



Omaha, Nebraska, Saturday, March 24, 1945

Standards of Value

(A Lenten Meditation by Ruth Taylor)

A great man of letters once defined a cynic as someone who knew the price of everything and the value of nothing.

There comes a time when each of us must pause and consider just what we, as individuals and as an integral part of a great nation, hold most dear.

If we were asked what is the motto of the United States, we would surely answer, "In God we trust." America gives to its citizens freedom of conscience, not license for unconscience; freedom of belief, not the destruction of all belief.

For our standard of values, we have a yardstick of common belief in the omnipotence, the omniscience and the omnipresence of God, no matter whether we learned our faith in cathedral, church or synagogue. It is our common denominator. The Ten Commandments belong to all alike.

We are a God-fearing people. We know what our standards of value must be. They were laid down by the Prophet Micah centuries ago when he said, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God." All three great faiths subscribe to that yardstick.

Inasmuch as all religions are based upon the same fundamental principles and concepts, religion should be the means of bringing about a better understanding between people, and should unite them in common bonds of fellowship. If, however, people will persist in regarding religion as a source of separatism and a divisive thing, their religion may do harm rather than good. If it does, it is the fault of the followers rather than of the creeds themselves. They are not following their own faith.

Dr. Bennett in, "Christianity and Our World", went still further when he said: "Unethical religion is a far greater danger to true religion than secularism. It is possible to be closer to God in seeking what God wills while denying his existence, than in defending an unpure order of things while praising him.

From our own religious teaching we know what our standard of values must be. It is up to us to follow them as individuals and as a nation.

The Common Defense

"Moral Interdependence"

(by Emerson Hugh Lalone, Associate Editor, The Christian Leader)

On the eve of the American Revolution, a patriot wrote the following words on the American cause: "The sun never shined on a cause of juster worth... 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity will be affected even to the end of time, by the proceedings now."

These words fit our situation to a fearful degree. Our "affair" is of all continents and of the whole world. Ours too is a fateful seed-time. It is democracy's seed-time. In the thousands of communities of these United States we are now sowing either the seeds of health and honor or hate and horror. The fate of democracy and free religion depends on how we sow. If the seeding be furtive ideas of distrust of other men and other classes, the harvest will be destructive of both democracy and religion.

As men and women of religion and as Americans fighting for freedom, we are therefore called on to wage an unremitting and resolute fight here on the home front against the anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, anti-Negro stories that continue to make their destructive rounds in spite of our need for greater unity now than ever before in our history. "Yes, but aren't the Jews this or that?" Nonsense! Tragic, dangerous, irreligious, un-American nonsense! There are bad Jews, of course. Most Jews are fine decent men and women. There are bad Catholics. Most Catholics are fine, decent people. There are bad Negroes. Most Negroes are fine and decent. There are bad Protestant Yankee gentiles. Most Protestants are fine and decent.

He ill serves his country and his God who attributes the badness of any man to the entire racial or religious group to which that man belongs. For in so doing he sows the seeds of class strife.

At home and abroad we will get on with the job successfully only as we remember and act on the truth that our continued independence results from intelligent and moral interdependence.

SIDELIGHT OF THE CENSUS

The 1943-44 report of the Bureau of the Census out sometime ago, was somewhat disappointing. Revealing a substantial rise in the portion of the population classified as nonwhite, it nevertheless failed to indicate that the Negro population has risen much above the rough reckoning of 10 percent of the whole attributed to it in recent years.

Nonwhite includes, in addition to Negroes, Orientals and Red Indians, and those groups cut quite a swath into the 14 and more million members of the colored minority. Those persons who had ventured to reckon the Negro's numerical strength in the neighborhood of 15 million have either got to back down or to question the efficacy of the Census Bureau's methods of arriving at its estimates.

We are in the latter category and although our contention has no basis in proven fact, we make it nevertheless. We believe the Negro population in this country is closer to 16 million than it is to 14.

