

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. How does Steinbeck's description of America's early years differ from Crèvecoeur's? Do you think that Steinbeck is cynical, or that Crèvecoeur is unrealistic, or both, or neither? Does the time in which the writer lives affect his interpretation of facts? How do Crèvecoeur and Steinbeck illustrate your answer?
2. When Steinbeck compares the phrase "precious inheritance" to a sandwich wrapped in plastic and served on a plastic tray, what is he saying about the phrase?
3. What is the explanation for the "cruelty toward newcomers" which Steinbeck notices in the American past? Does such cruelty still occur? Explain.
4. Is it true that "Americans almost without exception have a fear and a hatred of any perpetuation of power"? What evidence do you have to support this statement? What evidence can you find which disproves it?
5. What method of child-rearing do you think Steinbeck would advocate? Do you agree with him?
6. Steinbeck suggests that leisure is a powerful calamity. Why? Do you agree that "our moral and spiritual disintegration grows out of our lack of experience with plenty"? What evidence is there of such disintegration?

#### FOR COMPOSITION

1. Write an essay either agreeing with or disagreeing with the generalization Steinbeck refers to: that "we are a restless, a dissatisfied, a searching people." Support your view of this generalization with proof and documentation. Simply repeating your opinion is not enough.
2. Carefully describe and discuss one paradox by which you feel "Americans live and breathe and function." Try not to repeat Steinbeck's examples.