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The Meaning of the Kefauver Investigations, 1951.

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THE MEANING OF THE KEFAUVER INVESTIGATIONS

April 1, 1951

The Kefauver investigation into the tie-up between organized crime and government has shocked and startled the American people. Frankly, I do not know why they were so startled. Most intelligent Americans who have been reading their newspapers have been aware for a long time of the existence of widespread crime and criminal gangs in this country, and of recurrent instances of police corruption and of graft and favoritism and the peddling of influence in high governmental circles. Certainly those of us who have lived through the prohibition era and its after-math, when bootlegging became America's biggest single business and racketeering a most lucrative profession and gang-killings an almost daily commonplace and public collusion between police and criminals a well-publicized secret - certainly we should not have been startled by the revelations of the Kefauver Committee.

Nor should those of us who were not unaware of the moral slump which followed both the First and the Second World War, nor those of us who had not forgotten the Teapot Dome scandals of the Harding administration, which make the present revelations of the Fulbright Committee investigating irregularities in connection with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation pale into insignificance. I suspect that the shock was due largely to the new medium, the television, which brought the vivid action of the investigation committee actually into the homes of millions of American citizens, and by the sheer power of the visual drama which unfolded itself before the very eyes of these millions of Americans, in which the actors were star villains and star heroes, in which the stakes were high and the suspense breathless - I suspect it was this medium which was responsible for giving to the investigation the powerful impact which it had upon our people, which no written account in the newspapers would possibly have achieved.

And to that extent the investigation was decidedly worth-while. For the American people to have become aware of the worm within the apple, of the evil that was eating at the heart of American life, of the dangers which were lurking in every

community and around every home, to have disturbed and awakened and aroused the American people to that extent, the Kefauver investigation rendered a great service to our nation. And if it will lead to soul-searching on the part of our people, on the part of all of our people. If it will lead to action, to the mending of our ways - for the ways of the criminals will not be mended by the investigation - to new attitudes on our part towards practices which are tolerated and indulged in by good and respectable citizens, which unintentionally feed and finance and nourish the underworld, which in turn corrupts government - if this will come about as a result of the investigation, then the investigation will have proved to have been a great boon to the American people. For it is not the criminals alone whom the Kefauver Committee has exposed. There are criminals in every country - the lawless and the anti-social elements prey upon their communities. There are grafters and corruptionists everywhere in the world, but it is the size of their numbers and the extent and the persistency of their operations which disclose the strength or weakness of the social framework within which they operate, the firmness or the laxity of the laws of a people, the quality of law enforcement, the discipline or lack of discipline of the people - in a word, the moral tone and temper of a nation.

It is the American people, too, which has been exposed by the Kefauver Committee, and in a sense, indicted. If there exist wide-spread gambling syndicates in our country whose profits run into the millions and tens of millions of dollars - perhaps the hundreds of millions of dollars annually - it is because good and respectable citizens in vast numbers are not averse to gambling and betting and the slot machines and all other forms of gambling devices. The gambling institutions which existed in the proximity of our community for a large number of years - I don't know whether they have ceased to exist now - were patronized by good and respectable citizens. There was hardly a day or an evening, I am told, that a respectable minion of our people was not present there. They attended it far more faithfully and regularly than they did their churches or their synagogues. They looked upon it as innocent amusement,

harmless sport, a pastime. To them it was just that. But what to them was a harmless sport was to the professionals serious, very serious, dangerous and evil business which spread like a cancer to the body politic. It was the good and respectable citizens of our country who made bootlegging profitable, and thereby helped to bring into existence the vast empire of criminals and hoodlums and killers who have since that time uninterruptedly battered upon every community in our country. It was these good and respectable citizens, in their millions, who helped to bring law as such into disrepute by their gentle disregard or flaunting or defiance of the law, a law which they had helped to enact. If incompetent and characterless and corruptible public officials exist in our midst, is it not due to the fact that our good and respectable citizens, ourselves, do not adequately exercise their duty and responsibility towards citizenship, do not actively participate in state and local and national politics, are not members of those political units and groupings which pick and select and campaign for candidates for office, are not politically vigilant, are not intelligent voters? Let us be frank with ourselves. How many of actually take time out to see that the right kind of people are nominated and then elected for office? Many of us go through the motions at stated intervals, of mechanically voting for a slate of officers whose names are hardly known to us and who have been selected by people practically unknown to us. Most Americans do not ever take the trouble of voting in primaries or in elections. I mean the good and respectable citizens. They don't trouble themselves about it. But the Costellos do. They make sure, doubly sure, as to the names which appear on a ballot. They are very much concerned as to who is to be elected. They organize for it. They plan for it. They are alert politically.

