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Give Light and the People Will Find Their Own Way

THE BIG THREE SHOULD MEET

THE Big Three should meet soon. It is unfortunate that so many decisions must wait on the personal consultation of three men. But that's the way it is. So the quicker they get together the better. This would have been necessary in any case, because of the death of President Roosevelt. Post-war European problems and Pacific war demands make it imperative now.

There are plenty of reasons why such a meeting is not convenient at this time. If duties at home required the recall of Foreign Commissar Molotov from the all-important United Nations conference in San Francisco, certainly Marshal Stalin has his hands full in Moscow. Prime Minister Churchill, in addition to his manifold official obligations in domestic and foreign affairs, is preparing as Tory party leader for a general election. And, of course, President Truman is not yet settled into his new job.

But the postponed and new allied decisions requiring a Big Three session are of an urgency which cannot be put off without serious consequences.

AT THE TOP of the list is Japan. What is Russia going to do? How? When? The general understanding that Russia will move at her convenience, and the common estimate that four months would be consumed in switching her military strength from Europe to the Far East, are not sufficient. If Russia is going to fight, a much closer allied liaison must be perfected than Stalin permitted in Europe, even after the Yalta blueprint. And more acute than military questions are the political. Does Stalin plan to grab control in Manchuria, Mongolia, Korea, Japan, as he has in Eastern Europe?

Next on the list is Poland. The allied commission in Moscow failed to put into operation the Yalta agreement. The three foreign ministers, in almost constant session at San Francisco, failed to the point of not even being able to discuss the subject any longer. By kidnapping and imprisoning non-Communist Polish leaders, who were to have been members of a new democratic Warsaw government pledged at Yalta, Stalin has created a worse impasse.

Though less publicized, the problems caused by Russian dictatorship in Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Austria are hardly less explosive than the Polish. The Italian situation is equally dangerous.

THEN THERE are all the delayed decisions regarding Germany. After months of negotiations on these issues, German surrender catches the allies without adequate agreement on the rules of joint occupation, on reparations, on the use of "slave labor," on territorial disputes, or even on punishment of war criminals.

Overshadowing all other European questions is whether there is to be a real peace conference, and when. Present strategy in Moscow, and to some extent in London, is for the European big powers to make a series of settlements to suit themselves, and about two years hence call in the United Nations to rubber-stamp an unchangeable status.

A Big Three meeting soon seems to be the only chance of restoring and strengthening the highly essential American-British-Russian co-operation, which is now cracking under the Polish and other disputes.

MENTAL TORTURE

A REPORT from Henry J. Taylor, in Germany, may help to explain the inexplicable. Liberated American soldiers, in some cases, feel ashamed to greet their comrades. German guards have systematically drummed into them the idea that they were cowards because they surrendered and did not die fighting.

Mr. Taylor quotes one artillery major, captured in Normandy: "I don't know how to face you men."

Remove a man from the world and tell him a lie, however monstrous, over and over. First his faith is weakened; then he begins to believe it.

A somewhat similar system was used on the German people themselves. They were isolated from outside influence. Execution was the penalty for listening to a foreign radio or reading a smuggled paper.

Day after day Goebels and his propaganda men beat home their ideas of the master race, sub-human peoples, mistreatment of Germany, invasion of Germany, the duty of Germany to "resist aggression" and restore world order.

UNLIKE THE American prisoners, most Germans half believed or wanted to believe even before Goebels started working on them. It is not wholly surprising that eventually they accepted as gospel some of the most outrageous lies in history.

It will be difficult to restore the mental balance of these deluded Germans, even with the restoration of the free flow of world opinion across their borders. Nor will it be easy to restore the self-confidence of the brave Americans who have been subjected to this mental torture.

But Gen. Marshall, quickly sensing this situation, has taken steps to speed the latter process. Liberated American soldiers are to be welcomed back as conspicuously as possible and given every assurance that they have been remembered, their sacrifices appreciated.

It is one of the most pitiful aspects of this war that these brave men should have any doubts of their own courage.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS AGAIN

SPeAKING of helicopters, one planner of post-war aviation predicts that rural commuters will go to and from work in distant cities—zip! Just like that by helicopter. Says a pilot who gets wages for flying helicopters: "They're not practical in cross currents among tall buildings."

From our spot on the ground, it looks as if this town will have to worry about congestion of busses, street cars and autos for quite a while. After gasoline rationing is loosened the congestion will begin to reappear. And it will get no better fast as new cars reach the market, unless we are ready with adequate regulation.

Public parking space, reduction of left turns, control of curb parking, clean supervision of arterial flow—we interrupted community work on such problems shortly after Pearl Harbor. It is time to resume our studies and get set for action.

REFLECTIONS

The Moral

By John W. Hillman



IN THE WAVE of horror and revulsion that has followed the publication of pictures and descriptions of the Nazi death camps, perhaps some of us have lost sight of the moral underlying these demonstrations of bestiality.

