

Of Destiny

New Congress Bears People's Edict To Halt Pressure Blocs

There have been darker days in our history when a war Congress of the United States has placed its burden on the nation but seemed more confident than the streak of disaster at home. It is our opinion that the 76th Congress will hear destiny calling more loudly than it ever called before. This Congress was born in war, of the labor struggle of power politics in its life will be spent in the same grim fashion. It will take its place with the ground-work for wartime living already laid, but will walk in the peril that all may be undone. The fight against inflation for instance, is not won. Pressure blocs that which knifed Leon Henderson over a period of six years shocked the nation; but it needn't have. The office of the Attorney General has announced that over 800 firms are being investigated on similar charges, that fifteen firms willfully delivered such goods, that two more have already been indicted.

first one was as a sort of ambiguous public chief during Mayor Douglas' administration, and we happen to know that he gave it his best. Probably he would have got somewhere except for the two insuperable conditions of a divided City Council and a dissenting police department which bogged him down. His second assignment was as acting postmaster, and here too he has acquitted himself honorably and with credit.

Traitors

Firms Defrauding Government Should Pay Heaviest Price

The case of the United States against Anacosta Wire and Cable Company, charging fraud and the foisting of defective equipment upon the armed forces over a period of six years shocked the nation; but it needn't have. The office of the Attorney General has announced that over 800 firms are being investigated on similar charges, that fifteen firms willfully delivered such goods, that two more have already been indicted.

For months Army officers have forbidden Anacosta equipment to be shipped abroad, and limited it to maneuvers; Russians had protested that it was 50 per cent defective. To the extent of \$5,000,000 in contracts, that equipment endangered the lives of United States soldiers all over the world. But, so far, the only action taken has been a civil suit asking return of the millions to the Government.

It seems to us that such calculated fraud in time of war amounts to simple treason, that the laws covering such cases must be adopted into law. Attorney General Francis Biddle's declaration that Anacosta was engaged in "the most reprehensible case of defrauding the Government and endangering the lives of American sailors and soldiers ever to come to the attention of the Department of Justice" calls for action.

Officials of the company and those of all others found guilty of like crimes against the nation should be served with sudden and stern justice. These are saboteurs who did not come by submarine.

Hot Cash

Public Response to Victory Fund Drive a Major Triumph

The part that big money plays in winning the war, like General Somervell's theory on the War of Gadgets, is right down the American way. This week the people of the United States may look upon themselves in amazement as the money-rainiest nation in the planet's history. The first Victory Fund Drive, in itself the largest financial endeavor ever wangled, is over the top and still climbing.

If the fat linked zeros of billions seem remote from battle, and leave the little bond-buyer cold, he can remember that without the billions there are no bullets, no battles; without his small contribution there can be no sky-high total. The drive has already netted well over eleven billion, and the Treasury hopes for twelve by the end of the month.

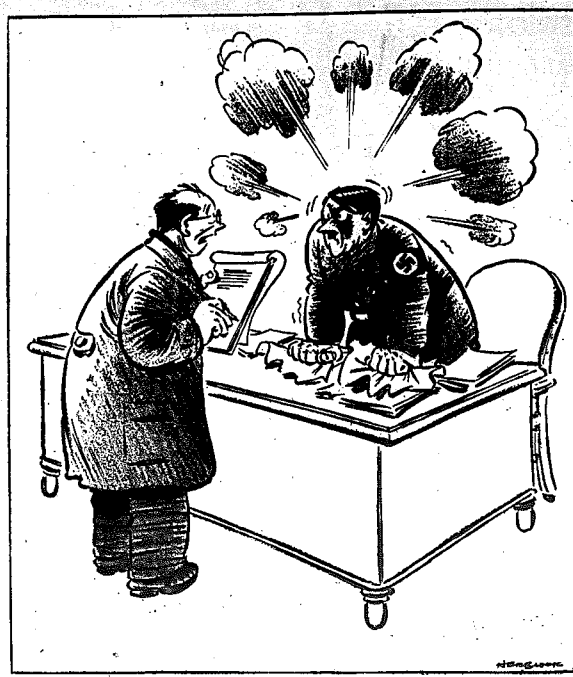
And that's not just that. The result is the first difficult phase of major financing is past, that such such drives every year will pay the costs of war and reduce the national deficit to a figure almost within reason. The revenue act of '42 is expected to produce 26 billions of Federal income, and next year (through the addition of a withholding or sales tax) Secretary Morgenthau will aim for 30 billion.