It is not that we are bad citizens. We are not. It is not that we do not love or appreciate our country and its free institutions. We do. We just take them for granted - that's all. We are thoughtless. Our principles/ interests lie elsewhere. Citizenship is just not a vital part of our lives. We spend very little time on it.

We spend very little time educating our children to it. And yet, citizenship is the most important enterprise in the life of a citizen.

We are all convinced that our country is so sound. Nothing can hurt it. It does not need our personal attention. And here is where we make a great mistake. The political bosses and grafters and corruptionists - they do pay personal attention to government. They do take time out; in fact, the major time of their careers. And in the struggle between the active dark forces and the passive and indifferent forces of light, the dark forces win out inevitably.

Now, the task of maintaining a free country, of running a democracy is a very difficult and exacting task. It's a day-by-day job. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Unless there is that eternal vigilance, expressing itself in action, a democracy slips back very quickly into lawlessness, into chaos, into dictatorship. The great democracies of the past which perished were first corrupted from within. They were not overthrown by external forces, enemies from without. They were corroded, rotted, eaten away within, undermined first by the negligence and the indifference and the moral laxity of their citizens, which prepared the way for the vicious elements to step in and to take over - those who are gross of heart and grasping of hand, who always are there lurking in secret places, waiting for their opportunity.

One thing which Mr. Costello said in the hearings struck me very forcibly because it was not merely an indictment of himself, but of so many of us. He just blurted it out. He was asked whether at any time he rendered any service to his country, the country which had given him so many opportunities, that he had served in war, in civic services of all kinds, to all of which he answered, of course, in the negative. He was finally asked - I don't recall the exact words - whether he had ever done anything for his country. And he said, "Certainly, I've paid my taxes." Well, I'm afraid that's what many good and respectable citizens may have to reply if they were closely questioned and they were honest with themselves. Yes, they pay their taxes. But that is not enough for the preservation of a democracy and a good society. We

have to give to our country much more than taxes. We have to give it thought and love and loyalty and sacrifice. We have to live in that country in such a way as to be worthy of those noble traditions and those free institutions for which other people made such sacrifices, for which other people died in the past. We must try to insure a condition of justice and love and order, of brotherhood and equality. We must look upon our government as we look upon our homes - our own homes. We do not discharge our full responsibility to our homes as members of a family simply by contributing to its budget. A home is built out of much else without which it is not a home. It will not long survive as a happy home.

Perhaps as a result of these investigations many Americans will come to the conclusion that new laws and better laws are needed to meet the situation - I don't know. Perhaps a permanent Federal Crimes Commission to serve our local law enforcement bodies, to keep our people permanently alerted, is desirable. But, my good friends, when all is said and done, laws are no better than the people who make them. Laws never made a people moral. It is the moral aspirations of a people which come to reflect themselves in laws and the degree of the moral resolution of the people will determine whether these laws will be observed or whether they will remain a scrap of paper.

And there are practices, good friends, which may not at all be illegal by the strict letter of the law, but which are quite immoral and socially harmful, and this fact escapes the attention of many of our good and respectable citizens.

I read and re-read that very splendid address which Senator Fulbright, head of the committee investigating the R.F.C. delivered in the Senate a few days ago on this very subject. This is a powerful sermon which he preached on the basis of his findings. He was dealing with people who were not the gangsters, the killers. He was dealing largely with people who were within the law. Some of them looked upon themselves as very good and respectable citizens, and yet, he looked upon them also as worms within the apple, somehow tending to undermine America. He said:

Before we had proceeded very far, however, it became evident that we were dealing not simply with a legal or legislative problem, but with a moral problem. The first case to which my attention was called was one involving the employment, by a borrower, of an R.F.C. employe who had recommended the granting of a loan.

The board of directors of the R.F.C. thought this practice quite proper. I thought it improper. So from the beginning we were confronted with a difference in ethical standards. It presents a difficult problem. It is difficult because the evils to be dealt with are so seldom amenable to the processes of law.

When confronted with an evil, we Americans are prone to say, "There ought to be a law." But the law does not and cannot apply effectively over wide fields of men's activities. It cannot reach those evils which are subtle and impalpable. Generally speaking, it reaches only the overt and the blatant acts of the wicked.

