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A way out of our crisis, 1951.

A WAY OUT OF OUR CRISIS

Is There a Way -- Have We the Courage to Take It?

November 11, 1951

On this Armistice Day we are reminded that since the first armistice 33 years ago which closed the First World War, we have had a Second World War, and we are now preparing for a Third World War. The First World War was to make the world safe for democracy, the second world war was to end all wars. We and our allies won both wars. Yet, never in 100 years has there been less democracy in the world than there is today, and never in the whole history of mankind has the world been so obsessed and enmeshed and entangled in the war psychosis and in preparation for war as it is today.

How vain indeed is man's reliance upon war to cure the ills of his world!

Horse and chariot are vain to rely upon for salvation.

In the First World War Czarist Russia was the ally of the democratic world. In the Second World War Communist Russia was the ally of the democratic world. In both the First and Second World Wars Germany was the enemy of the democratic world. For the Third World War Russia is the marked enemy and Germany is being groomed and re-armed as the ally. How confused indeed are all our values! How we improvise ideologies to suit our needs! How misleading are the slogans with which we delude ourselves. We seem to have learned so little in the last 33 years. We are now hell-bent on re-arming Germany, just as were after the first armistice. Germany we thought then was beaten and chastened. She would now become a trustworthy ally of the democratic world, and we joined the other democracies in joining the "cordon sanitaire" around Communist Russia, and it all ended up, as you will remember, in Hitlerism and in the Second World War and in the ravaging of our world.

We are doing the same thing all over again today. What we are doing is more incomprehensible and more reprehensible today because we have the recent lesson of history before us which we are determined to ignore. Germany, we now believe, has been de-Nazified. The Germans may now become our natural allies against the same Communist menace - that Communist menace which we did not hesitate to embrace as friend and ally in our desperate straits during the Second World War. The Germans are now good and peace-loving and redeemed democrats. They should now be re-armed as quickly as possible and made the strong ally of the democracies. Yesterday from the wires of the Associated Press came this report, which appeared in your local newspapers:

There are signs of Naziism's revival multiplying in this land which only six years ago was freed from Hitler's dictatorship. There are indications that German Nazi sympathizers, flushed with the growing success at home, may be trying to establish links with sympathetic groups in other European countries. Leaders of the Party met last weekend in Augsburg with Fascist followers from Britain and Italy. The chief admitted that Nationalist groups from Norway, Holland and France also have asked his party for closer cooperation. So bold are ex-Nazis becoming that even Hitler's notorious SS men of talking of forming their own organization. The SS, Hitler's Elite Guard, was declared a criminal organization by the International War Crimes Tribunal five years ago, but already they are holding mass meetings, making speeches, demanding the release of war criminals, and planning a big mass convention of former SS men.

In our search for allies to organize against Communist Moscow and in behalf of democracy and human rights we have now turned to the unspeakable Franco and are bolstering him up with our funds in his cruel, reactionary, corrupt regime. We have also turned to Communist Tito as to an ally, and he is being de- and presented to us today not as a Communist dictator, which he is just as Stalin as, but as some kind of progressive, national, social reformer, just as the Chinese Communists/~~were~~ represented to us in 1947 and '48 as sort of agrarian social reformers.

In the last two wars we were drawn in, and we came in rather late. We had not assumed leadership in any world crusade. In fact, we were accused of isolationism. Today, we have assumed leadership in a world-wide mobilization against what we call aggressive Communism. Today we have gone the limits from isolationism to world globalism and we are drawing in other nations in our plans and our strategy. And some of them come in rather reluctantly and some apprehensively and some of them fear the tempo of our mobilization, the extent and the cost and the consequences.

I wonder whether we really know what we are doing. I wonder whether we really knew what we were doing when we interfered in the civil war in Korea in June of 1950. We did not even wait for the decision of the United Nations or authorization of the Security Council before we plunged into that war. So confident were we of our political judgment and of our right of leadership and of our military might! The nations of the world followed us rather reluctantly, you will recall. They did not respond wholeheartedly to our leadership. To this day their military contribution has been a token one. We have by this time suffered nearly 100,000 casualties in Korea. The American people have never been for this war. Every poll has indicated that. A year ago, you will recall, I said that the Korean War was needless, pointless and would lead to nothing. I was severely criticized at the time for taking such a position. Today it seems that many, many people among the top leadership in our nation are echoing the same sentiment.