The response in one month by the people and institutions of the country helped solve a major problem. It is by no means done yet; costs may increase, new quotas may be harder and fiercer. But the fact that the first Victory Fund was subscribed about 50-55 by banking and non-banking investors keeps alive a potential threat of inflation.

But the first big job is done, and it marks a point in the progress of the war as plainly as if our troops, say, had blasted the Axis out of Tunisia. It was a blitz victory at home.

"Any New Year Predictions for 1943?"

By Herblock



Picking Our Leaders

They'll All Be Imperfect

By Samuel Crafton

AND probably the only way we can keep the Administration from picking the wrong leaders for the occupied countries is to deny utterly that it has any right to pick leaders at all. Maybe what we have is the right to recognize councils for each country, councils representing every major shade of opinion in the nation involved, and not the right to tap one man gently on the head with the State Department seal and make him official.

We go in for the council idea, which would involve, say, setting up a council of de Gaulle as well as Darnatist elements in North Africa, we give up the right to pick the very best man, and to put him in absolute charge. But we also give up the right to pick the very worst man, which is the right we have mostly used. It may be, judging from recent events, that this right to pick and choose among national leaders is dangerous for any nation to have in regard to any other nation, even too dangerous for us to have in regard to the occupied nations.

Don't we promote dictators by picking and choosing individual leaders for the occupied countries? If we were picking continents from a tray? Our last adventure among the French pastry was not so healthy.

Maybe we have overweighed the importance of our own predictions. Somebody in the Administration must be very fond of Otto of Austria. I have lunched with him, and I like him, too; he is one of those candid chariters, with whom you can talk, without being people, who know and understand. He has stirred somebody in Washington, and that has made him head of the recruiting committee for the Austrian unit of the 81st Army, leaving it heavily handicapped, overtime to the whole business. And maybe nobody ought to have the power to act on such a prediction. Predictions are not important. Whatever will work is important.

And it might have been a safeguard, if we had followed the rule of establishing councils, as we said last week, "Christians in America: You men get together in a room and work out an agreement on how to fight together, and bring it in, and we will recognize the whole lot of you, and the leader you pick yourselves. But if you leave one important, particularly one popular group out, down with you; we won't even give you parking space in our anti-chambers."

It would be much better, of course, if we had the guts and the clarity to select the absolutely best and most thoroughly certified democratic leaders. But this is a war full of spot military situations, hasty decisions on the field of battle, intense and intricate political struggle among the nationals of each distressed country, equally intense and intricate struggle among our own diplomats, each of whom is pushing his own ideological peanut down some road of his own, with a view to the personal rule of establishing councils would take away our right to put a de Gaulle in absolute charge, but it would also take away the right of a man like Darlan to creep into something like absolute charge, too. The council idea would be an official admission that we are not perfect, a discovery which has profoundly depressed many Americans, from Wendell Willkie to Pearl Buck.

So far, we have muddled gorgeously. We declare our right to pick and choose leaders, when we give the tap on the head to Otto. Then we assert, in the Darlan case, that we have no such right, that we have to work with all factions. On the basis of that noble declaration, we then proceed to work, in North Africa, with one faction. Thus the declared purpose regarding all shades of political opinion ends up, in North Africa, with Darlan as high commissioner. His death only brought the muddle to a specific end.

In a couple of years of such an armistice, the men and women involved might learn more about living together than they possibly can from a couple of years of beating each other up on the head. The council idea is not perfect, but neither is the political trick in England, nor the agreement not to strike in America, and in war the Communists or what you want, you do what wins. You use the best imperfect plan you can find for an imperfect situation.

phenomena themselves. Organized Christianity regarded with contempt, but expelled no imposing intervention, through the nations where it was still powerful, in the case of Germany, though the Catholic Church supported world-wide political action against Communism.

