

24 June 1945

Dear Ones

We only have one typewriter in the office now and it is busy so I am down in the S-3 office and using their machine. Last night I read Esquire for a while and at eight o'clock I rolled over to nap for a while; I got up at 7 this morning - so I feel well rested. This afternoon I'll probably ride out to see a ball game; Hal Stein keeps telling me that his CB outfit has a wonderful team. It is a bright sunny day - very nice for Sunday. Let's hope that the mailplanes decide that today is a good day to come in loaded to the ceiling with letters.

Since I am not in the office, I do not have your letters to answer and this is a good time to launch into that discussion of the swing to the left in Europe and the so-called eventual conflict between Communism and Democracy. A number of various aspects of the question are covered by just analysing the general picture of post-war Europe. All reports would indicate that the cities and the centers of population in Europe are in a ravaged condition; food supplies are non-existent, clothing and housing are almost equally as serious problems. The only places where there is a semblance of normal economy or life are the farms and the country areas that did not become overwhelmed in the emphasis on technology in this war; even there, however, there have been severe disruptions in family life since the men fought the war. The results of this general situation are seen in the chaos which every visitor in Europe has noted; we can divide the chaos into two parts - the German chaos and the non-German chaos. Let us take the latter first. We have a primary responsibility as co-victors to see that justice and order are restored in Greece, Yugoslavia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, France, and to some degree in Italy. If we talk of our own readjustment to peace as being a period of trials, you can imagine what it will be like in these countries. There is a welter of confusing factors: pre-war political factions which have not as yet won post-war democratic approval or disapproval, complete industrial and economic chaos, a black market functioning in peace as it did as an underground, a population greatly upset and still uncertain at this stage of the game as to whether it should prefer security and a promise of liberty to liberty and a promise of security. On top of all of this is the general world wide picture in which we are working for the constructive basis of total peace. What then is the first call - it is for order out of the chaos, something to work on; the order need not be too exactly defined as long as it is a starting point. In France it is De Gaulle, in Yugoslavia Tito, in Scandinavia the prewar regimes and in the Low Countries more or less the same, in Poland, in Greece, in Italy, there was less ease in finding the starting point. All this is by way of background - if we were fully able to know the background of the myriad European problems the answer would, as always, work itself out in the process.

The first factor that should be considered is that of nationalism - even the most determined communist in Italy does not do his thinking in terms of Russia's ruling Italy: he is talking about Italian communism. Even the Europeans of the right left or center, who are Federalists or Unionists do not contemplate in the foreseeable future any true deemphasis on the individuality of the political entities of the various countries. Once we have agreed to this nationalist element in the problem of rebuilding and reforming the European world, we can go on to the issue at hand of how each nation will find its own solution. The question we are discussing is not specific in terms of whether the nation will build shoes or railroad cars or grow wheat, but the pattern into which its national economy and politics will fit. We can reduce that even further: for we must assume that politics will fit into a democratic mold - that is written into the Atlantic Charter and the Yalta agreement and now into San Francisco: we must assume that the democratic ideals of a free press and of free expression and of free political activity for the minority groups will be allowed: we must assume that all men will work progressively in their national political growth and will not resort to terrorism and civil war. These assumptions concern the mechanics of politics. Therefore, it seems to me that the problem is most logically studied in terms of the requirements placed upon each national



