

benefits because they provide for mutual protection through public cooperation, we might as well scrap a good many other benefits of modern civilization along with it. We might as well go back a hundred years to the perhaps not so good old pioneer days when we had no community provision for water or sanitation, for light or transit. There are no threats to our independence in utilizing these modern facilities. And no sensible man or woman will be able to perceive equally far-fetched dangers in a system of old-age savings operated on the same principle of cooperation through established channels.

Throughout our history, our people have repeatedly joined forces for their mutual welfare. Throughout our history, the Federal Government has repeatedly been called upon to participate in projects for which it, as well as the other units of our government, has a legitimate responsibility. Whether we have called it by that name or not, social security has been accepted as a proper function of government ever since—and even before—the founding fathers included the pursuit of happiness along with life and liberty as one of the major goals of a democratic nation.

What have we striven for most earnestly in this country through all the years of its existence? First and foremost, to iron out the difficulties and bridge the gaps in our governmental system, in order that democracy may function in the uneven places and to the benefit of all. As a practical people, we have expressed this ideal in definite and specific purposes. We have been interested in giving everyone a chance to work. We have been interested in providing reasonable compensation for the man temporarily dispossessed of a job. We have been interested in giving workers an opportunity to lay by the wherewithal for self-support in their old age. We have been interested in assuring a living for those who are aged and in want. We have been interested in safeguarding for every

child his birthright of health and happiness. We have been interested in training for the handicapped, and in protecting the health of all our people. These are things we have struggled toward for years. These are things which every American believes are worthy of our utmost efforts. And these are things which the Social Security Act now seeks to promote.

"United we stand, divided we fall" applies not only to our government but to our *people*. It is as true today as it was a hundred years ago. And it is, in essence, the philosophy on which the Social Security Act is founded—the American philosophy of joint action for the common good.

FRANK BANE

"AMERICA: THE LAST CITADEL OF DEMOCRACY"

THE great countries of the past have made distinct contributions to civilization. For instance, the Hebrew kingdom contributed religion; the Greeks, art; the Romans, law. Some one has said that America's distinctive contribution may be democracy if she can work it out successfully. But at the present time when democracy is in retreat in practically the whole world, when Communism and Fascism are contending with each other for large portions of the earth's surface, many people despair that the ideal of democracy as a distinct contribution of America to civilization will ever be realized.

What do we mean by democracy, and in what ways does it differ from the other forms of government prevailing at the present time? When I ask my pupils what is meant by democracy, I receive answers almost as varied as the number in my class. Were I to put the question to you, each might give a different answer. One might answer, as do some of my pupils, freedom; another, the right to vote and hold office; another, equality; and still another might give Lincoln's definition, "a government of

the people, by the people, and for the people." To the majority of the people in the United States today the ideal of democracy is still a political one, because it was that in the past—the ideal of equality in governmental affairs, in voting and holding office. Today political democracy has been realized, and the ideal is a social and economic one.

When the "Founding Fathers" set up a new nation, some of them visualized a society composed of the desirable political features they valued, and free of the faults which they despised. This kind of society they spoke of as a democracy. They imagined a society with autocrats left out, one with equality of opportunity for all, one with no fixed classes, but with the people managing their own affairs. They did not have such a society. They imagined it. Nevertheless, they had something that we call an ideal. All of us have had enough experience with ideals to know that they are never quite completed, that they are made and remade continually. They grow, or they are hardly ideals.

By a democracy we mean not only a form of government but a way of living. A democratic society is one that constantly watches for and continually creates opportunities for individual growth, a society in which everything that is done is done with the purpose of keeping everybody growing, socially, intellectually, and esthetically. These opportunities can be created only through a continuous reorganization of institutions. (All of us can call to mind examples of this continuous reorganization; for instance, the abolition of slavery, and the extension of citizenship and the franchise to the Negro; the extension of the franchise. When the Constitution was adopted, possibly one-fifth of the people were allowed to vote. The ballot was restricted by property and religious qualifications. Gradually those were swept away, the franchise being eventually given even to the women. Compulsory education is

another good example, as is the change in electing office holders; according to the original constitution, the only federal officeholder the people could select was the representative. Today the people select senators as well, and the president indirectly. They go even farther than that and elect the candidates for some offices. Many other examples could be cited.)

Most students of society and government have held the conviction that the whole world would gradually adopt democracy, but lately, two great nations and several smaller ones have turned their backs on the democratic idea to experiment with rule by minorities. These two nations are Russia and Italy and their forms of society and government are Communism and Fascism, alike in some respects and dissimilar in others. These forms are significant, for they represent solutions advocated by powerful groups for the problems of our times. Communism is based on the idea of Karl Marx, a German Jewish philosopher, and owes its existence chiefly to Nicholas Lenin. While Communists are to be found all over the world, the leadership continues to rest with the Russians. Communism constitutes a real threat to the stability of society in many lands.