Much of the evil of the world is beyond the reach of the law. The law cannot prevent gossip. It cannot prevent men from bearing false witness against their neighbors. It cannot restrain them from avarice and gluttony. It cannot restrain a man from betraying his friend. In short, it cannot prevent much of the evil to which men are, unfortunately, too prone.

The law being inadequate, men long ago supplemented the law courts with courts of equity, where the spirit of the law, rather than its letter, is paramount. Underlying the law are the codes of ethics promulgated by the great religions and recognized by all civilized men as being essential to a humane and enlightened existence.

As our study of the R.F.C. progressed, we were confronted more and more with problems of ethical conduct. What should be done about men who do not directly and blatantly sell the favors of their offices for money and so place themselves within the penalties of the law? How do we deal with those who, under the guise of friendship, accept favors which offend the spirit of the law, but do not violate its letter?

What of the men outside Government who suborn those inside it? They are careful to see that they do not do anything that can be construed as illegal. They operate through lawyers - men who are known as clever layers; a cleverness which is like the instinct of the rat, that knows how to get the bait without getting caught. Many business men, ostensibly reputable business men, employ these knavish lawyers to circumvent the law and enrich themselves at Government expense. Too often the law cannot touch them.

Who is more at fault, the bribed or the bribers? The bribed have been false to their oaths and a betrayer of their trust. But they are often relatively simple men - men of small fortune or no fortune at all - and they weaken before the temptations held out to them by the unscrupulous.

Who are the Bribers? They are often men who walk the earth lordly and secure; members of good families; respected figures in their communities; graduates of universities. They are, in short, of the privileged minority, and I submit that it is not unreasonable to ask of them that high standard of conduct which their training ought to have engendered.

Man can observe the law, the letter of the law, and keep out of the toils of the law, and still be a scoundrel of the first water. Let us now, however, get the impression from these investigations and the publicity which attended them that the American people is on the brink of a moral collapse. I don't think so. I do not believe that this generation is the worst in American history or that there have never been such crime and corruption in American life before. We have had it, time and again, more severe, I believe, and on a larger scale in the past. And always our citizens, when at first they became aware and aroused by what was happening around them, they rose up in anger, smote down the evil doer, cleaned house, and then they relaxed, only to have to do the same thing over again ten years or fifteen years or twenty years later. There have been cycles of corruption and reform in American history recurrent. I do not wish to go back over the whole range of American history, although not a single era, from the days of the American Revolution to the present, is quite free of extensive corruption.

But at a glance at what followed - say, the Civil War and what took place in the decades which followed it, will be sufficient to indicate what I have in mind. Perhaps I best have the noted American historians, Charles and Mary Beard, who wrote "The Rise of the American Civilization", report on this phase of American history.

Year after year, in spite of the best efforts of those who sincerely desired clean ceremonials, scandals in high places broke out with distressing regularity at the national capital. After Jay Gould and Jim Fisk attempted to corner the gold market and brought about the financial crash of Black Friday in 1869, an investigating committee reported that President Grant's brother-in-law, a notorious speculator, had maintained a curious subterranean connection between the government and the conspirators. . . . Three years later came the unsavory exposure of the Credit Mobilier which involved many Republican congressmen of good standing; though the curtain was drawn with decent celerity, an inquiry revealed the Vice-President of the United States as a man who had sworn falsely to conceal improprieties.

Before another year elapsed, the most brilliant party leader of his era, James G. Blaine, was openly accused by the Springfield Republicans of using his powers in Congress to favor high tariffs and railway corporations in return for monetary considerations. After ignoring the charge for a time, Blaine finally took notice of it, securing at the hands of a congressional committee an official examination conducted according to accepted use and wont. This inquiry failed to disclose corrupt actions on the part of the accused; but Blaine, besides exhibiting during the furor a bearing that was not conspicuous for candor and nicety, told, as the record shows, six separate falsehoods.

The Blaine incident had not yet closed when the Secretary of the Treasury unearthed frauds in the collection of internal revenues from certain distilleries, revealing in the operation a "Whisky Ring" composed in part of high politicians thriving on profits derived from that form of economic endeavor. Additional inquiries made with the aid of the Attorney General led quickly to the door of President Grant's private secretary, arousing the General once more to military wrath.

