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An Invitation To Disaster

PURE or elementary isolationism, the political theory holding that the United States can live behind her ocean moat without reference to the rest of the world, vanished in the flames of World War II. The airplane has broken the barrier between nations, and not even the thickest-skinned American Firster can ignore the fact that physical isolation is impossible in the new atomic age.

To replace the earlier, primitive theory, however, there has not come into being a theory of advanced isolation. The new theory is a logical extension of the old, but where the first contained certain elements of wholesome naivete, the new is compounded largely of cynicism and undiluted nationalism. It recognizes that the United States must finally take her place as a world power, but insists that she must do so only to protect and expand her own economic and political interests.

Large and important elements of both major political parties are accepting the views of modern political leaders. They have done so gladly. Others have swallowed it reluctantly and with obvious distaste, justifying their action on the familiar ground that the masses of Russian Communists who have made it inevitable. Our current foreign policy incorporates it, by and large, and calls it "diplomatic realism." And, since the furthering of our own interests, or even their protection, may require the use of force at any moment, this theory also underlies the Navy's demand for Pacific bases and the Army's insistence on universal military training. Thus the old-fashioned isolationist, who has seen something of a pacifist and a consistent opponent of Army and Navy expansion, has become, or has been replaced by, a 1947 model isolationist: who is a leading instigator of the current arms race with the Soviet.

None of this, of course, is particularly surprising; it is only a variation of the pattern established after World War I. There is a higher degree of realism in our current decision to place our faith in arms than in the disarmament which we are, as we are, we did 25 years ago, turning away from the internationalist concept of peace through world government.

THE latest, and to us the most disturbing, contribution to the new isolationism, has come from the South. It came in the form of a joint declaration by the thirteen agricultural commissioners of the Southern States calling for high protective tariffs to protect Southern crops against world competition. And it has been signed by the most prominent leaders of several important Southern industrial groups.

This is a good deal more than a break with an ancient Southern tradition. It is a break with a tradition of care and caution, palatable to the masses during the past two decades by a Tennessee state's rights, but of elementary honesty; Bilbo has testified that he personally received money, goods and services from the Federal Government, and then used his influence to help them get awards involving millions of dollars. If the Senate accepts him in the face of that admission it will simply condone the least of his crimes.

Nevertheless, the reports from Washington indicate that most of the Southern Democrats are prepared to go down the line for their disreputable colleague, come what may. The reports are so definite that the Southern Democrats are prepared to go down the line for their disreputable colleague, come what may. The reports are so definite that the Southern Democrats are prepared to go down the line for their disreputable colleague, come what may.

nesean named Cordell Hull. And it must also be taken as an admission by the commissioners that the agriculture of the South is no longer self-sustaining, for the tariff is nothing more than a form of Federal subsidy. The tariff has been an artificial high price. But, perhaps most important, it must be regarded also as an admission that the South's internationalism is beginning to fade.

And in this there is a cause for concern to the nation at large. However illiberal the South may have been in other aspects of her political development, she has never before been infected with the virus of isolationism. Southerners traditionally have accepted their place as citizens of the world and as the responsibility that go with it. There were, and are, sound economic reasons behind the region's internationalism. It has also been something of a state of mind—an eternal willingness to drag the squirrel gun off the mantle and fight anywhere in the world if the need arose. And along with this willingness to fight there has also been a notable willingness to experiment boldly in the cause of peace.

This attitude may be regarded as an anachronism, but it has long acted as an invaluable counterbalance to the isolationism of the Mid-West and of New England. Southerners, from Calhoun forward, led the anti-tariff battles in Congress, because it was to their immediate economic interest to do so, but also because they knew that economic isolation is the key to the whole pattern that has led the nation twice to the brink of destruction. In the crucial months before America's entry into World War II Southern Congressmen, including some of the bitterest critics of his domestic policy, were Franklin Roosevelt's mainstay in his magnificent fight for internationalism.

That attitude, we think, still prevails in the South, as evidenced by the almost universal editorial condemnation of the agricultural commissioners' tariff proposal. We hope that the commissioners are only as naive as they appear. We hope that they are "thirteen against the people." But they are important officials, and they must have reason to believe that they are speaking on behalf of our farm population, which speaks on behalf of a majority of Southerners.