rehabilitation and I think that this can be likened to Mexico and her oil and silver resources and her eventual expropriation of our interests in them. The answer to this question lies with the American and British publics; I do not believe that in the post-war world with full press coverage and with the knowledge of the experience of this war behind them the peoples of the western world will be fooled into supporting economic ventures that are in conflict with the basic spirit of our world peace. Where then does the conflict arise in its fundamental expression? apparently it is that American and British trade cannot prosper in a world where national economies to all effects and purposed control the market and the demand. That is our dispute with the left: we see in the combination of nationalism and of leftist national governments which seek to achieve a guaranteed economy a denial of our rights of free trade and expropriation. To my mind that is just so much poppycock! It is true that leftist national governmental policies will deny economic imperialism, but it should be a shot in the arm to well organized international trade. The other nations of the world are as dependent on world trade as we are; they are going to need our steel and our cars as much as we need to have them buy them. There is no reason to assume that the growth which we have charted in Europe means that nations are going in for self-sufficiency or doctrines of that sort. What it does mean is that the competition from the producers of the Western world will be under certain wraps - those conditions to be decided by the internal condition of the country in relation to her needs and the current picture of world trade. It is my firm belief that we are entering the happy stage of recognizing the interdependence of world economies - Bretton Woods and the Reciprocal Trade agreements are brilliant high spots in the picture of the future trade organization. We are working on the promise that a lot of people will be well off rather than a few people's being very well off to the detriment of the others. We will not be fooled and the issues will not be beclouded for us if we remember that economic liberty does not mean economic imperialism by one nation of another's economy.

It is increasingly clear that any attempt to distinguish between political and economic concerns is doomed to failure; in our modern world they are intertwined irrevocably. We have learned from total war, that we must take a total, overall viewpoint of the problems which we face. So far I have tried to explain why I feel that the growth of left in Europe is nothing to fear in terms of the world economy, why I feel that by the very nature of the political organization of post-war Europe the European nations will eventually arrive at policies which are in accord with the overall picture just as we will. As important a factor as nationalism is in terms of organization, the age of nationalism in the face of a greater world interest (the cut-off-your-nose-to-spite-your-face type of nationalism) is over. The important thing is that this be recognized as it related to our myriad problems from the Levant to the Far East and back. The important thing is that we realize that economic freedom and political freedom if we are to achieve and to hold them cannot be contradictory. (This probably applies more to Britain than the United States.)

But people say that there is a basic conflict between Communism and Capitalist Democracy. I do not agree with that. I wish that someone would point it out to me - now do not rush back at me with the argument that Russia is totalitarian; that is not what I said. I do not identify communism as only the political form of Russia. In fact there is a good deal of justifiable dispute as to whether that is communism at all. I am talking about the communism, the extreme swing to the left, that will undoubtedly appear at several stages of European reconstruction. I am talking about the state which controls in its entirety the economic life of the nation. I want to know why that is in such violent contradiction with western democracy; I say western democracy with a reason. Western democracy has the basic assumption of backbone of the middle class - and Europe just does not have that class and it is quite obvious that they are in no mood to create one so that they can become western democracies. My point is that the standard of democracy per se is not the economic standard of being able to become a millionaire, it is the democratic standard of becoming president. But as I said before we cannot judge political democracy alone, it is melded into the economic picture in our total judgment - for our standard is still the greatest good for the greatest number and the greatest happiness for the greatest number.



government - specifically in terms of economic needs that must be satisfied and in terms of the general political picture on the continent, in the terms of the relation of the internally organized economy to the outside nations of England, Russia, possibly France in the future, and, I hope, the United States.

And in view of these basic assumptions and requirements I can see only one answer: the people who vote and write letters to the papers and speak their minds are going to insist that the reorganized governments give them the guarantees which they must have for physical existence. To say that this is too leftist to be democratic is to confuse democracy with capitalism. The peoples of Europe do not trust the capitalists who controlled their economies and often their governments, who led them through the terrible days after the rise of Hitler, and who never won their full confidence as being against the Hitler regime, and they are not going to offer to these men the opportunity to recreate their former roles and positions. As much as they are individualists in their demands for individual freedom, they will not allow the individualism of others to warp the fabric of their lives once again. They are going to insist on regulating ~~the~~ the factors of society which control them and that cannot be denied to them. Just yesterday the Czechs showed this very fact in their confiscation of all pro-German or German industries within the Czech state; it is not illogical to carry this policy to the point of popular regulation of all critical industry. However the rub is that Europe is in chaos - relatively speaking there is no industry - it will have to be rebuilt from scratch, it will have to be begun anew. The significance of this most apparent in the comparison of Europe with the US for what we have said about Europe so far is generally applicable to the US. The point is that America has a producer-industrial group at the present as the working basis for our economy and Europe does not. The result it seems to me is obvious - and it will be truer the farther east in Europe you go, from the highly industrialized west to the agrarian east - the governing body will be the substitute for a non-governmental producer-industrialist class.

