

Looking at WASHINGTON

Nations Seek Program For More World Trade

The representatives of seventeen nations, after a meeting in London, are reported to have reached an agreement on a proposed world trade charter, which, if it is put into effect, is expected to result in a greatly expanded world trade.

The deliberations of the experts will result in reports to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. There is no doubt that their recommendations will be scrutinized by those more concerned with domestic political realities, but there is hope that substantial progress will be made.

The trade charter that looms is said to be firmly fixed upon rules originally proposed by the United States. Clauses in the charter will cover the admission of nations to the organization, the prevention of unemployment, the economic development of backward areas, most-favored-nation-treatment, tariffs and preferences, quantitative restrictions and exchange controls, subsidies, state trading, emergency provisions, restrictive business practices and commodity agreements.

It is a hopeful sign that the representatives of the great trading nations of the world can get together and find a solution to the complicated problems that face them. The success accomplished is surprising, even to the optimistic, and it is hoped that the agreement will result in an international accord.

This depends upon the attitude of the United States, because of the preponderant position that this country has attained in the economy of the world. It is generally recognized that the failure of this country to carry through on its policy of expanding world trade will wreck the world

trade charter and that, on the contrary, if the United States determines that its intelligent, self-interests require its fullest cooperation, the effort will be a tremendous success.

Two Sides To The Idea About Mandates

There may be much merit in the suggestion of Sir Maharaj Singh, of India, that the United Nations administer dependent territories, instead of designating a power for the purpose.

The Indian delegate said that, under the proposed system, there will be speedier progress by the people concerned toward self-government or independence.

Without a rather keen study of the colonial system, as well as the question of mandates, one is not able to speak categorically for or against the proposal, but the people of the United States can get some ideas in connection with the administration of this country in the Philippine Islands.

Certainly, if the Philippine Islands had been placed under the administration of an international organization, the United States would not have expended millions of dollars for the benefit of the Filipino people, who have been considered something of the wards of this nation.

The international organization, what it might be, would have no source of revenue except that provided by contributions, from members. Thus, it would be unable to finance public improvements and policies designed to improve the welfare of people without regard to immediate financial return.

Army Must Find Some Way To Tell People Its Story

Secretary of War Robert C. Patterson says that 160,000 men are needed for the occupation tasks in

Germany and Austria and 170,000 more in Japan and Korea, as of July 1, 1947.

The official points out that the burden of taking care of displaced persons has grown, that the Army is not out of Austria and Italy; and that increased prices have reduced the buying power of the Army's funds. "Present appropriations", he insists, "are inadequate" because of factors beyond the Army's control.

It is important for the people of the United States to understand that the fruits of victory in Europe and the Far East can be jeopardized by an unwillingness to spend the small amount of money necessary to support adequate occupation forces. Mr. Patterson appeals for manpower, money and public support and, we suspect, the most important is public support.

In order to gain the full support of the American public, it is advisable for the Army to constantly tell the American people of its problems and its duties in foreign countries. The average citizen is somewhat impressed with the idea that "considerable economy is possible in current appropriations and does not yet understand why the economy put into effect may jeopardize our position abroad.

We do not know how the Army can get its message into the consciousness of the American people, but we are frank to say that the need exists. Not knowing the facts and without an understanding of the problems, there is a larger least public apathy prevent the Army from receiving the money and manpower necessary for the accomplishment of its task.

Greatest Era of Prosperity Possible But Not Certain

The United States is experiencing its greatest era of prosperity, declares Secretary of the Treasury John W. Snyder, who warns the people not to adopt a depression psychology, which, if unrestrained, might "literally talk us into at least a temporary period of hard times."

The Treasury head cites some interesting facts in regard to the economic status of the country. He says that industrial production is at a peacetime high, that employment stands at a peacetime high, freight car-loadings are at the highest peak since 1930, electric power output is at an all-time high and steel production has reached a post-war peak.

In addition, on the favorable side, the liquid assets of individuals are about \$190,000,000,000, which is another all-time high, compared with less than \$70,000,000,000 at the end of 1941. Moreover, the net working capital of corporations nearly doubled during the war years and is now estimated at \$54,000,000,000, which is also a record high.

Mr. Snyder points out that the liquid assets are "more widely distributed than ever before" and says that "this is another important factor in our economic well-being." He does not see how a fair appraisal can justify a feeling that a material recession is inevitable.

There is no reason to dispute the strength of the statistics mentioned by the head of the national Treasury, but one should understand that the threat of a depression psychology does not stem from what people have. It is based upon what they expect in the future. With prices rising and with controls abandoned, there is apprehension on the part of many consumers that the cost of living will outrun possible increased income.

This conviction will be sufficient to retard buying and if enough people act upon the assumption, there will be something of a slow-down in purchasing. If this is widespread, it could affect employment and begin the cycle that leads to recession.

Court Says Religious Belief Does Not Justify Illegal Act

In an interesting decision, the United States Supreme Court has decided that the practice of plural marriages is no defense to an individual prosecuted under the Mann Act which makes it an offense to take a woman or girl across State lines "for the purpose of prostitution or debauchery or for any other immoral purpose."

The defense set up the defense that they belonged to a religious sect, which maintains that plural or "celestial" marriage is a mandate from God.

Mr. Justice Douglas, in the majority opinion, said the "polygamy practice constitutes an 'immoral purpose', which has 'long been outlawed in our society' and that to defend polygamists on the ground that they are motivated by religious beliefs

"would place beyond the law any act done under claim of religious sanction."

There can be little doubt of the correctness of the conclusion reached by the Supreme Court in this regard, but it is evident that the opinion means that there is a limit to the guarantee of freedom of religious worship. Obviously, an individual could defend any alleged criminal act by the simple assertion that it

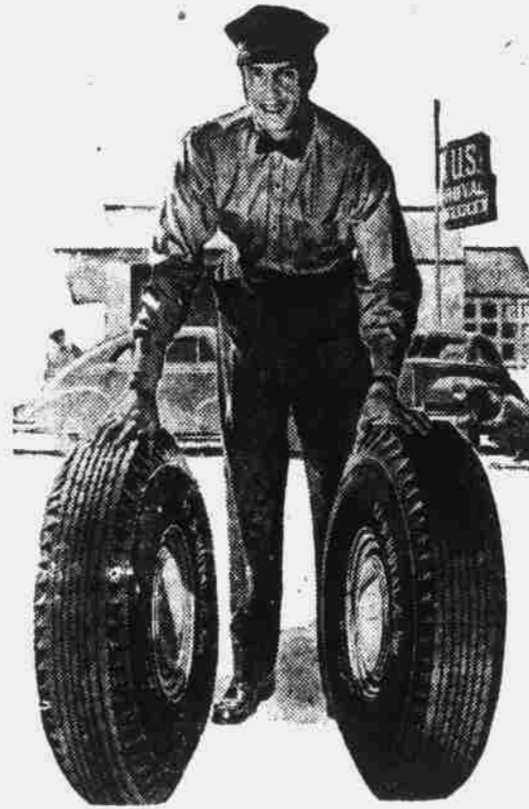
was committed under the sanction of his, or her, religious beliefs.

The things that men and women have done in the name of religion range from excellent examples of self-sacrifice to some of the most diabolical crimes in the history of mankind. It was not rare, some centuries ago, to believe in a divine mandate to kill those who did not readily subscribe to the prevailing religious be-

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