to say that in vision-making we have fallen short — we have talked too glibly about "making a better world" without thinking what we really mean. But let us not mock ourselves too much. The United States has done a lot.

We must build on what has already been done and we must plan new structures of world prosperity, new structures of world law, new guarantees of the rights of man everywhere under law.

Every year, nearly every day, brings forth new potentialities in physical prowess and in other realms of human endeavor, too. Let us be alert to all the changes and the rate of change. Let us be quick to exploit them for human good — and alert to their possible harm.

This is an exciting age. Good therefore for journalists. Let us take joy in it — and communicate our joy. This joy, this religion of the journalist, is not lessened or gloomed, it is deepened and made more sure, by remembering always that ours is a very special responsibility to truth in the urgent search for wisdom in our time.