Our reason for saying so may have something of ante-bellum flavor, but distasteful as it is, the fact remains that we are not in all things entirely removed from the influence of our previous condition. It is a regrettable truism that too many of us still dis-

trust white people, object to their "meddling", and just on general principle rarely tell them the truth when questioned about our private affairs. In substantiation of this, the writer recalls an incident during the last census-taking when the mistress of a home in which 13 persons lived, blandly told the interrogator that only four persons lived there, turning away to offer hourly advice against "telling white folks our business".

This incident when retold has met with a counterpart many times. Multiply that by thousands of understandably wary Negroes and you have reason to doubt the accuracy of the Census Bureau's estimate.

It is unfortunate for the Negro if his numerical strength is greater than it appears to be that it is not known. For the measure of his influence is taken in the force of his numbers.

NEW PURPOSEFULNESS

We think we see in recent trial verdicts, both by juries and judges, indications of new purposefulness in the administering of justice to Negroes charged with crime against Negroes.

The laxness of the law in this regard has become well nigh a national tradition. In the South, Negroes who kill Negroes are given what amounts to almost every consideration short of decoration for ridding the community of another Negro. The North while not as frankly contemptuous of the right of wronged Negroes to be avenged, has winked off its responsibility with paternal allowance of some kind of predication that "Negroes will be Negroes".

Locally, we have been pleased recently to note evidence of awakening by the courts to their responsibility toward the Negro community. In several instances in which sympathy for some "poor, ignorant colored boy" has been asked, the court has bucked at such deception and has sternly insisted on deciding the cases on their merits.

Susceptible, as all people are, to the influence of preponderant opinion, the Negro, as a race, has come to hold black life very cheaply. Added to this is the encouragement to violence furnished by frustration and by ignorance, which has but one sure means of expression—action; the result is the average Negro community's high rate of assault and murder.

Firmness in the courts will not entirely mend this situation, but along with education and racial equality, it will help.

"ONLY THE STRONG CAN BE FREE"

Before the war, a favorite topic of discussion was the danger involved when government lived beyond its income. In those days, a billion-dollar deficit in the Federal budget brought cries of alarm from every corner of the nation. A thirty or forty-billion dollar Federal debt was considered ominously big. Now we have a debt many times that, and the annual deficit is a breathtaking fifty or sixty billion. Yet, few even bother mentioning it, and fewer still express alarm. However, this should delude no one into believing that the fears of former days were groundless.

Figures now show that bank deposits, notes in circulation and public debt in the United States, have far outstripped similar figures for France and Belgium, from the standpoint of percentage increases during the war. We think of France and Belgium as on the verge of financial collapse. So where does that leave us?

The things that can save this country from the financial plight of Europe are its natural resources and great productive capacity. The combination of these two can develop enough commerce, enough jobs, and enough income to support a great debt. But we must not forget that, while our wealth in the form of natural resources is an act of providence, the tools to exploit those resources were developed by enterprising men. The industries of oil, power, mining, transportation, and farming, as we know them in this country, came from the work and organization of individuals. Because they are owned and operated by millions of individuals, they are called private enterprises. As long as they remain private enterprises, they will continue to expand and grow in the future as they have in the past. If given the opportunity, they will bring new strength to America, for America is a young nation. Her people and her industries can overcome the problems of a gigantic war debt.

Our greatest hazard is that through fear of the effects of debt and inflation on prices, we will abandon freedom in favor of permanent strait-jacket regulation and a planned lowered standard of living—regulation that will lead to oppression, destruction of private enterprise, and eventually our ability to produce. We should remember that fear can destroy freedom. We should also remember, now as never before, the words of a great statesman who warned that only the strong can be free and only the productive can be strong.

SHADES OF THE UNITED STATES!