My conclusion then is that strong leftist governments are going to come into power - in some places the governments will be communistic, in others the conditions will be such that governments will regulate in varying degrees rather than control and/or own. But I feel that in all cases the fundamentals expressed in our bill of rights will be observed; the nations will grow under the aegis of a popular movement, not under the rigid control of a Communist Party such as brought Russia from the depths of the Czarist regime to her present position. Europe will progress through the democracy of the proletariat rather than the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Now we come to the question of the external relations of these reconstituted governments; we skip the factors of time, of progress and setbacks, and assume that we have well outlined national regimes. Each country has its representative legislative body and its executive or executives; each country has its loyal oppositions of both extremes. Each country is definitely progressing toward full freedoms of expression and belief, and in its own degree of regulation is watching the economic reconstruction of its countryside. How is all of this going to come into play in terms of international relationships? It does not seem too unreasonable to assume that Russia will look with favor upon the swing to the left in the various countries. Russia will see in the establishment of governments with broad popular fronts a promise that she will have no external threats to her experiment at home and that is her primary concern. In times of political crises and heaven knows that every day will see new crises in Europe, new struggles for power among factions and parties, there seems little doubt but that Russia will lend her weight to the support of those groups who offer her the greatest political-military security and the most complementary economic structure. There is not a single reason to suppose that Russia will support primarily totalitarian regimes in Europe. She as well as anybody knows the inherent dangers in such a growth. To my mind the only real danger in terms of opposition to the growth of Europe along the lines I have outlined above will come from the capitalistic-democracies of England and the US; we are going to find that we can not exploit these nations without economic ventures - there will be no cartels and international monopolies fostered by the new governments of the left. (In all of this I am talking about eventual situations.) It is true that some nations may agree to economic contracts during the period of growth and



And it is the decision of each individual nation to find its happy medium of economic and political freedom consistent with the standard laid down by the world organization and the principles for which we have been fighting. My thesis is that our western democracy is one acceptable extreme and that complete socialism ( don't call it communism if you don't wish to ) is the other acceptable extreme; and between these there is a great common ground in which differences are only differences of degree in application and balancing of the basic principles and standards. One key to seeing this point of view is the recognition that what the average American looks upon as the balanced situation is not necessarily what the average Yugoslav sees as his optimum condition; just as we cannot impose constitutional western democracy on conquered Europe as we tried to do last time, so we cannot insist that our standard is the only valid one for the world this time.

Russia is a case by herself - the critics who confuse our relations with Russia with our relationship with the rest of leftist Europe are creating a false impression and false conditions of appreciation of the problems involved. My contention is that Russia is still in a condition of growth that will leave her in a position very similar to that of the United States; there is every indication from Russian foreign policy toward the rest of Europe that the Russian leaders contemplate the day Russia will step into the period of practising her political democracy which is still only on paper. I have written at many times before about Russia and I don't think that it is necessary to go over all my reasoning and opinion again. I do feel that the only contradiction today exists in Russia's one party system and I feel that it is part of her program to resolve that herself.

I will have to read this letter over and I will probably add a paragraph of summary when I do; I have written as the thoughts have come to me and I hope that they are orderly enough to have coherency and to make some sense. What I have tried to show is that there is no "irrespressible conflict" in the world today, that you can oppose socialism for the western world but recognize it as the most democratic form for Europe and not be inconsistent, that I feel that rather than being on the threshold of a new and disastrous world conflict we are on the threshold of the greatest meeting of minds and ideas that the political-economic world has ever known.

OK for nat -  
Carl G. Sumner