According to Geoffrey Parsons, the Russian revolution in 1917 came swiftly and inevitably. The czar abdicated peaceably and a moderate government took charge. Within a year this was overthrown and the soviet government was established under the leadership of Lenin, probably the ablest leader of his time. The Bolshevik party of Russia seized and held the state, establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat, the control resting in a small group, representing a small party, possibly two percent of the population, which has ruled the great mass of the population—the old aristocracy and the old bourgeoisie—as ruthlessly as ever the czar ruled them.

The object of the revolution was the seizure of all private property, including

land, and the organization of a socialistic state. Industries were to be run by the workers of each factory. Representation in the government was to be based upon labor organizations called soviets. This ideal was never achieved. Communistic ownership of land was installed after a prolonged struggle. The Soviet system was installed in industry and a long period of inefficiency followed. This is to be expected in any social experiment. One of the essential features, equal wages, was abandoned in many cases because skilled workmen failed to give their best services. In commerce, the government found it necessary to restore the principles of private property and capitalism to the small trader. In practice the government has modified the principles of Communism, but whether the economic compromise that has resulted will endure remains to be seen. The Soviet rulers have thus far exercised great wisdom in retreating in time before disaster. Some observers feel that the Russian rulers will be forced to return to all the essentials of capitalism if they wish to preserve their rule. Recent events tend to support this prediction. To the historian of the future will be assigned the final task of evaluating this experiment in government.

Politically, the dictatorship of the Bolshevik minority has undergone little development. It remains a revolutionary despotism, executing political groups opposed to it, believing in class struggle and opposing democracy. No share in government has been granted to the great mass of Russians, although the eventual goal is a government participated in by all the people. This goal will be attained when all classes shall have disappeared and when all the citizens shall have become devoted to the Communistic society. Russia will then cease to be a dictatorship. It is only fair to state that under the dictatorship of Stalin the government in theory at least has been conducted in the interest of the industrial workers. The dictatorship has not

existed for the glorification of the State nor the aggrandizement of the ruling clique.

The example of Italy shows striking resemblances to the Russian system and sharp contrasts. The aim of Italy was the exact antithesis of Russia. It was to preserve capitalism, nationalism, and the existing order against the threat of Communism. The inspiration came from one popular leader, Mussolini, instead of from a group as in Russia. While he built his rule on the existing parliamentary and monarchical forms, he followed more closely the Napoleonic tradition of one-man dictatorship. He repressed free speech and individual liberty and forced political opponents into exile. Industrially, a new efficiency has been achieved and the benefits to Italy have been great. A treaty was signed by which the papal territory was recognized as an independent state. Thus was settled the Roman question that had harried the Italian rulers for two generations. Albania has been brought under the domination of Italy and in the face of world disapproval, but, with no lowering of Italy's prestige, Ethiopia was annexed to the Roman State.

How does Fascism compare with Communism and wherein do they differ? The former is revising an old system; the latter is building a new. The former welcomes private initiative in production, reserving the right to intervene if private management is inefficient. The latter abolishes private property and gives the State complete control of production, distribution, and consumption. The Fascists recognize different classes but compel them to cooperate for the common good. The Communists would have a single class, the workers, who would be raised to higher cultural and living standards. The Fascists are strongly nationalistic—only recently has Italy had a tendency towards internationalism—while the Communists are international. The Fascists support religion, while the Communists are anti-religious; Fascism is

authoritarian while Communism is totalitarian; Fascism has no philosophy while Communism has a definite one.

Both Communists and Fascists regard labor as a social duty. Both impose a rigid discipline on the people, curtail personal liberty, maintain that the state as a living organism is superior and has prior rights to the individuals composing it. Both systems crush opposition ruthlessly and reject parliamentary government and the theory of popular sovereignty. Both deny the supremacy of law, both conceive of government as government by men rather than by law. The broad underlying principle common to both Fascism and Communism is that the individual has no rights which the State must respect.

To enumerate what Fascism and Communism deny is to enumerate what democracy guarantees. The United States, Great Britain, and some of the smaller countries are the last firm stand of democracy. "The United States has been called the last citadel of democracy because it seems to be the only country in which democracy, a free society, and the specific rights which go with it, are guaranteed to the individual in a written constitution. America is the last stronghold against a movement which everywhere submerges the individual, everywhere gives to government unlimited power to compel the individual, everywhere reduces the individual to complete subjection to the will of the man who gets control of the government."

In Germany, the Fascist movement took the name of national socialism, shortened usually to Nazism. In Great Britain, France, Rumania, Hungary, Belgium, the United States, and in fact all over the world, Fascist parties are appearing, as have Communist.