Argentina, that troublesome neighbor to the south of us who persistently leans toward the trappings of dictatorship in preference to the institutions of democracy, has now decreed that there shall be no more chain stores in the Argentine. According to reports, the organization of new chain store companies is prohibited, pending the drafting of new regulations, and present chain stores are forbidden to open additional outlets or make any changes in the premises of existing stores without special permission. Shades of the U. S.! This particular piece of tyranny is not a copy of Germany or Japan. It probably was imported from the statute books of some of our own states. Possibly it came from currently proposed, anti-chain store legislation in Congress itself.

For years, American politicians have harped on imagined evils of chain stores. Punitive tax laws in state after state took a toll of chains, until gradual-

News-letter WHAT'S HAPPENING IN Washington

THREE PREDICTIONS: To keep the home folks from backsliding the armed forces assert war production will be maintained after VE day "at close to 100%." Nevertheless we repeat:

1. Substantial cutbacks must follow VE day. Pacific Ocean distances are more than twice Atlantic runs. When practically all current war production goes to Pacific, our cargo ships can't carry more than 60% to 70% of present total war shipments. We can stockpile, but only for a few weeks; before long, there won't be enough warehouses to hold the overflow. So—

Very soon after VE day, look for cutbacks bringing war production down perhaps to AS LOW AS 50% of present output.

2. Do not believe statements that Jap war requirements will not be substantially different from those of European war. Drastic changes will be made.

Many contractors will receive telegraphed 100% terminations on the day the military decides war in Europe is essentially over.

3. First cutbacks will be raw materials, especially where surpluses would be embarrassing after final victory. Last to be cutback will be end-products. Contracts approaching completion are less likely to be cutback than those in earlier stages.

LABOR POLICY CHANGES? For difficulties in getting wage increases, union labor blames Fred M. Vinson as Director of OES (Office of Economic Stabilization), and to some extent his immediate superior, Justice Byrnes, Director of OWM (Office of War Mobilization). For political reasons, they give FDR an out—he must concentrate on military and peace policy programs: "too busy to know what's going on." Vinson, now RFC chairman, is out of way; union leaders hope for easing of wage policies.

New appointments: William H. Davis as Director of OES and George W. Taylor as WLB chairman, are regarded by labor leaders as "probably the best we could look for."

Davis has been chairman, Taylor vice-chairman of WLB since its inception in January, 1942. **PAST RECORD:** Board used January 1, 1941, as base for wage adjustments. Since then living costs have risen 26.3%; average hourly rates of workers who have not changed jobs, 36.7%; average weekly earnings, overtime included, 76.3%.

**65¢ MINIMUM:** Recently answering a query from Senator Claude Pepper (Dem.—Pa.), Davis said he saw no harm in classifying wages below 65¢ an hour (\$26 for a 40 hour week) as substandard—the figure to which employers could make increases without getting WLB approval. Such a rate had no chance under Vinson. He resisted even 55¢ an hour minimum if employers could not pay such wages without raising their selling prices.

**ON "FRINGE INCREASES":** Labor leaders will demand modification of Vinson's last important OES decision, setting narrow limits for fringe war increases. Says one labor member of WLB: "As chairman of the Board, Will Davis supported every one of the 'fringe wage increases' voted by the Board. It is hardly likely that as Economic Stabilizer he will change his mind as to justice of these increases."

But recall that Salmon P. Chase as Lincoln's Secretary of Treasury declared the printing of greenbacks a national necessity. Later as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court he held such action both unnecessary and unconstitutional. Ultimate

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## The Omaha Guide

★ A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER ★

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responsibility has often changed attitudes.

If Byrnes, acting for the President, decides—as he probably will—to keep the lid on until after VE day, Davis may simply decline to reverse his predecessor.

Of Taylor, new chairman, another WLB labor member says: "While Taylor is tougher than Davis in granting increases, at least there'll now be a man in the top spot (OES) who is more likely to approve Board orders than Vinson was."