On top of the Whisky Ring scandal came startling charges respecting the Secretary of War, General William W. Belknap, accusing him and his wife of collecting for their private purse large sums of money from federal office-holders. ~~Sketch of the case and the~~
~~circumstances~~

Just as the interest in this affair began to wane, public excitement was renewed by a revelation of frauds in the carriage of mails over certain lines - roads marked by asterisks in the official records and popularly known as "star routes." It was shown by competent evidence that the men operating such lines were often paid more money than their contract stipulated and that the secretary of the Republican national committee, which managed Garfield's campaign in 1880, had been a beneficiary of benevolence, if nothing more. Indictments followed.

In a great speak delivered during the trial of Secretary Belknap, the Honorable George F. Hoar, a Senator from Massachusetts, soon to be a distinguished national leader, reviewed in a pathetic strain the grievous cases that had recently come to his notice.

He had seen five judges of a high federal court driven from office by threats of impeachment for corruption or maladministration. He had seen four judges of New York impeached for corruption and the chief city disgraced throughout the world by the machinations of the Tweed ring. He had listened with astonishment to a demand from the chairman on military affairs that four congressmen be expelled for selling cadetships at West Point. Then he moved on to the worst. "When the greatest railroad of the world, binding together the continent and uniting the two great seas which wash our shores, was finished, I have seen our national triumph and exaltation turned to bitterness and shame by the unanimous reports of three committees of Congress - that every step of that mighty enterprise had been taken in fraud. I have heard in the highest place the shameless doctrine avowed by men grown old in public office that the true way by which power should be gained in the Republic is to bribe the people with office created for their service. . . . I have heard that suspicion haunts the footsteps of the trusted companions of the President."

Well, I could read on and on from that period. Many of you may have read some years ago that very revealing and interesting autobiography of Lincoln Steffens, who tells the story of what came to be known as the muck-raking era in American life. The reformers at the turn of the century had become so alarmed at what was happening to government in our municipalities, government on a local level, that they began an investigation, and then the American people were shocked and outraged by the facts which were brought forcibly to their attention. Some of the great cities of America were investigated - Philadelphia, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Minneapolis, New York. The findings were, by and large, that Philadelphia was corrupt and contented; St. Louis was among the most corrupt cities in the land; Pittsburgh was a hell with the lid lifted; Minneapolis was shameful in its corruption; and New York City, ten years after the Lexow Police investigation, which revealed a veritable cess-pool of corruption, was back again in its stride.

Lincoln Steffens, by the way, calls particular attention to the fact that this corruption, this tie-up between criminals and government, was not limited to any one class or any one group or any one racial strain or any one nationality on the American scene. The Yankee of Rhode Island was no better than the German of St. Louis; The Scandinavian of Minneapolis no better than the Scotch-Irish of Pittsburgh or the Irish of New York, or the old settlers of the city of Brotherly Love, which were among

the worst corruptionists of all. Corruption is not limited to recent immigrants or to the poor or to the illiterates. Big business played a great role in corrupting American politics over a period of many years in order to obtain concessions and franchises. They controlled elections and legislatures and courts. Some of you will recall that startling book that appeared quite a number of years ago, the story of the Standard Oil Co., written by Ida M. Tarbell. Similar stories were told of the railroads, the mining industry, steel, life insurance and other public service corporations in America.

Let no one wrap the mantle of sanctity about himself and point the accusing finger at others.

But the encouraging thing about it all is that when the American people were made aware of what was going on, they proceeded to check the abuses, at least for a time. The American people were never content to let corruption abide and prevail. They rebelled; they reformed. And in any test of strength between the law-abiding citizen and the criminal element, the law-abiding citizen won out, for he knew what he wanted and he knew how to go about getting what he wanted.

And I believe that our federal government today in 1951 is cleaner by far than our federal government in some of the past eras of America, as recently as the Harding era. And I believe that our state and municipal governments are cleaner by far than they were at the beginning of this century. But the thing to remember is that the danger is always there, lurking. The Kefauver Committee has reminded us that it is here - now - and a house-cleaning is due, over-due - one that should be more sustained than those outbreaks of reform zeal in the past.

I believe that a moral regeneration of the American people is due, a religious revival is long over due. We need higher standards of moral integrity for ourselves, each one of us. We have to tidy up our moral lives. We have to learn to abide more rigorously by our moral codes. We must demand more of ourselves. We must raise our sights, each of us, individually, as far as life's meaning and life's destiny is concerned. Life does not fulfill itself in material success alone. Each one

of us must try to be an example.

