

Sober Second Thoughts

by Paul B. McKee, Chairman, R.I. Committee on Participation of Rotarians in the Postwar World

The other day a friend of mine remarked, "These are times when almost anything could happen." These are certainly times when the businessman—be his enterprise big or little—is hoping and praying that a number of things will happen so that he can see his way clear to carry a full employment roll and continue his service to the public.

If anyone is inclined to shrug his shoulders and say that everything will be all right, or let somebody else worry about the basis on which we are going to do business following the war, let him read the following editorial reprinted here by special permission of The Saturday Evening Post:

Right in the middle of an enthusiastic outburst in favor of something or other, have you ever felt that gnawing way down in your soul producing the suspicion that you may be just talking through your hat? Well, every now and then, editors feel that way, and being unusually candid in this business, we hereby take our readers into our confidence and expose a few sober second thoughts that are driving us crazy.

For example, it sometimes occurs to us that people may be worrying too much about the horrors of peace. Some of us talk as if it were necessary to expect a grim day when nobody will have a job and every shortcoming would be excused by the reminder, "Don't you know there's a peace going on?" There may be no harm

in suggesting that, when the war is over, there will be instant demand for quite a lot of people to do the thousand and one things that are only half done now—repair the radio, put in that extra bathroom, work in laundries, read meters, deliver milk, fix "flats," survey building lots, repair typewriters.

Another suspicion that haunts us is the possibility that, when we cut loose at Congress for refusing to close the "inflationary gap" of consumer purchasing power, we may be leaving out another inflationary gap which is even more contributory to inflation—namely, unbridled Government spending power. The Republican members of the House Ways and Means Committee made a fair case for the proposition that it does little good to take money away from the public by income tax if ten times as much money is to be shoveled into circulation through unnecessary spending.

Thirdly, as the Calvinist preachers used to set it up, we are often a little worried by the talk about how, come peace, the free-enterprise system is going to have one more chance to produce "full employment." If it doesn't come through, then Harry Hopkins and the deluge. Our feeling of discomfiture is caused by the obvious fact that free enterprise can hardly operate at the point of a shotgun. It has to have a chance to move around a little. If, at the first sign of a tailing off from the present orgy, the bureaucrats cry triumphantly, "There, we told you! The index numbers are off two points already," then the customers will have

to decide between freedom and "full employment" at made work. The present propaganda is not calculated to suggest patience as a factor in making the decision.

On the other hand, we are a little nervous when we hear some business leaders sound off on free enterprise without explaining that they will have to hump some if free enterprise is not going to have a wreath surreptitiously laid on its tomb every ground-hog day. Free enterprise implies, of course, a "profit economy," but it won't get anywhere for long if it does not also function as a "use economy." It is our belief that little will be produced for "use" unless there is plenty of opportunity for profit. Sometimes, though, we fear that Eric Johnston has not convinced all his members that vice versa is also true.

Our final doubt concerns the widespread acceptance of collective security as our future international policy. Too many of the peace plans we read suggest a rigidity which would permit too little opportunity for the inevitable workings of change and evolution, as if the international police force would slap down dissenters first and talk it over afterwards. We must not forget that, as has been well said, "peace, to be durable, must be endurable." Some encouragement is contained in a recent speech by Elmer Davis, who said that we must not freeze the future international organization into something static. We must remember always to leave open the possibility of change." (Copyright 1943 by the Curtis Publishing Company.)

"A World to LIVE In" on the Air

John Burton, who broadcasts for station KNX, Hollywood Station of the Columbia Broadcasting System, devoted one of his recent broadcasts to a discussion of "A World to LIVE In," the book published by Rotary International consisting of 30 articles on postwar themes from "The Rotarian."

Mr. Burton's broadcast centered on the article by Arthur Holly Compton, Nobel Prize winner in Physics. He says this of the book, in general: "The material it contains is so good, so authoritative and diversified that I recommend it to everyone who is interested in establishing a peaceful and a just world order."

A few copies of "A World to LIVE In" are still available at 25c each, six for \$1.00, or 40 for \$5.00. Orders should be sent to Rotary International, 35 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, 1, Illinois.

It ISN'T Too Early

The weather may still be wintry, but that doesn't mean it's too early to plan for Victory Gardens. Although Victory Gardens were a great success last year, the Government is asking for even more and even better gardens this year.

At the Regional Victory Garden Conferences held all over the country during February, certain things were stressed: (1) the importance of early planning, choosing the soil, preparing it and having good seed ready to plant the moment weather permits; (2) the economic value of Victory Gardens in producing good crops and aiding in the war effort; (3) cooperation with other groups sponsoring Victory Gardens so that there will be no duplication of effort; (4) encouraging Victory Gardens as a means of curbing juvenile delinquency.

Keeping youngsters busy in the garden keeps them out of mischief, and the proper kind of sympathetic backing will give them the satisfying feeling of having a part in national defense.

Training Schools for 4-H Leaders

There are 60,000 boys and girls in Indiana actively interested in 4-H Club work. The Rotary clubs for several years have sponsored schools for the training of adult leaders in this work. Interest in the project has grown steadily. Recently three schools for training of adult leaders were conducted at different localities in the 154th district, and all were well attended. Rotary clubs, with the cooperation of local County Agricultural Agents, located men and women leaders from their communities, and arranged for and financed their attendance at the three training conferences.

The clubs feel that this activity provides another opportunity to intensify the "Food-for-Victory" program.

You can't spell Rotary with an absent "t."

—Springfield, Illinois
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