electric light and power operating companies, and now the fourth largest in the United States, measured by capital investment. Last year he became chairman of the board.

There is another story about myself that will help explain this man. I had moved to New York City in 1945 and had been invited to a dinner with eleven heads of our largest corporations, nearly all of them strangers to me, except by reputation. The aim was to decide on a course of action they would take on a silly legislative proposal that stood every chance of passing. I had decided on my own course of action at this meeting with industrial bigwigs: say nothing unless asked a specific question. But never had I found silence so difficult. For two hours, the talk commended compromise, taking no personal positions, hiring college professors to speak in their stead, and so on. Finally, the question came: "Read, we haven't heard from you. What do you think?" If I said what I thought, Read would be referred to in the past tense, my chance of working with these people at an end. It was at this point that I paid Mullendore as fine a compliment as man can pay to man. I asked myself in one silent second, "What would Bill do?"

To Point and to Principle

The answer to my question came swiftly and as clear as crystal: "Tell them precisely what you think. It isn't dangerous to be honest, but what if it is? You have yourself to live with before you can live with these other people. Tell them what you think in unmistakable terms." The advice was heeded. And Bill was right. It wasn't dangerous to be honest. Indeed, it turned out to be profitable.

Intelligence can be pursued infinitely. It isn't attainable by man in an absolute sense. But it is possible to achieve absolute integrity, and Mullendore is nearer to this achievement than any person I have ever known. Integrity in its highest form is not merely the abstinence from lying. It is the accurate reflection of what a person believes to be right under any and all circumstances. Integrity in this sense is more than a negative form. It is a virtue with a positive quality.

It is integrity in this higher form that is the root of Mullendore's character. I have seen him in meetings time and time again where the course of the talk was socialistic or otherwise unprincipled. Always it would have been easy to say nothing. But not this man! By implication, if not by word, he might be thought to be in agreement and that would be a false impression. He rises and talks to the point and to principle—always to the point and to principle. And no one leaves any meeting without knowing where this business statesman stands.

Once, several years ago, he was selected as Los Angeles' distinguished citizen of the year. The banquet hall was filled with the leadership of southern California who generally endorsed existing conditions and exuded optimism about the "good road" America was on. The record shows that Mullendore said: "Thank you." It also shows that he must not be understood to have accepted the honor as a leader of the optimists or as one who joined in the endorsement of the path the country was traveling. His unusual, if not shocking, acceptance speech, though brief and pointed, was one of the strongest and most vigorous of his not untame career, and reminded the audience that he sincerely believed that "we are on the road to disaster." Having a good sense of humor, he ended by offering to give back the watch on the grounds that maybe they had changed their minds about him as their citizen of the year.

This integrity, which often expresses itself as unusual candor and frankness, has had a tendency to rub many a prominent citizen the wrong way of his ideological and public relations grain. One might think that Mullendore would finally drown in a sea of unfavorable attitudes. But while the prominent citizenry expresses irritation over the Mullendore tough-mindedness, it is well to observe that this self-same citizenry keeps right on loading bigger and bigger responsibilities onto him. Of the hundreds of positions proffered, only a few have been accepted. He served his year as president of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce during the time when I was its general manager. He is a trustee of the Foundation for Economic Education, a trustee of the University of Southern California, and a director of the California State Chamber of Commerce. He is a trustee of Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York, and a director of Union Pacific Railroad, of North American Aviation Company and others. He has been honored with an LL.D. degree by the University of Southern California and his own Alma Mater, the University of Michigan.

Recent Example of Courage

There was one time recently when every good citizen of southern California was pleased that the Edison Company had a president who would not compromise principle. That was when a vicious strike was called in an effort to force compulsory unionization on the company's employees. Many criminal acts, including dynamiting of the company's major transmission lines, occurred during this strike. This man of principle, only a few months out of the hospital after a heart attack, stood up and fought the greatest fight of his life, giving not an iota to expediency.

His answer was, "We refuse to do something which we do not have the right to do, under the excuse that we 'could get away with it'; that 'it is the easier way out'; that 'the public would rather have you impose union membership on your employees than to be bothered, threatened and inconvenienced by a strike'; and that 'the governmental authorities will o.k. the union shop if you say the word.' All of those arguments have been made to us. Then they were backed up with the force, the threat of violence, and the great public injury which this strike represents. That which is demanded is wrong and the use of force and violence (the uncontrollable power of a strike) to get it, makes it doubly wrong. . . ."

The union lost the strike, and no fundamental principle was violated in the settlement because of the courage of a man who knows "there can be no responsible exercise of unjustifiable power."

You won't find Bill Mullendore and his wife going to parties or giving them. They simply refuse to become a part of the social whirl. Instead, on evenings and week ends, he is found reading, studying, writing, or just meditating. This he has done for many years. It accounts in no small measure for the fact that he is just about the most profound thinker I have ever met.

His philosophy, as expressed in one of his speeches, shows the courage to face reality:

"Interwoven with the network of institutions and physical structures in any human civilization, is another intangible and invisible network. The two networks—the physical and the nonphysical relationships and institutions—are so closely interwoven and so completely interdependent that the destruction of either will surely destroy the other. The nonphysical includes the psychical, the mental, the spiritual forces—ideas, attitudes, emotions—which must remain in reasonable equilibrium if the network is to hold together.

"During this twentieth century, the leadership—the leading human mentalities and personalities—have been disproportionately absorbed in development of the physical. We have suffered wars and revolutions, and the emotions aroused to the level of domination thereby have been the destructive emotions of distrust, suspicion, envy, resentment—all forces which will, if unchecked, lead to the enforced equality of the Welfare State, to the violence of the police State, subversion, treason, the torture chamber, and to both civil and international war. The disequilibrium is now evidencing itself in a drift toward socialistic materialism in a dangerously tense and strained world situation."

The thing that has made Bill Mullendore tick is his belief that we are here on earth to develop our talents, our highest and best human potential, and that this can be done only if our social and political institutions permit us the necessary freedom. He is still growing, earnestly pursuing the truth with all the wisdom and experience and energy which come from a fruitful life as a farm boy, student, business-statesman, patriot and libertarian.

An Open Letter to My Friend, the Liberal

As a good modern Liberal, you are always in a sweat about civil liberties. You say that informers, witch-hunters, book-burners, China Lobbies, character assassins, wire-tappers and other agents of the iniquitous government lurk in constant readiness to trample any stray civil liberty as soon as the ADA or the ACLU turns its back. I, being on the "extreme right," often argue with you about these allegations. I say that you exaggerate, or that you are accusing the wrong people.

But while I shall continue to maintain that you do exaggerate, and that you point your fire at those who do not deserve it, I must admit in fairness that what you charge is substantially true. That is, the power to crush the civil liberties of American citizens is latent in our government. Several times it has come to the surface, and some helpless citizen has been sucked down by the inexorable undertow of a government that is too powerful for the country's good. These frightening experiences seem to promise worse horrors in the future.

So, without embroidering the subject, I shall grant the substantial truth of your incessant uproar about infringement of civil liberties. Then, after granting you this major point, let me ask you one question: *how did we get this way?* Who made the government so powerful that it could trample on the rights of the individual? Who subordinated the individual to society? Who stressed security, at the expense of liberty?

You did, friend. You did.

M. STANTON EVANS