We have scored no such brilliant victories there as to discourage future Communist aggression in other parts of the world. In fact, so-called Communist aggressions are even now going on in Indo-China, Malay. Some of the members of the North Atlantic treaty organization have recently given clear indications that they cannot continue to ~~bare~~ bear the crushing burden of rearmament which our global strategy for defense against Communism calls for without an economic collapse in their own countries. Great Britain has given such indications and so has France; so have some of the other members of the North Atlantic treaty organization.

The strain of accelerated is being drastic effects in the economic life of the nation. General Eisenhower is being compelled to revise his program and his time-table because of this development. Peace through strength is an appealing slogan, but not if the strength - that is, the military strength - saps the economic vitality of a people, forces bitter hardships, austerities which they are unwilling to bear, and which they cannot bear, especially when they do not see the menace quite as grave and quite as imminent as you do, especially when they do not see that the interests of these two halves of the world are quite so irreconcilable as we do, and that no reasonable, mutual accommodation is possible.

They will consent, these treaty nations, these allies - they will consent to increased military equipment, enlarged military establishments, if we will pay the bill and only as long as we will pay the bill. That's not because they're greedy or selfish but because they are not able to. And the American taxpayer will have to support not only his own vast, military establishment of his own country, which is already eating up a huge slice of his national income annually, but the military establishments - the growing military establishments - of half the world.

And unfortunately, we will never be as strong as we would like to be and our potential enemies will never be as weak as we would like them to be. And before we have built up this peace through strength, we are likely to blunder and stumble into the Third World War, as Churchill warned the other day. Certainly the propaganda of this cold war which has been going on on both sides, which has been growing in intensity and virulence and vituperation - this propaganda is fostering and inflaming a movement of hate and bitterness in the world, which make the chances for stumbling into a war in blind wrath increasingly greater.

A few weeks ago a very important American weekly devoted its entire issue to describe the Third World War imaginatively. And Russia's defeat and occupation from 1952 to 1960. Thirty-four authors collaborated in telling the story of this imaginative, though not too imaginative, war - how it would be fought, what weapons would

be used, atomic artillery, the A bomb, and how Russia would finally be crushed, Bolshevism uprooted, not before some of our own cities like Detroit and New York and Washington and Chicago would be practically wiped out, and how after this successful war, as successful as the last two world wars and even more so, the blessings of liberty and democracy would come to the very grateful and emancipated peoples of the Soviet Union.

Professor Fleming, commenting on this issue of this periodical, remarked:

If one reads the whole issue, one can only ask, "What would we think if a Soviet magazine devoted an entire number to picturing in detail the Russian conquest of the United States and the destruction of the American way of life?" Would we conclude that the Soviet Union was bent on avoiding or on inviting a fight with us?

And the samewriter quite correctly remarks:

In our time the business of fighting world wars, whether nationalistic or ideological, is played out. Never again can any victory be won which will promote the values we are most concerned about. These values, whether inherent in private enterprise or civil liberties, can be concerned only by exerting ourselves mightily to prevent a third world war. Another world war is neither inevitable or necessary, but unless many powerful voices are raised in this country in favor of moderation and restraint, we are headed straight towards a war of liberation for unlimited and unattainable objectives, to quote the remarkably wise and pungent letter of William R. Mathews, publisher of the Arizona Daily Star, in the New York Times for October 31. He warned that "we are being shouted into a catastrophic war by the opinion makers of this country." A bell does not toll alone for the men in the Kremlin. It tolls for all of us.

The Assembly of the United Nations is meeting at this very time in Paris. It is a critical session of the Assembly, the most critical one. So much depends on it. The principle item on the agenda is the item of the limitation of armament because the member nations of the U.N. can no longer bear that crushing burden. The United States, Great Britain and France have presented a formal proposal of an arms limitation to that Assembly. The cynics have said that it was only a maneuver.

It intended to steal a march on Russia in the peace offensive propaganda. I choose to think otherwise. I hope that I am not mistaken. I take it for a serious and earnest proposal. America has no imperialistic ambitions. It has no designs on the sovereignty of the territorial integrity of any other peoples. The Americans have no tradition and no temperament for militarism, although I must say that our military are coming to play altogether too great a role in our political and civilian life. We ought to guard ourselves against it. There is no reason to suspect the sincerity of our motives when we advocate limitation of armaments, though we may not always be wise in going about it and though there may be forces in this country who do not want it.