Quite a number of Jewish names were bandied about in these investigations. That has been most unpleasant -- more than unpleasant. It is quite dangerous. Of course, we can say that in a community of 5,000,000 souls we are entitled to its percentage of criminals. Logically, that is so. Psychologically, it doesn't meet the situation one iota. We are a minority group, and as such, we are more under scrutiny of the public eye than if we were lost in the vast majority, and every Jewish malefactor is not only an enemy of America, he is doubly an enemy of the Jewish people. In our camp he is a moral leper, and those who associate with them and befriend them and make it possible for them to operate are enemies of the Jewish people unintentionally; they are enemies of themselves.

We Jews must not only be an example to ourselves; we must be an example to our neighbors; we must be inspired by the oldest moral traditions of the world. The Jews have prided themselves upon their high standards of moral rectitude. It's a strange, shocking, new phenomenon in Jewish life. When did Jewish life know of gangsters and killers and criminals of that character? We must be alerted to that fact, too. On the other hand, we ought not to absolve ourselves of responsibility again by pointing our fingers to that small group, and say, "They -- they alone are responsible." We are all responsible. And if the Kefauver investigation has made us aware as Americans, as Jews, of our moral duties more clearly, more sharply, it has done us a great service & a great service to America and to its free institutions.

#1 The Keenan investigation into tea-up-org. crime + govt C
has shocked + startled Am. people. -

Frankly, I do not know why they were so startled!
Most intell. Americans who read their newspapers - have
been aware of existence of wide-spread crime, criminal
gangs; and of recurrent instances of police corruption
and collusion; and of graft and ^{and peddling of influence} ~~favoritism~~
from time to time in high post circles.

Certainly those of us who have lived thru the prohibition
era and its aftermath - when ~~bootlegging~~ ^{bootlegging} became
America's biggest single business, ^{and} ~~was~~ having a most
lucrative profession, ~~and~~ gang-killing a ^{daily} ~~most~~
commonplace, and police collusion with criminals
a well-publicized secret - should not have been
startled by the revelations of the Keef. Committee.

Nor should those of us who were not unaware of the
moral shams which followed both hold laws have
been so surprised. Nor those who had not forgotten
the Tea-pot Dome scandals of the Harding Admin -
which make the present revelations of the Fullbright
Comm. investigating irregularities in connection
with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation - pale
into insignificance.

I suspect that it was the new medium, television,
which ~~set~~ ^{set} the vivid ~~picture~~ ^{picture} of the investigation
actually into millions, ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{by} ~~the~~ ^{the} sheer power
of the drama which was ~~presented~~ ^{presented} before them very

eyes - in which the actors were star villains and
star heroes - ^{the states high and the wrongs of the day} impressed the Amer. people as no written
account in their newspapers could have ^{possibly} ~~achieved~~ done

2/ To that extent - it was decidedly worth while! To have been
made aware of the work that was taking at ^{within the} ~~the~~ the
apple of the evil that was endangering Am. life & the dangers
harkening in every community, which might at any moment
overwhelm it, to have disturbed ^{and crossed} ~~and crossed~~ them - ^{has been}
the great service rendered ~~by the~~ to our nation by the
Key. Com.

(1) If it leads to spil-searching on the part, the
Am. ^{it will not reform the perverts} ~~people~~ ^{to act} - to the blending of our ways -
to new attitudes towards practices tolerated and
indulged in by lord and respectable citizens which
^{quite} ^{very} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{way} ^{of} ^{the} ^{day} ^{and} ^{the} ^{city}
feed, fatten and nourish the underworld, which
in turn corrupts fast - the Key. investigations
will ~~have served~~ ^{have been} a great boon
to the Amer. people.

(2) For it is not ~~only~~ ^{alone} the criminals, when the K.
Com. has exposed, there are criminals in every country,
the lawless and the anti-social who prey upon their com-
munities. There are prostitutes and corruptors everywhere.
~~The extent of the~~ It is the size, the numbers and the
extent ^{+ persistence} of their operations which discloses the strength
enormities of the social frame-work within which they
operate, the firmness of laws ^{and their enforcement} ~~and~~ the discipline
is lax, discipline, its people, in a word, the moral

tone and temper of a nation

(3) It is the Amer. people, too - exposed - indeed
if there exist wide-spread gambling syndicates - whose
profits run - it is here. good & respect. - most us -
not averse to gambling, betting, slot-machines - (1/11)
They look upon it innocent amusement - harmless sport -
past-time -

