

# Comment

## The Catholic Voice Pleads for Peace

AS THE war-mongers continue their hysterical harangues intended to create a public opinion which will force the President to take America into war, prominent Christian leaders courageously raise their voices for peace.

Speaking in Boston, before the 47th annual Massachusetts State Convention of the Knights of Columbus, Cardinal O'Connell excoriated the war-mongers and their catchy slogans.

"Of all the things in this world," said His Eminence, "I think that we most have to be on guard against are these slimy slogans that mean nothing. They are all insults to one's intelligence. And worse than that, they are dishonest."

"Make the world safe for democracy."

"The war to end wars."

"Oh, how slick that is. It sounds so nice. 'The war to end war.' Of course, everybody wants to end war; so they rush in to end the war that they begin. We have had wars ever since, and the worst one the world has ever known has come about since this slogan was manufactured to fool the people."

"What a crime to deceive the poor people!"

"To bring about what? To bring about disunion, confusion, and, little by little, the loss of everything they hold dear — the loss of their own children, the loss of their own possessions, the loss of their civil rights!"

The Cardinal's 45-minute address was the bitterest and most forceful of several he has made in recent months denouncing the interventionists who seek to plunge America into Britain's war.

His Eminence declared that America must be adequately armed for defense but should direct its efforts toward peace rather than war.

"Yet to say the word 'peace' nowadays would be almost to bring down upon your head a torrent of abuse," he added. "Well, is that rational, or just hysterical?" he asked.

The President has used the analogy of putting out the fire in Europe before it spreads to our own country. In this connection Cardinal O'Connell said that America should 'not run around to everybody else's fire, trying to extinguish all blazes, and come back and find its own house in ruins.'

In an address before the Curley Club in Washington, D. C., the Most Rev. Michael J. Curley, Archbishop of Baltimore and Washington, warned:

"We gained nothing in the last war. We did not make the world 'safe for democracy.' We only helped to lay the foundation for future wars."

"Today, when nations set up gods of their own, following them blindly, there can be no peace. Because, when men meet again around a conference table to get all they can in order to gain prestige — then peace is left outside."

The Archbishop declared that "if we enter into the fray, let us hope we win, but if we do, we will pay the price. We shall see the collapse of our whole economic and social setup, with the result that we will face a situation which will far outdo the situation we faced in 1929 — and subsequent starvation."

The Daughters of Isabella of Ohio, in state convention at Lima, heard Most Rev. Carl J. Alter, Bishop of Toledo, point out that Catholics favoring peace are not "appeasers."

"We do not want peace at any price," Bishop Alter asserted. "We are prepared to defend our rights and our territory whenever they are attacked . . . But we want to be sure we are on the defense. We want to be sure we are not guilty of aggression."

"What are our rights?"

"Where do they begin? Where do they end?"

"We must have a clearer definition of our foreign policy."

"Until men realistically and practically return to religion, there can be no basis for a common brotherhood, for a right order, and without order there can be no peace," the Toledo Bishop asserted.

"We advocate peace, rightly understood. We defend our rights as a duty. We do not wish, nor do we think it is possible, to impose our way of life by military or political power or force."

Very Rev. Robert I. Gannon, S. J., president of Fordham University, added his voice to those pleading for calm reasoning and common sense in determining America's part in the war.

He attacked the small clique of war-mongers who begin wars for their own aggrandizement and then, by propaganda, induce innocent citizens to join the jingoists. As the propaganda increases, he said, real thinking by the people is denounced as "traitorous."

In almost every case wars are avoidable, but "men are troubled and will not keep on thinking," Msgr. Gannon said.

"In almost every case there are interested outside parties trying to discourage thought by feeding the flames of passion. In fact, the secret pattern of an aggressive

war is becoming more familiar to us every day.

"There are usually small, interested groups, entirely selfish and highly organized, who decide ahead of time that destruction of property and loss of other men's lives is for some reason to their advantage. They know that the vast majority of citizens, if allowed to keep on thinking, will seek a rational solution, so that systematically, step by step, the organized few play on the passions of the emotional people."

"The tom-toms sound in the city streets, louder and louder and louder, until men drop their books and rush out of their homes to join a war dance. When most of the population has lost its mind and is marching toward the cliff, anyone who keeps on thinking finds himself a dangerous traitor to his country."

At an assembly of Holy Name Sodality members in Mount Vernon, New York, Right Rev. Francis N. Walsh, vicar delegate to the Army and Navy, and a veteran of the World War, warned Congress that its members will be held responsible for every drop of blood shed by American boys in a foreign war.

Msgr. Walsh emphasized that he is not an isolationist in matters of peace — that he believes this nation should collaborate with others to maintain peace — but, he added, "in matters of war, I am an isolationist."