The proposal of the commissioners cannot be dismissed lightly. Forwarded to a Congress known, by virtue of its Republican majority, to be disposed to upward revision, it affords the Executive and industrialists lively ammunition for their present, short-sighted campaign for protection against foreign competition. It is a threat to the nation's, for its implications go far beyond the immediate economic considerations it sets forth; it may very well turn out to be an invitation to disaster for the nation as a whole, that up to now, has known better.

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People's Platform

On One-Party Rule

CHARLOTTE, N. C. (Special News Service) — An individual is a unit of the collective civil whole...

We believe that the obligations of citizenship owed to the Government, which according to our notion of democracy is all the people, carry inherently the right to participate in Government. Participation implies the right of opinion, and the right to disagree. That is the essence of American democracy—the ballot is the concrete evidence of it.

But in the Southern States we have had a very small expression of opinion by the citizens and a state government by one party for 80 years. Can it be, or is it reasonable to believe, that through the decades for three generations one political party in this nation for so long has been right and the opposition party has always been wrong? Is it possible that for 80 years the Democratic Party has always been right and its leadership inferior?

Can it be that generation after generation we are slipping back into a state of mind that precludes the full and free expression of opinion? Can it be that we accept the idea that long continued power by a political party places it beyond opposition? Or over the generations has the average citizen been built up so powerful that he is unable to resist it?

As the year closes today, it may be wise to look back at what has happened in the past year. The most striking economic development of 1946 is the general lowering of prices. For instance, there are about 77 per cent more stock of junior coats and suits now on hand in proportion to the stock in 1940. The expense of new fur, new sportswear, girls' wear, handbags, negligees, robes, and coats has fallen in price. And 1946 was not one of our most prosperous years.

the rights to disagree is preserved—and practiced? Do we not know as a matter of reason and historical experience that if opposition to that party dies or it weak, then because of lack of opposition, the cessation of opposition—the Democratic Party inevitably becomes an oligarchy resting upon an ossified public opinion, becomes minus the quality of democracy, and has changed its form and lost its virtue?

On the other hand it is incontrovertible that when the Republican Party becomes strong the Democratic Party must become strong in order to overcome it. And what makes a party strong? Why, of course, the quality of able leadership and the ability to give good government. As just a simple commonplace fact does it not plainly appear that strong opposition forces any party, as a necessary corollary to its success and retention power for any length of time, to put forth its strongest and consequently its best men, to give the best government of which it is capable?

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WASHINGTON (Special News Service) — A group of progressive Democrats will meet here in Washington on Jan. 4 to discuss the program which it is hoped eventually will be adopted by the Democratic Party.

On the first place, the effort is to make headlines. The day-long meeting will be off-the-record and the conclusions reported to the press at the end of the second day.

One reason why this meeting has special significance is that perhaps the widest and the most diverse group of labor leaders is participating in a deliberative and careful effort which has been made to exclude Communists. It is believed under the auspices of the Union for Progressive Action.

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Mood Of Suspicion

IT is now a put to name to the politico-economic mood in which the public is reacting for the new year. It is a mood of suspicion.

But the note of suspicion, of waiting, of holding one's breath, is not the only note. Customers are increasingly distrustful of their own merchants.

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Another Voice

A Note On Baffling Bristles

On this day of ponderous reports of comic portent, it is perhaps not amiss to refer to our recent spore of conscientious ruminations into the subtlety of post-war know-nothing in the toothbrush industry.

Drew Pearson: Sabotaging OPA Disastrous To Economy

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Salesrooms Almost Deserted

STORIES throughout the country are loaded down with surplus stocks of women's wear being anything but the most important economic news before the USA—inflation and the high cost of living.

Bowles Was Right

SO, clearing away the political debris, it's look back and see who was responsible for getting us into all this. Chapter I—the War. Whether we liked price control or not it worked under the war.

Emotional Price

Perhaps the reason to come the American republic is a walloping realization that there is a need for a change in national policy, and that students and men of heart may be better guided than boys primitives, shouting the neat formulas which leave out so very much.