But what is to them - professionals - serious - dangerous
and evil business - which grows into a cancer

(4) If it was the good - brothel - helped buy
most evil - criminals - brothel - killers - who have
never - uninterruptedly battered
helped to bring law - disrepute

(5) If incompetent - characters - corruptible - admirably
exercised - actively participated in local -
memberships - not. 1/11 - intellig. voting

(6) How many of us actually told truth out to see
right kind of people are nominated
many of us show their motives - at stated intervals

4. I am afraid - Cisello - "Don't I pay my taxes?"
- Not enough! We have to live it lost slavery & sacrifice -
 - So live as to be worthy of its noble tradition for which
so many died
 - To win freedom, law, order; to increase brotherhood
and equality -
 - It is a Role - One does not discharge his full resp. as
a member of a family - simply by helping to contribute
to its support budget

5. Perhaps new laws rather laws are needed to meet the
situation
Perhaps a permanent federal Civil Commission is
to serve as local law-enforcement bodies and to
~~at~~ keep our people permanently alerted - is desirable.
But, when all is said and done, laws are no better than
people who make them. Laws do not make a
people moral. The moral aspirations of a people
expresses its in law - and the degree of its moral
revolution will determine whether the laws will be
observed, or not.

6. And there are practices which may not be illegal by the
strict letter of the law - but which may be grossly immoral
and socially harmful (Just - Fullbright)

7. Let us not, however, let the impression from what has been
expressed that Amer. is on the brink of moral collapse

- that this generation is the ~~worst~~ worst in Amer. history (6)
- that we have never had such crime & corruption -
- We have ^{had} Turn & Again! Men never and on a large scale.

- always an citizenry - when it became aware and aroused - rose up in anger - swept down the evil doers - cleared houses - ~~but~~ then ^{unforgotten} relaxed again - only to have to do the same thing over again - a decade or two later on
- Cycles of corruption & reform are recurrent in our history.

8. I will not go back over the whole range of Amer. history - altho no single era is quite free of it. But a glance at what followed the Civil War & what took place in the subsequent decades. Perhaps I best ~~for~~ have the noted Amer. historian Charles Francis Beard - 'The Rise of American Civilization. (II p. 305)

9. And what took place of Nat. ~~is~~ level - was duplicate on local level - the Tweed and Croker eras in N. Y. will be ~~remembered~~ ^{will be recalled} - where corruption knew no bounds.

10. Muck-raking era - 1900 - The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens

He and others in vestigated Memphis fact - large city (1)

Philadelphia - "corrupt and contented"

St. Louis - among worst ranked cities in land

Pittsburgh - Hell with the lid lifted

Memphis - champion in corruption

N. York - 10 yrs after the Lexow Police Investigation ^{and}
which revealed a gross part of corruption - back
in its old study

11) Traveler Shaffer - calls particular attention to fact
that corruption is not limited to any one
class or group or racial strain - the Yankee
of Rhode Island was no better than the Servians
of St. Louis, the Scandinavians, Memphians, the Catch-
fish of Pittsburgh - the Jews, h. y. - or the
old settlers of the city, Brooklyn Jews - which were
the worst corrupt of all..-

12) Corruption not limited to recent immigrants..-
or to poor or degraded - Big Business played a
great role in corrupt practices - on many details
concerning - franchises - by controlling elections,
legislatures & courts.

Edw M. Tarbell told the story, the Standard Oil Co
Sumner stones have told of Railroads, Minny
Industry of Steel, Life Insurance - etc. Other public service
corporations

13/ But - Amer. checked their abuses - and other as they made themselves manifest - (8)

The Amer. people were never content to let corruption abide and prevail

They rebelled - They reformed - Hope glory, America!

Our federal part - any test of strength clearer by far > in years

following and has - Harding Adm.

So as our State the unsuccessful parts -

But the day is always there - The Key - Can has

reminded that it is here now -

Another major effort is called for - more sustained

> in the past -

A moral regeneration

lay under due

Higher standards of moral integrity
A religious revival

14/ Jews - vulnerable - dangerous - Anti semit

- moral lepers - enemies of J. people - as well as America

- Tidy up our moral things - Alid and rigorous

by our moral code - Demand more of ourselves!