"I believe that while this nation should adequately arm itself for defense, it should resort to war only when unjust aggression is directed against itself and only when war is the last resort to repel it."

"I am willing that the Congress of the United States should decide whether or not war is necessary to repel it. But I warn the members of Congress that in the event of war they, individually, will be held accountable before the Judgment Seat of Almighty God for every drop of blood spilled and for every ounce of treasure destroyed."

In an article entitled, "What Are We Fighting For?" in the May issue of *Scribner's Commentator*, Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen punctured the argument that the United States is fighting for "Christianity" by aiding England.

"How can we be fighting for Christianity," he asked, "when we are not living for Christianity? To call Hitler anti-Christ does not mean we are for Christ. If at least 60 per cent of the parents of the United States do not care enough about God to give their children a religious education, do you think they would fight to defend the rights of God?"

"If 60 per cent of Americans consider religion no more essential for their own peace of soul and the moral conduct of their children than a game of golf, would they be ready to die for religion any more than they die for golf? Men only fight for what they love."

"How can we be said to be fighting God's cause when we call that nation which has driven religion from its borders, murdered millions, and officially proclaimed atheism, a 'friendly nation'? I mean Soviet Russia."

"How can we say we are fighting to preserve liberty, justice, and democracy, while embracing in friendly gesture that tyranny which has snuffed out the liberties of one hundred and sixty million people?"

## The Delanos

DANIEL W. DELANO, who described himself as a "fourth cousin of President Roosevelt," told the Associated Press at Hartford, Connecticut, recently, that a forthcoming genealogical study would show that the President has followed the footsteps of the Delano, or maternal branch of his family.

The Delanos, he said, "have been American leaders for three centuries" and added that the family included "many naval officers, a Treasury comptroller, a New York mayor, a United States Senator from Ohio, as well as the first winner of the national liars' contest!"

Do tell!



# Comment

## Walter Winchell's Wail

WALTER WINCHELL, in case you didn't know, is the former vodvil hooper turned "journalist," who changed a quiet Sunday evening into an Orson-Wellesian horror with his hysterical "scoop" about an F.B.I. round-up of 17 young "traitors" caught in the act of overturning the United States Government. Consistently, he clamored for their conviction, and pressed for investigations of Father Coughlin and SOCIAL JUSTICE Magazine with the rest of the Commies; but, conveniently, forgot to apologize to the Christian Front boys—or to the Rev. Father Coughlin—when the United States Courts dismissed the charges.

Mr. Arthur Robb of *Editor & Publisher*, the magazine of the newspaper trade, discusses Mr. Winchell's status. By reason of the wide publication of his New York gossip column, it seems, Winchell has to be regarded as a newspaper man.

We quote *Editor & Publisher*:

"Walter Winchell has raised again the eternal question of the right of a columnist to get his stuff printed by newspapers which subscribe to his service. In his column of May 7, in the *New York Mirror*, Winchell relates that one of the newspapers on his list omitted his column twice last week, the editor explaining, under the standing Winchell head, that 'the material therein is, in our opinion, abusive, factually open to question, etc.'"

"The two omitted pieces dealt with the speeches and activities of Charles A. Lindbergh, and, in the opinion of this writer, it was an understatement to call them 'abusive.' They were excellent examples of the Winchell name-calling technique, dealing with their subject in a fashion that would not be tolerated in any other department of any newspaper . . ."

Every item of news or comment that gets printed is subjected to the approval of some newspaper man, without whose approving judgment it could not get beyond the copy-desk, Mr. Robb points out.

"That," he adds, "has nothing whatever to do with the freedom of the press guaranteed by the First Amendment. It is an entirely different question."

"The freedom guaranteed in the *Bill of Rights* is a freedom from Government restraint. It is a safeguard of popular rights against infringement by Government. It does, of course, carry with it the implied responsibility that the owner, editor, or publisher will work for the public good, and that he will not step into the sphere prohibited to Government by coloring or suppressing news against the public interest."

"The columnist is not an editor, and he does not share the responsibility of an editor for the presentation of the news and comment of the day. His assignment is the production of several hundred interesting words every day, usually free from the limitations of editorial policy of the several papers he serves. Mr. Winchell has enjoyed that freedom to a degree unmatched by any of his contemporaries, and we cannot say that his use of it has always reflected credit on American newspaper work . . ."

"The editor who ditched the Winchell columns was not withholding news or information from his readers—he was keeping out of the paper information which, to his mind, was factually doubtful, unkind, and abusive of a man whose activities were already receiving adequate attention in other news and editorial columns. That was a proper exercise of the editorial function."

