

SAWYER. ...St. Nicholas, or Kris Kringle, whatever we may call him, represents a classic expression of the wishful dreaming of all children. Instead of teaching children that things they want come for free, they should be taught, while they are still in their formative years, the value of the work ethic that has made this country great. They must realize that this is a hard and competitive world, and if they are to succeed, they must learn the difference between myth and reality. Mature adults who continue to perpetrate this fable reveal themselves as incomplete and neurotic personalities who have failed to adjust to the stringent demands of our culture. Not only have they damaged their own existence, but they are harming their children's future. A child who does not understand this marked difference between fact and fiction will grow up still clinging to infantile fantasies and never be able to face the cruel truths of today's world. (*DORIS winces.*) Why do we do this to ourselves, you ask?

KRIS (*aside*). Don't ask!

SAWYER. To compensate for feelings of guilt. That's why we perpetuate the myth of Santa Claus. Parents who feel guilty because they've neglected their children 364 days of the year and pick this one day to overwhelm the kiddies with gifts, are doing it so as to purge their shameful behavior. And parents and grandparents who swamp the child with talk about Santa and stage the Christmas charade, are re-enacting their own infantile emotions which they have never outgrown. Therefore, I suspect that the vaunted "spirit of giving" is nothing but selfishness in disguise. (*ELVES boo and hiss.*) Far from doing any good in the world, this vicious myth has done more harm than...than...

KRIS (*beside himself with anger*). Now just a minute, there!
(*He starts toward the podium.*)