- Raise our rights - in life meaning - destiny

- An example - to our children and neighbors -

Text of Fulbright's Speech Calling for Moral Revival in Government

WASHINGTON, March 27 (AP)—The text of a Senate speech today by Senator J. William Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, discussing moral standards:

Mr. President, when the subcommittee on the Reconstruction Finance Corporation undertook its study, more than a year ago, I anticipated the development of little more than usual the issues which grow out of an investigation of the Executive Branch of the Government. I expected just another case study of an agency, with a finding of facts to be made and an orthodox legislative remedy recommended.

Before we had proceeded very far, however, it became evident that we were dealing not simply with a legal or legislative problem, but with a moral problem. The first case to which my attention was called was one involving the employment, by a borrower, of an R. F. C. employee who had recommended the granting of the loan.

The board of directors of the R. F. C. thought this practice quite proper. I thought it improper. So from the beginning we were confronted with a difference in ethical standards. It presents a difficult problem. It is difficult because the evils to be dealt with are so seldom amenable to the processes of law.

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Much Evil Beyond Law

Much of the evil of the world is beyond the reach of the law. The law cannot prevent gossip. It cannot prevent men from bearing false witness against their neighbors. It cannot restrain men from avarice and gluttony. It cannot restrain a man from betraying his friend. In short, it cannot prevent much of the evil to which men are, unfortunately, too prone.

The law being inadequate, men long ago supplemented the law courts with courts of equity, where the spirit of the law, rather than its letter, is paramount. Underlying the law are the codes of ethics promulgated by the great religions and recognized by all civilized men as being essential to a humane and enlightened existence.

As our study of the R. F. C. progressed, we were confronted more and more with problems of ethical conduct. What should be done about men who do not directly and blatantly sell the favors of their offices for money and so place themselves within the penalties of the law? How do we deal with those who, under the guise of friendship, accept favors which offend the spirit of

the law, but do not violate its letter?

What of the men outside Government who suborn those inside it? They are careful to see that they do not do anything that can be construed as illegal. They operate through lawyers—men who are known as clever lawyers; a cleverness which is like the instinct of the rat that knows how to get the bait without getting caught. Many business men, ostensibly reputable business men, employ these knavish lawyers to circumvent the law and enrich themselves at Government expense. Too often the law cannot touch them.

Who Is More At Fault?

Who is more at fault, the bribed or the bribers? The bribed have been false to their oaths and a betrayer of their trust. But they are often relatively simple men—men of small fortune or no fortune at all—and they weaken before the temptations held out to them by the unscrupulous.

Who are the bribers? They are often men who walk the earth lordly and secure; members of good families; respected figures in their communities; graduates of universities. They are, in short, of the privileged minority, and I submit that it is not unreasonable to ask of them that high standard of conduct which their training ought to have engendered.

Is it too much to ask of them that they do not use a Government lending agency as a dumping ground for their own mistakes in judgment? Is it too much to ask of them, the favored few of our country, that they behave with simple honesty; with that honesty which looks, not the letter of the law, but to its spirit?

Mr. President, the essence of what we have been studying in our committee is but a reflection of what may be seen in many other phases of our national life. The Government and its activities in a very real sense, a mirror of our national life. The inquiry into the R. F. C. has revealed conditions which unfortunately may be found in other activities of our people.

Let us consider what has developed in our colleges where the characters of our young men and women are being molded. Our colleges, under extreme pressure from the alumni, have become so intent upon winning football and basketball games that they use any means to gain their ends.

They hire players who are not bona fide students and thus make a mockery, a farce, of the whole concept of amateur sport for the health and entertainment of our young men. They corrupt not only the hired players, but also the entire student body who learn from their elders the cynical, immoral doctrine that one must win at all costs.

Corruption Held By-Product

A by-product of this doctrine, the necessity for big money, lead naturally to betting and to the

shocking episode of the widespread bribery of basketball players in New York. I find it difficult to blame the players. They are but following a logical sequence of influences, beginning with the corruption of the sport at its source by pressure from the alumni.

This question of the moral strength of our people is not just an internal domestic matter. It has grave possibilities in our international relations. Without confidence in their Government, the people will not make the sacrifices necessary to oppose Russia successfully. [Arnold J.] Toynbee, in his well known historical study, demonstrated clearly how the vast majority of great civilizations have been destroyed, not as a result of external aggression, but as a consequence of domestic corruption. A democracy can recover quickly from physical or economic disaster, but when its moral convictions weaken it becomes easy prey for the demagogue and the charlatan. Tyranny and oppression then become the order of the day.