"We hold that the editor of a newspaper, acting for the ownership, must assume the right of final judgment on what appears in his columns. He cannot abdicate that right of judgment to any writer, no matter how famous, highly paid, or distinguished the latter may be. As an editor, he has no right to alter the opinions which appear under another man's by-line, but he most certainly does have the right to omit material which he regards as unsuitable for publication, and he has the right to do so without subjecting himself to name-calling by the offended writer."

"Another instance of incipient rebellion by featured writers against editorial judgment has recently been noted in the columns of New York's egregious *PM*," the *Editor & Publisher* article continues. "When Lindbergh resigned his commission, Ben Hecht was moved to review the flier's public career in about a column of verse. *PM* preferred to note the event sardonically under one of its 'File and Forget' heads and omitted the 'poetry.' Immediately came a strong telegraphic squawk from Mr. Hecht at Malibu Beach, tendering his resignation, which seems to be almost a weekly routine with him."

"Two days later, *PM* printed the exchange of telegrams between the outraged versifier and Ralph Ingersoll, the editor, and also the verse that had been left out. The space might have had better use."

"Last week, *PM* published a story on the activities of the mysterious William Rhodes Davis, written by Kenneth Crawford and George Reedy of its Washington bureau. The story was printed as written, but its publication produced a protest from the writers because it was printed where the want ads would be if *PM* carried want ads. Again, there was an exchange of long telegrams between the Washington men and Mr. Ingersoll and again, the full text of protest and reply were printed with prominent display . . ."

"If Ben Hecht, or Mr. Crawford or Mr. Reedy had resigned because of their variance of views with Mr. Ingersoll, that would have been news for *Editor & Publisher*, and it might have had some passing interest for readers of *PM*, but there seems to be little interest in the fact that they cooled off after popping some torrid language. If newspapers gave their space to the things that almost, but not quite, happen, there would be little left for events that actually do come off."

"The various viewpoints expressed by Winchell, Hecht, Crawford and Reedy, also Ingersoll, are a far cry from the journalism of a generation ago, which operated on the theory that the story and not the man who wrote it was news. The newspaper was bigger than any man on its staff, bigger than all of them put together, and it is difficult to imagine a newspaper owned by Adolph S. Ochs, Victor F. Lawson, or William Rockhill Nelson filling columns with inter-office memoranda between the editor and his reporters. They had a tough enough job in whittling the available news of importance to the public into the space available for its publication. And it seems to us that

they set a sounder basis for genuine journalism than can be found in *PM*'s practice of conducting its business in a sidewalk showcase."

## Christian Revolution

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and would anesthetize all possible qualms of conscience, awakened by Father Connell's caution.

"The same issue of *America* carries another defense of the *Inter-Faith Movement*. This one is from a layman, one Mr. Higgins. He seemed very much wrought up that any adverse criticism should be visited upon a program such as that of the *Inter-Faith Movement*. But, being a layman, he may be praised for his good-will as freely as he may be forgiven for his lack of whatsoever theological science may have a bearing on the case. Some laymen are too prompt to accept security of social and financial position or even the promotion of mere amiability as a means of salvation. But in the words of Hamlet: 'That would be scanned.'"

"Some defenders of the *Inter-Faith* program, such as Father Parsons, tell us that no speaker is permitted to discuss points of Faith. Why then is it called an *Inter-Faith Movement*? Does that really describe its purpose? Why give the movement a religious title?"

"Its sponsors claim that the purpose of the movement is to 'create harmony among the different faiths.' But how can harmony among different faiths be effected, if the points of faith which may be the basis of a lack of harmony are strictly banned from discussion? Would it not seem necessary that they be properly explained and evaluated? How can any of the faiths be assisted and their adherents benefited unless the differences between these points of faith be noted and an effort be made to clarify them?"

"A neglect of this process might imply a lack of courage, or even of honesty, in those who profess these faiths. Any hesitancy in clearness of treatment of the points of faith might suggest a dogmatic equality of all beliefs, and might favor the theory of indifferentism in religion. Why, then, call it an *Inter-Faith Movement*, if all consideration of the relative value, of the content of any faith must be kept from the people? Does it invite us to join those who scornfully discard dogma? And if it really be not a Faith Movement and, therefore, calling for doctrinal precision, why was it instituted and why is it led and manned by religious leaders?"

"Perhaps, it is not a Faith Movement. Its purpose may be chiefly the securing of social, political and economic advantages. If so, why not leave it to laymen whose ambitions for such goods are more readily admitted and whose worldly skill would assure greater success?"

## New Deal Minstrels

A CONTRIBUTOR with a flair for the theatrical volunteers the following dialog for a radio script, but the office quipster thought it would go better in a minstrel first part:

*Interlocutor:* Who was that convoy I saw you with?

*End Man:* That was no convoy, it was a patrol!