**AFTER VE DAY,** President must face issues of "if and when" to reverse wage policies. Safe bet: Little Steel formula will not be changed during period of high rate war production; when economy is jolted with severe 3% to 6% cutbacks and labor loses overtime, Administration will find way to fulfill repeated promises that "take-home pay must be maintained."

Reduction from 48 to 40 hours and loss of overtime would require approximately 30% increase in hourly rates to produce today's take-home pay. Washington thinks raises of 10% more probably 15%, will be granted—perhaps gradually.

**JOHN L. LEWIS' MAJOR DEMANDS** and what he will get:

1. Contract termination by either party on 20 day notice.
2. Royalty payment of 10¢ a ton to union for use as welfare fund.
3. Lewis doesn't expect to win demand this year; later will more vigorously renew demand.
4. All supervisory employees except one superintendent and one foreman per mine to be brought under union contract.
5. Lewis will not press.
6. Elimination of North-South pay differential.
7. Eventually, but not this year.
8. Differential of 10¢ an hour for second and 15¢ for third shift.
9. WLB's new "fringe standards" will apply—must not exceed 4¢ for second, 5¢ for third shift.
10. Vacation allowances, now \$50 maximum, to be raised to \$100.
11. Miners will get substance of this demand, WLB's new "fringe standards" permit one week's pay after one year's service, two weeks' after five years, 55% of miners qualify for two weeks' allowance.
12. Full, instead of two-thirds, pay for portal-to-portal.
13. Portal issue rests partly on Supreme Court decision expected this month—whether full travel pay is required under long-hour law.
14. Freedom to quit work in mines serving firms involved in a legal strike—secondary boycott: Will not be granted. Otherwise, Lewis could dictate settlement of every future labor dispute. Behind scenes, CIO oppose; Lewis could use power to destroy CIO unions when they become involved in jurisdictional disputes with other unions. Lewis hopes to organize, or with AFL unions after Lewis' re-joins.

\* Since 1920, Great Britain has collected and distributed \$30 million through a royalty tax for welfare purposes (first, at 2¢ a ton, then dropped to 1¢; now back to 2¢). But this fund is administered by tripartite body: employer, union, and government.

**Randolph, Webster Visit New Orleans for FEPC.**  
New York, N. Y. March 15 1945  
A. Philip Randolph and Milton P. Webster, International Officers of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters will speak at a great public mass meeting in the Booker T. Washington Auditorium in New Orleans, Sunday afternoon March 25 in the interest of Bills S 101 and H. R. 3222 for a permanent FEPC. The meeting is being arranged by the New Orleans Council for a Permanent FEPC.

DO'S AND DON'TS



Do avoid staring at people. You make them uncomfortable and resentful—Both men and women love to be admired, but not stared at. To make it short—it is very rude.

ly it dawned on the consumer that such demagoguery was undermining mass distribution at minimum prices. Malicious attacks on chains today get a cold reception. The public cannot be kidded any longer into believing that chains are destructive monopolies. They have been in existence many years and anybody with eyes can see that they not destroyed the independent merchant. Chains have increased competition in distribution, and have been a major factor in holding down and stabilizing prices.

The people of Argentina are not as lucky as the people of the United States. They will probably be forced to sit by while the whimsies of their political masters decide by whom, how, and at what price the necessities of life will be edistributed to them.

**GOOD AND BAD "CO-OPS"**  
A United States senator says of marketing cooperatives: "Through cooperative effort a thousand small farms can pool their interests and thereby perform the services that might otherwise be done by a single corporation, while at the same time they preserve their sense of ownership and full responsibility upon which sound and stable government itself depends."

The senator's comment illustrates the basic purpose of the marketing cooperative which seeks to build individual enterprise that operates for a reasonable profit.

Candidate: "How did you like my speech on the agricultural situation and problems last night?"  
Farmer: "Wasn't bad, but a good day's rain would do a lot more good."—Metuchen, N. J. Dairy Farmer's Digest.