We are not so far removed, culturally, from the law of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." That is proved anew by the wave of letters proposing that similar punishments be meted out to Nazi criminals—suggestions that they be exhibited as beasts in a cage, or tortured as were their helpless victims.

But such is not the way of civilized people, however outraged. We can not afford to stoop to the level of those we fought or, in defeat, they will have destroyed us as they could not in battle. Rather we should learn from their example. And there is an important lesson for all of us in those heaps of broken bodies, and in the calloused souls of those who, by their cruelty, have shown how little ground humanity has won in its struggle to rise from the slime of the past.

'Well and Clearly Stated'

THAT LESSON is well and clearly stated in a thoughtful editorial by Sgt. H. F. Butler in Top Billing, the weekly newspaper published at Billings General hospital.

"If this writer were the praying sort," writes Sgt. Butler in the current issue, "he would pray not merely for the souls of the miserable victims of Nazi concentration camps, not merely also for the hopelessly diseased souls of the criminally insane keepers, but still more for the souls of all humanity. For what the Americans discovered at Belsen and Buchenwald . . . and what the Russians earlier discovered at Maidanek represents the possibilities latent in all people."

"Cruelty is not localized, nor is it a Nazi or Jap monopoly. Popular interest in bloodshed may take various forms, from enthusiasm over bullfighting to enthusiasm over lynchings, from absorption in murder mysteries to the irresistible impulse to gape at the mangled victims of an auto accident. The religious and moral principles of a well-ordered society impose restraints which keep all but the criminally insane from yielding to obscure impulses to shed blood or inflict suffering.

'Destroyed as Much as They Could'

"BUT THE NAZIS destroyed as much as they could of the religious and moral influences that stood in their way. They legalized the hunting down and torturing of their religious and political opponents, and thus made possible the eventual horrors of Maidanek, Belsen, Buchenwald and other murder factories."

"Let us not feel too smug and superior. The rest of the world knew, even before the Nazis seized power in 1933, what the doctrines of 'Mein Kampf' would almost certainly produce. Everybody could predict it, but nobody did anything important about it."

"The lesson to be learned from Belsen, Buchenwald, Maidanek is not just the commonplace conclusion that the Nazis are fiends. The lesson is rather that those horrible places represent the logical end of violence and aggressiveness. There is what can happen to any society that throws its restraints overboard. With a multitude of lynchings and bloody labor battles to our past discredit, we Americans must be careful to observe the law and keep the peace in what may turn out to be our most difficult years, the post-war era."

'Those Pictures Remind Us'

SGT. BUTLER is obviously a man who knows what he is fighting for. Just as obviously, he knows what we must fight against—not only now but in the years ahead. And he knows how we must fight. His words to remember lest we, like the Pharisees, praise God that we are not like others, forgetting that we, too, are clay and that only good will and tolerance and decency stand between us and the spawn of the jungle. Those pictures of the torture chambers, those shriveled skeletons of living death, those piles of bones and rotting flesh remind us. It could not happen here?

It could not happen.

It can not happen—if we learn well the lesson of Buchenwald and Maidanek and Dachau, if we remember that they are but the last way-station on the road of violence and intolerance—the road that leads to destruction.

We must not let it happen here.

WORLD AFFAIRS

The Great Question

By Howard Vincent O'Brien

SAN FRANCISCO, May 11.—Looking at a picture of Mussolini's end—doing the Fascist salute with both arms and upside down—I recall Vernon Bartlett's tale of his visit with the Milanese adventurer, shortly after the first clashes in Ethiopia.

Mussolini was at his desk in the Chigi palace. He rose, his face set in its famous frown; but Bartlett, who had "known him when" was not impressed.

"Tell me, Musso," he said, "what's the pitch on all this saber-rattling you've been doing?"

Mussolini's dark features relaxed in a grin. "Show business," he said, chuckling. "Just an act. You see, Bartlett, old pal, I've made a study of this dictator stuff. Nobody knows more about it than I do. And, so far as I now can find out, no dictator ever started a war—and lived to finish it."

How right he was!

'No Wiser Than You or I'

NOW THAT UNCIO has gone into its second week, it is fair to make a guess as to what it has accomplished—and is likely to accomplish.

I find the proceedings easier to understand when I put myself in the place of the statesmen who are trying to end war and establish a peaceful world.

They have a tough nut to crack; and they are no wiser than you or I. Their first step is to find out what they want—and they don't clearly know. Their second step is to work out some basic ideas on which all of them can agree.

It appears to me that their problem is really much simpler than they make it seem. The disputes over procedure, the selection of committees, the technique of voting, the subtle distinction between a "mandate" and a "trusteeship" . . . all these things are irrelevant. The one hard fact is that there are only three powers in the world whose opinions count at all. They are the United States, Great Britain and Russia.

We share with Britain a common language and a common economic philosophy. But we are competitors in the world's market; and the foreign policy of Great Britain has always been based on a balance of power. Britain might thus side with us—or with Russia, whose philosophy of statism is in direct conflict with our philosophy of individual liberty.