Will these proposals be advocated, cooperative and effective regulation and limitation of armed forces and armaments to the disclosure and verification of the size of such forces and armaments - that is, ^{census} ~~inventory~~ of all the arms of all the nations of the world - which census shall be carried on continuously on a continuing basis and which census shall also include atomic weapons. There is to be an effective international inspection to check on all such information. And arms should be reduced to a level that would decrease substantially the possibility of successful aggression at any time in the future. As far as atomic control is concerned, the proposals state that unless and until a more effective plan can be devised, the United Nations plan for international control - the so-called majority plan - of Atomic Energy and the prohibition of atomic weapons, should continue to serve as a basis. And the proposals further state that discussion of this plan for arms limitation should begin now, but cannot be put into effect while the U.N. forces are resisting aggression in Korea and cannot be put into effect until the major political issues, which have divided the world, are settled - and that I think is sound.

Now, the spokesman for the Soviet Union, Vishinsky, greeted these proposals with derision and scorn. They made him laugh, he said. He couldn't sleep at night for the laughter which these proposals provoked. I am afraid that this peculiar brand of Slavic humor is not appreciated. I suspect, too, that all of this is by way of letting off steam, of putting on the record what he thinks is good propaganda copy for Communist consumption in all parts of the world. He countered with Soviet proposals, and allowing for certain sharp divergencies between his proposals and those of the allies, they do not, in my judgment, seem to be so far apart that adroit and inspired statesmanship cannot find a way to bridge the gap and bring them together.

Reicher suggested a world disarmament conference for all countries before June 1952. What is wrong with the idea, and why need we oppose it? There is nothing wrong with the idea and we do not need to oppose it. We stated in our proposals that while the discussion of our plans could begin now, no plan can be put into effect until the Korean War is ended and until the major political issues which divide the world - presumably the issues between the East and the West - are settled. And surely 7 or 8 months' time is not too long a time for an effort to be made to settle these questions. And so, surely there is no way of settling these major political issues without bringing together the heads of the governments to discuss them. Are we afraid that others ^{not at} ~~and~~ present U.N. members, such as China, might be invited to such a disarmament conference? How can you discuss world disarmament without including the other nations who are not at present members of the United Nations - like Italy, like Spain, like China. There are others. These governments may be called to a conference without necessarily implying official recognition of their status, just as we summoned representatives of Communist China at the United Nations some months ago to discuss with them the problem of the Far East.

Russia further proposes a five-power meeting to discuss all outstanding issues and to arrange for a peace pact. Why not? The major political issues will never be resolved unless they are resolved at the highest level, unless the people at the top who have the decision at their hands, make up their minds to come to an agreement. There is no other way! Are we afraid of the inclusion of the Chinese government in this conference. Let's make a counter proposal for a meeting not of the Big Five, but of the Big Four. Let's see what happens. President Auriol of France has asked for it. Churchill has asked for it. The world is asking for it! Why should the United States oppose it? What have we to lose? Think how much there is to gain. We are not going to lower our guard, so to speak, while these conferences and negotiations are going on. We are not going to reduce our armed forces in the meantime. We are not naive. We certainly ought not to be too proud to negotiate. In the First World War President Wilson let loose a slogan in the world about being too proud to fight. I don't think that was a particularly happy slogan. There are occasions when we have to fight. Certainly we ought not to be too proud to negotiate.

Russia further proposed a cessation of hostilities in Korea in 10 days. Well, isn't it about time that these cease-fire negotiations, which have dragged on for nearly four months, are terminated and there is a real cease-fire? To a layman - and I'm only a layman - there seems to be nothing, absolutely nothing, which stands in the way for an immediate cease-fire, except some technicalities which do not justify the loss of a single life, which do not justify the continuation of the fighting for another hour. It seemed to be that the insurmountable difficulty was that the Communists insisted upon the 38th parallel as the line of demarcation, and we insisted upon the present battle-front beyond the 38th parallel. The Communists have now accepted our position. What in heaven's name is now delaying a cease-fire?

Since these cease-fire negotiations began, which meant that both sides were ready to talk peace, since these negotiations began four dreadful months ago, we suffered 20,000 casualties of dead and wounded.

