

- The development of good human relations depends not on being "nice" to fellow workers but on one's ability to create a sense of common purpose.

THE LIMITS OF HUMAN RELATIONS

The more an executive focuses upward and outward, the better he usually fares in managing his own people. Executives do not have good human relations because they are nice guys; warm feelings and pleasant words can be all too often a false front for wretched human relations. What pulls people together in an organization is a common sense of purpose.

If I were asked to name the men who, in my own personal experience, had the best human relations, I would name three. General C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army in World War II; Alfred P. Sloan Jr., the head of General Motors from the early 1920's into the mid-Fifties; and one of Sloan's senior associates, Nicholas Dreystadt, the man who built Cadillac into a successful luxury car in the midst of depression (and who might well have been chief executive of General Motors some-

time in the 1950's but for his death soon after World War II). These men were as different as men can be: Marshall, the "professional," sparse, austere, dedicated, but with great, shy charm; Sloan, the "administrator," reserved, courteous, and very distant; and Dreystadt, warm, bubbling over, and, superficially, a typical German craftsman in the "Old Heidelberg" tradition. All three paid little attention to the rules of "human relations." Yet every one of them inspired deep devotion — indeed, true affection — in all who worked for him. All three, in their very different ways, built their relationships to people — their superiors, their colleagues, and their subordinates — around contribution. All three men of necessity worked closely with people and thought a good deal about people. All three had to make crucial "people" decisions. But not one of the

three worried about "human relations." They took human relations for granted.

Another outstanding example of "right" human relations achieved by emphasizing contribution — and achieved by someone who is all "wrong" in his own human relations — is certainly Rear Admiral Hyman Rickover, the father of the atomic submarine. Like so many people of incandescent intellect, Admiral Rickover finds it hard to tolerate us lesser mortals. In addition, like so many pioneers, he tends to consider anything but uncon-

ditional support of his ideas akin to high treason. His human relations outside his own organization are, as a result, problematical in the extreme. But within his own organization, the U.S. Navy's nuclear submarine fleet, he commands loyalty and personal devotion. He so completely focuses on contribution that even the harshest treatment of an individual is seen as in the common interest and devoid of personal bias or self-seeking. — *Fortune*, Vol. LXXV No. 2, Feb. 1967.

TO THE PRETENTIOUS FOOL

Life is "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." — *Shakespeare*.