In recent years, I wonder if we have not unwittingly come to accept the totalitarian concept that the end justifies the means, a concept which is fundamentally and completely antagonistic to a true democratic society. Democracy is, I believe, more likely to be destroyed by the perversion of, or abandonment of, its true moral principles than by armed attack from Russia. The evil and insidious materialism of the Communists is a greater danger to us than their guns.

One of the most disturbing aspects of this problem of ethical conduct is the revelation that among so many influential people, morality has become identical with legality. We are certainly in a tragic plight if the acceptable standard by which we measure the integrity of a man in public life is that he keep within the letter of the law.

Official Moral Obtuseness Hit

Mr. President, the growing size and complexity of our Government, as much as we may deplore it, only emphasizes the need for a clarification, a restatement of the moral standards of governmental conduct. When our Government was small, when it took only 10 per cent of our earnings in taxes, we could afford a certain amount of official boodling. Today, it has become too important. We simply can no longer afford moral obtuseness in our public officials.

Scandals in our Government are not a new phenomena in our history. What seems to be new about these scandals is the moral blindness or callousness which allows those in responsible positions to accept the practices which the facts reveal. It is bad enough for us to have corruption in our midst, but it is worse if it is to be condoned and accepted as inevitable.

Mr. President, is there anything

we can do here in Washington to help our country reaffirm or reestablish a higher concept of public conduct?

Some weeks ago, I suggested, informally, that it would be beneficial to have a commission of eminent citizens designated by the Congress, to consider the problem of ethical standards of conduct in public affairs. I renew that suggestion now.

Would Restate Principles

Such a commission should be composed of private citizens of outstanding achievement and character, whose integrity is beyond question. As examples of the type of men who should serve, I suggest the following:

Former Justice Owen Roberts of Pennsylvania; former Senator La Follette of Wisconsin; Judge Learned Hand of New York; Walter Reuther of Detroit; Paul Hoffman of the Ford Foundation; Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Theological Seminary; Dr. Theodore Greene of Yale; Dr. Hutchins of Chicago; President Clinchy of the Conference of Christians and Jews; Father Parsons of Catholic University.

Such a list could be extended indefinitely, but I think I have adequately indicated the kind of person I have in mind.

Such a commission, as I conceive of it, would be a catalytic agent, stimulated by public indignation, to draw forth meaning from the mass of data revealed by the several current investigations. The commission would evaluate the conditions which have been exposed, and drawing upon its combined wisdom would restate again or formulate anew, principles which, it is to be hoped, would strengthen the faith of all decent men in our democratic society.

Too many people in our nation do not believe anything with conviction. They question the precepts of God or of man, indiscriminately. The values of life

which were clear to the Pilgrims and the founding fathers have become dim and fuzzy in outline.

False propaganda and the "big lie" of demagogues have created doubt in the minds of men. Professional political hucksters, imported from afar, without local responsibility or restraint, corrupt our free elections and poison democracy at its source.

Something Can Be Done

The principal objective of the study I suggest is the restoration of the faith of our people in the validity of the traditional precepts of our democratic society. It is not a job for politicians, it is not a job for the inexperienced, it is a job for the wisest of our citizens under a mandate from the nation.

Mr. President, in making this suggestion, I am quite prepared to be dubbed naive. It will not be the first time. As I look back upon our history or upon my own experience, nearly every progressive or fruitful move, especially

if it was novel, has been considered naive. To expect, or even hope for, an improvement in the moral climate of Washington, is, in the eyes of the boys who know, I am sure, thoroughly Utopian.

I confess that I do not know what should be done. If I knew, I would not call upon the wisest men of our country. I would suggest it myself. But, Mr. President, I am unwilling to accept the view that nothing can be done, that the moral deterioration, which is so evident to all, must continue to its logical conclusion, which is the destruction of our free democratic system. Mr. President, I think something can be done. This may not be the right thing, but, if anyone has a better suggestion, let him step forward.

I submit, Mr. President, that further investigations, as instructive as they may be, are not nearly as important as an understanding of what has already been exposed and action to remedy the situation.

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FULBRIGHT URGES
A MORAL REVIVAL

bona fide students, he argued, was making a mockery of the whole concept of amateur sports.

Mr. Fulbright, colleagues recalled, was out-

tigations and at other sources before submitting its proposals for a set of moral and ethical standards and a means of enforcement. The