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Barbarians May Yet Win Out

WE may have to make a choice between civilization and barbarism before long. It may be a showdown at high noon.

The dictionary defines civilization as "an ideal state of human culture characterized by complete absence of barbarism and nonrational behavior, optimum utilization of physical, cultural, spiritual and human resources, and perfect adjustment of the individual within the social framework."

The ideal has never been achieved, but we can claim considerable advancement along the road to civilization. However, we have lost our momentum on a detour and there are road blocks ahead.

Just what is a barbarian? The dictionary describes many American citizens in this vivid definition:

"BARBARIAN: lacking refinement, gentleness, learning, or artistic or literary culture. Marked by a tendency toward brutality, violence, or lawlessness, but sometimes displaying a rough vigor or vitality. A

stage of cultural development about midway between savagery and full civilization."

Reports of barbarism fill our newspapers. Terrorists, vandals, immoral people, murderers, brutes, and those who desecrate our country and its flag, our religions and our morals, our homes and cultural institutions usually fall within the definition.

Apparent total acceptance of immorality and complete rejection of culture and idealism by substantial groups, is a way of life for substantial groups. Many of them hold college degrees, although their education might be questioned, and a considerable number are from well-to-do, respectable families and homes.

Perhaps because of a void of worthwhile goals, neglected spiritual training, and lack of appreciation of the finer things of life, these people have rebelled against the very institutions that have made possible their freedom. They regard violence as a virtue, and diligently try to drag more young people into their mad

dog assaults on law-abiding citizens.

Violence against people often is carried over to include senseless killing or maiming of animals on farms, in the wild or in zoos.

Vandalism is another evidence of barbarism. Last month, vandals caused \$11,500 damage to a municipal park center in Oklahoma City, and schools, homes and businesses suffer continually. Detroit police recorded 5,061 instances of malicious property destruction in four months this year. In New Orleans, swings and other play equipment set up three days before opening of a new park were stolen or destroyed before the day of dedication.

Millions of people continue to work valiantly toward the ideal of full civilization but too often their efforts are countered by spreading terrorism, immorality and vandalism.

Right now, the majority of people do not seem to be too excited about joining either side. They don't want to become involved, but in this showdown, we can't remain neutral. Let's hope that civilization wins. It's a lot better!