'Difficult, but by No Means Impossible'

RUSSIA WANTS peace as much as we do, and probably needs it even more. Great Britain certainly wants peace. But Russia does not believe that peace can be achieved by resolution. It believes that power is the price of peace. And so, in their hearts, believe Britain and the United States.

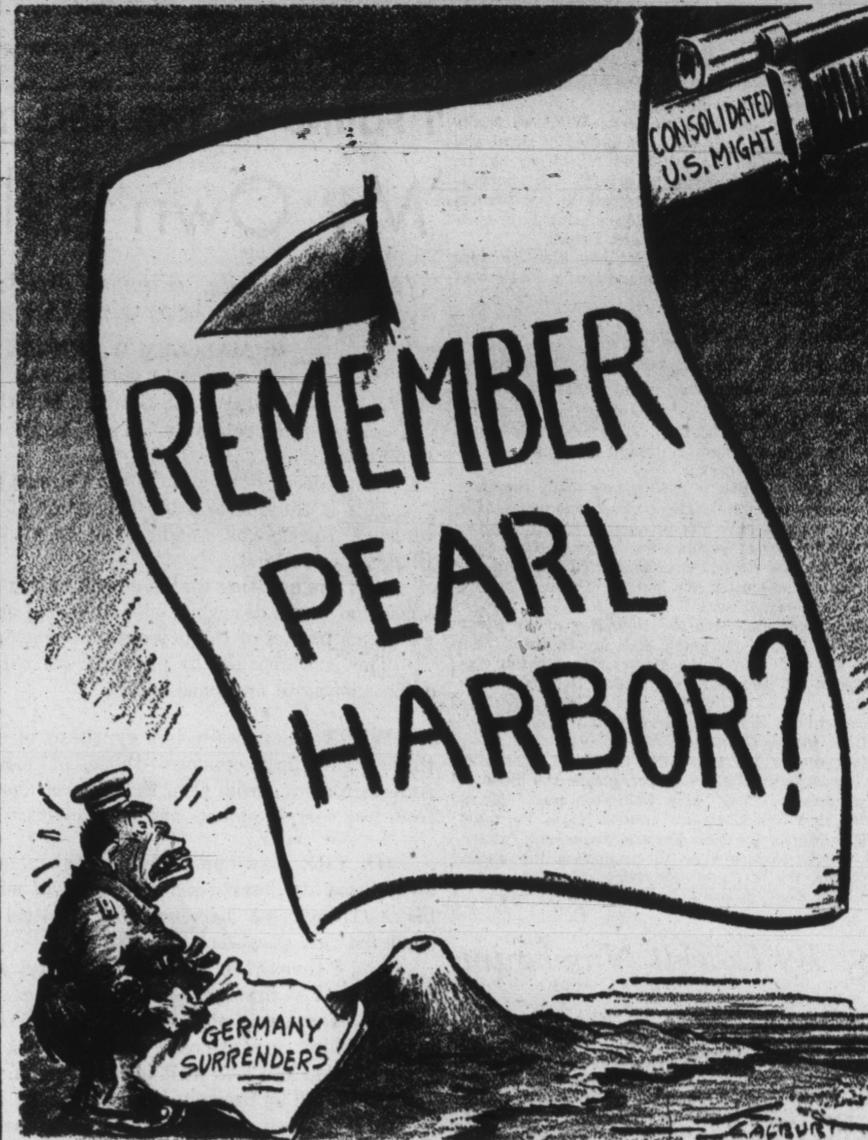
Therefore, I think the proceedings at San Francisco boil down to an effort to work out some formula which will recognize the interests of Britain and ourselves, on the one hand; and Russia on the other.

This will be immensely difficult, but by no means impossible. It will not profit us, however, to become confused with peripheral issues, such as education in Liberia and the definition of "justice."

We are likely to go farther and faster if we accept the grim realities of the situation: Admit our fundamental conflicts of interest; and stumble on from there.

No matter how eloquent the charter which will emerge from San Francisco, the great question will still remain: Can the lion and the lamb be made to lie down together—can capitalism live at peace with collectivism?

And Now for That Memory Course!



Hoosier Forum

"THE WAY HE TOOK HIS LUMPS"

By Mattie Withers, 1325 N. Arsenal ave.

Sometime ago, John W. Hillman had a piece in this paper, the subject of which I have forgotten, but the substance of which was that a man should be judged by the way he takes his lumps. In support of which he quoted copiously from that most brilliant of contemporary senators, ex-Senator Ashurst. And in line with which I would like to give some personal reflections.

It has always been a wonder to

me how the people of Germany could allow themselves to be led by such a man as Hitler.

There is nothing about the man so far

as I can see that would have any

appeal to the mass of any people.

I do not subscribe to the belief

that the Germans are a super race,

but I do regard them as being of

quite average intelligence.

This makes it all the more puzzling why

they would accept Hitler's leadership.

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