Yet the basic aims of Communism, to achieve an economically egalitarian and just society, are more compatible with Christian ideas than are Communism more compatible than the total abolition of Nazism, as is the universalism of Communism more compatible than the total abolition of the Hitler concept. The church is a living faith and an integrating ethos even if some frustrated Jews, who have fallen in harping their religious ideas, have a universal ethos, even though it teaches the dominance of the materialistic—as does, in practice, capitalism.

The crisis of Christianity arises out of failure to make a living school, but the main spring of personal, communal and international life. Christianity is not confined to sects, races, and in which no conservatism supports a status quo. It is not even conservative in the sense that it actively operates to conserve mankind from the chaos resulting from predatory nationalism, predatory capitalism, and predatory laborism, creating a stable community based upon a living ethos.

Yet the whole of our civilization is sick for a living ethos. Its experiments and adjustments fall for the lack of an integrating faith. Given a living faith and an integrating ethos even faulty measures would save us. They will always be faulty, for Man is of fallible mind and flesh. But a main current of its life has no strong imperatives of good and evil, whose sense of sin is confined to sexual urges, and in which no vital faith burns brightly throughout all its parts, cannot bring order out of chaos with even the most brilliant forms.

The Christian idea, like Mary with her unborn Child, is homeless in the modern world. It will find its new home, and build, but a new order must be created, and to which it gave birth, is not to perish. But those institutions which are confined to cash-drink. They must be economic, political, social, and international.

What's the chances of getting him a decoration? He just licked the tar out of a German polio dog twice his size!"

Little Santa

Have Faith

By Dick Young

CHRISTMAS has come and gone. And this is the day after. Most of us have pleasant memories and a sense of a joyful holiday. But the spirit of Christmas didn't strike me until a couple of days before and a dirty-faced urchin brought it to me. He made the season real and genuine, not just a word he lapped, but by the bright smile that lighted up his face at the mention of Santa Claus.

I was leaving the restaurant across the street from the City Post Station when I noticed the chap, he was probably three years old, gazing at a picture that hung low on the front of the fountain. He wore a pair of dirty overalls and a hat of his own. He was rolled up, as though to bring my vision in line with his and to see what was attracting his attention. A play-acted finger pointed to a picture and announced, "That's Santa Claus, that's Santa Claus." He had a bright, excited smile that came from the heart burst upon his face, that bore traces of a chocolate ice cream cone, not long since enjoyed. "That's it," he said. It was a cheap advertisement for something, the picture showing the Merry Old Gent in the modern military conveyance.

"Yes, that is Santa Claus, all right," I replied. He was so sure of himself and displayed such confidence in the mythical character of good cheer that I felt fortified to press him for more information. "For what is Santa Claus going to bring you?" I asked. "In all the majesty of three years and the cocksureness of one who has been around, he drew himself up and boldly announced, "A scooter!" And I came back with the reply, without hesitation, "A holster and some candy and some nuts."

I left him with an upsurge of the Christmas spirit that had not faded before. The next day I was called upon to make the preparations for the season within my own household had not made a dent on me, but that kid with his earnest and sincere faith had touched off the spark that lit the fuse of Christmas. And for the remaining days his innocent face and dancing eyes and his utterly unalterable belief flashed before me time and time again. That made Christmas real and I was glad I had stopped to chat with him.

Faith and confidence like his will lead us to ultimate victory and to the day when the dark cloud will be forever removed from the face of innocent children "on earth" shall be as real as that youngster's faith in Santa Claus.

U. S. Future

The Last Mile

By Raymond Clapper

A READER sends in from Uvalde, Texas—no I wasn't Mr. Gardner—a quotation from something I wrote during Christmas week last year. The quotation was as follows:

"Peace has been the dream of the ages, but nothing has come of it. Or has something come of it? I wonder. . . Why should we give in? Why should we give in now when we may be pulling up the last mile toward the goal of peace? . . ."