Russia further proposes the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea in 90 days. There can, of course, be no withdrawal until formal peace is signed, but after formal peace is signed, naturally all foreign troops must withdraw. Do we intend to keep our boys there indefinitely? Whether it be 90 days or 120 days or 180 days - that's not the important thing! It's a subject for negotiation. That's a detail. The principle is important. And with the establishment of peace all foreign troops, ours included, get out of Korea. Korea does not belong to us nor to China!

And when you push away the cloud of propaganda talk which in this instance was more grossly indulged by the Russians than by any others, you push away the cloud of recriminations, the bad manners, which do not contribute to calm, reasoned deliberations. And you get down to the meat of the proposals - ours and theirs - why, there seems to be a large area of agreement which should be eagerly explored - eagerly, avidly explored - because therein lies the salvation of the world.

Both the East and the West want the war in Korea to end and to end quickly. Both the East and the West want the limitation of armament and proper safeguards and supervision. Both the East and the West want atomic control and are prepared for it. Both the East and the West realize that the existing major political issues call for a meeting of the heads of the great powers. Now, is world statesmanship so bankrupt that it cannot find the formula to bring this about? Why should not our delegation, the delegation of the United States, move forward boldly and point the way? Are they terrorized by the MacCarthyism which has swept over our country, by fear of being smeared as pro-Communists? I concede that it does take great courage to stand up against such demagogues and political gangsters. It's

not easy for men in public life to do, but isn't this the cross and the crown of leadership?

America will bless and honor these men in the end if by their courage and their labors they advance the cause of world peace.

Let not the recognition of China and the issue of Formosa becloud our vision. For good or for evil, Communist China is there, and there is nothing we can do about it. We tried in many ways to save the Nationalist regime of Chiang-kai-Shek. We failed. We tried in many ways to bring peace in China during its civil war. We sent many a fine emissary to mediate. We failed. The Communists now are in complete control of China. Some of the great nations of the world have recognized that Communist regime as the legitimate regime of that country - India, Great Britain, and other countries. Are we to leave open the Chinese civil war by arming and equipping a new invasion of China by the remnants of Chiangkai-Shek's army - Chiang-kai-Shek who, according to the testimony of Dean Acheson, had lost the confidence of his own troops and his own people? Are we to involve ourselves in that kind of a war? This would be madness! The American people will never sanction it, never sanction such an idiotic undertaking, concerning which General MacArthur said: "Any one who commits the American army on the mainland of Asia ought to have his head examined."

China may for the moment be working hand in hand with Moscow - she probably is. She may do so for some time to come. When her interests are no longer served by such an alliance, China will turn elsewhere. We have much to offer China, to its industrial development, to its economic rehabilitation, and the Chinese people know that we have been the friends of China for more than 100 years. Let us not permit our world diplomacy to be bogged down hopelessly over this issue. Let us go beyond it to the larger problems. If we can succeed by our initiative and leadership to bring about a partial limitation of armaments, we will be saving so much in money

that we will be able to help much more significantly the economic rehabilitation of the backward nations of the world and thereby make them immune to the aggression of Communist ideologies.

There is a way out of this crisis. We are not in a cul-de-sac, unless we choose to remain there, but have we the courage to take the way out. I hope and pray that we have.

I have often been criticized for saying some of these things, for being critical of the policies of our own government. Well, there is a difference, friends, between preaching and propaganda. In our tradition the classic preacher was called upon to tell his people what was wrong with them and not to tell his people what was wrong with other people. "Declare unto Jacob his sins and unto Israel their transgressions." The business of propaganda is to tell the world how wonderful you are and how bad the other fellow is. Now, there is plenty of propaganda in the world. I choose to do a little preaching. I know that this solution is not a unilateral one. I know that it is not entirely in our hands. And I know that we have made efforts at times and we have not succeeded. And I know that at times our own ~~past~~ efforts have been rebuffed. Nevertheless, it is our moral duty, deriving from our marvelous tradition of freedom and courageous moral leadership in the world, to try and try again, and yet again, and never miss an opportunity to bring mankind out of this dangerous morass in which it finds itself.

There is a way out. The United States of America, in my deepest conviction, can point to the way out if its leadership will have the courage and the vision to go forward, unafraid to the new day.