"True, people have been climbing for centuries and they are tired, but we are a long way up the hill now. It is worth while to press the journey still a little farther."

Those words of last year reached me on a day when I was leaning on the pessimistic side. Sometimes lately I have been wondering whether we were going to make that last mile. And I'll tell you why I am just a little down about it. The state of mind of people toward the Administration which their Government is not a happy one today. We might as well face it. The relation of the people to the Administration is clouded by so much doubt and suspicion now that unfortunate consequences could result.

We saw the tragedy happen to Wilson and Hoover. In each case the country went through a period of violent stress while its faith was finding new foundations. In the case of Wilson the country was shaken from the idea of collective security back into the idea of safety through isolation. In the case of Hoover, the country was shaken from its confidence that business prosperity would keep two chickens in every pot and it turned to the idea that it would keep one for oneself and one for the neighbor.

This Administration and all of its friends may well take stock now, before it is too late, if indeed it is not too late already. It would be a tragedy if the nation had to finish the war and begin disbanding the peace under an Administration in which a majority of the people had already lost confidence as in the case of Wilson.

Some of the criticism of the conduct of the war is overdrawn, a substance of truth blown up into grotesque proportions. To a considerable extent that will right itself in time. But beyond that people are affected by this war in a strange way. It is an offshore war and so much is secret that its magnitude is difficult to grasp. So it reaches out like an unseen hand to clutch people by the throat, with rattling, with goods disappearing completely, with sons and husbands disappearing into the unknown where they may be either alive or dead. The psychological strains of such a war are heavy and lead to bitterness against those regarded as the authors of these circumstances.

President Roosevelt and his whole Administration need to work on this war in a hard, there has been nothing more important in our generation than that America make this victory, that we should not afford to have the chances wrecked by an internal upheaval that would wash everything down the drain again.

Mr. Roosevelt missed one bet in not making better use of Wendell Willkie. He must, for the sake of ends that are bigger than he or his Administration, leave nothing undone to deserve and hold the confidence of a majority of the country so that the task that destiny has lodged in his care can be carried forward.

World Milestone

Crisis Of Christianity

By Dorothy Thompson

THAT there is a crisis in the Christian Church and in the Christian world is a fact which the World War that rages over the entire globe had its origins in Christianity, in the West, where for centuries two irreconcilable beliefs have laid claim to man: that of Force, and that of Christianity.

The contradiction has given our civilization its curious christopagan quality. For the civilization we celebrate is a mixture of the two. Force is the generator and instrument of its most powerful dynamism—nationalism. Naked or veiled, Force is behind the rise of imperialism. Order and man, unshamed, Force animates the contrary dynamic of Communism.

There is an irreconcilable contradiction to the faith and theology which, for two thousand years, has been professed by the men of the West. He whose birthday we celebrate with a universal festivity, an exchange of gifts preached the Unity of all Mankind in God—a concept absolutely irreconcilable with Nationalism. He taught a moral law governing the behavior of men among themselves both as individuals and as groups.

The Church he founded was a human society. The Lord's Prayer is a prayer for this earth. The Christian life, as he taught and practiced it, is concerned with the relations between man and God, Man and Man, and Man and Men. The mundane principles are co-operative, benevolent, mutual, and all-inclusive. They are honorable, just, and true. They reach complete personal responsibility and self-accounting, together with social responsibility, the accounting of the whole.



"What's the chances of getting him a decoration? He just licked the tar out of a German polio dog twice his size!"

Raise By Adoption

WHEN the poor Eugene Field wrote a daily column for the Chicago Daily News, he decided he would write more money than he was getting and asked the publisher for a raise. The publisher said no. The desperate Field finally hit on an idea. He gathered up a dozen of the most ragged urchins he could find in Chicago's streets and marched them into the publisher's office, after coaching them to act as his children. There Field made a pathetic plea about the importance of raising so many mouths so many mouths so many mouths. The publisher solemnly heard Field out, then gave him a raise.