At present Communism and Fascism are contending for the control of Spain. Spain came late into the modern world. It missed the experience in democratic government that formed France, England, the Nether-

lands, and Scandinavia. Unprepared, it began to experiment with democracy just at the time when the two new conceptions of government had grown powerful. It was inevitable that Communism and Fascism would contest for Spain. Italy and Germany wish Spain to become Fascist, Russia wishes her to become Communist, and France fears that whatever the outcome, in Spain, democracy in her own country is doomed. Thus Europe is divided into two opposing camps, the divisions cutting through national lines, through alliances and through geographic barriers. According to Anne O'Hare McCormick, one of the ablest of foreign correspondents, "They foreshadow the war all nations dread most—the war without frontiers, not country against country, but Front against Front, civil war on an international scale, without rules, without end."

Let us examine briefly the document that is the basis of our freedom. It is brief, concise, and specific. It set up a form of government for thirteen states, each jealous of its rights of self-government, and at the same time it secured to the individual his most cherished rights.

The Constitution has proved itself elastic and vital, capable of meeting the changing needs of the times because it carries within itself the power of change and because it embodies principles, not laws. It creates a government which acts directly upon the individual, a nation in which the people through their representatives are supreme. This is the true test of a democracy: the people must actually control the governing authorities, whether these authorities be kings, emperors, presidents, parliaments, congresses, governors, or legislatures. Under the constitution the individual is the master, not the servant nor the slave of government, as under a dictatorship. A government of laws, not men, protects the people against centralized tyranny and the power of mob rule. The Constitution sets up a dual form of govern-

ment. It preserves state sovereignty and at the same time creates a strong national government. It creates a government founded on a system of checks and balances. The three departments are checks on each other, so that no one can ever take supreme power unless the Constitution is deliberately set aside. The President may check Congress by the veto, Congress may check the executive by overruling his veto, the Supreme Court may check both by declaring a law unconstitutional. And the people have the final check by being able to change the Constitution. Thus the people are supreme.

Certain powers have been delegated to the national government, certain ones reserved to the states, certain ones are to be exercised concurrently. All powers not specifically delegated to the national government are reserved to the people. The rights of local self-government were jealously guarded as the priceless heritage of 180 years of colonial experience.

In like manner, the personal rights of the individual were guarded as the priceless heritage of Englishmen. These rights were so obvious that the makers of the Constitution did not think it necessary to embody them in the document, but the colonists had seen an oppressive home government violate them. They had fought a long and bloody war to preserve them, so they were determined to have them embodied in the Constitution. Therefore Virginia and some of the other colonies made their adoption the condition of their ratification. Accordingly, they were proposed, ratified and in 1791 became an integral part of the Constitution. These rights include freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and petition, the right to bear arms, no quartering of troops in private homes without the consent of the owner, protection against search, protection in the right to life, liberty, and property, and in criminal trials, right to trial by jury, no excessive fines and punishments.

In 146 years only eleven amendments have been adopted, although hundreds have been proposed. Most of these have had to do with the details of government. None has altered the basic framework of government or the fundamental principles of constitutional liberty.

How may America preserve these personal liberties?

Democracy is not necessarily the best form of government, although we Americans feel it is the best for us. The best form of government is that which best meets the needs of the people. Lord Bryce, an illustrious and sympathetic writer on democracy, very correctly remarked that to devolve upon a people who are not fitted for the undertaking the task of governing themselves is "like delivering up an ocean liner to be navigated by cabin boys through the fogs or icebergs of the Atlantic, or setting a child to drive a motor car." Woodrow Wilson seemed to believe that if a theoretically good form of government could be found it could be clapped down on any people and made to work. Jefferson insisted that no government was good unless it was adapted to a specific people at a particular stage of their mental and moral growth. The World War, which was to have made the world safe for democracy, seems to have sowed the seeds the fruit of which the world is reaping now. Democracies were imposed on people not temperamentally fitted for them.

America was peculiarly adapted for democracy, because of the sheer distance of the new world from the old, its topography, its large amount of free and unoccupied land, and its successive frontiers. None of the leading English colonists expected or wished for any democratizing of either social or political life. Most of them, like the Rev. John Cotton and John Winthrop, feared and detested democracy. The latter cursed it as the meanest and worst of all forms of government. The Puritan fathers had no intention of allowing democracy in their

government or liberty in worship. The American dream of equality of opportunity owes more to the wilderness than to them. In these small communities weeks or months from England, local government could function and anarchy be averted only by the consent of the governed as the signers of the Mayflower Compact "had perceived, not as a theory but as a practical exigency." In these small coast villages or groups of plantations the gentlemen and moneyed men might still have various social privileges, but where there were few luxuries to be bought with money, where service was hard to hire, where almost everyone owned his home and a plot of land, where as yet there was little difference between the homes of the rich and those of the poor, where work was a great leveler, it was inevitable that the ordinary man should assert himself and become a power. The questions to be decided were such as concerned every householder; he felt as competent to discuss them as any gentleman. When an Englishman had gone through the trials and labors of clearing his land and establishing his home, it was not in his nature to sit by idly and allow himself to be governed by a few neighbors who in the wilderness had lost a great deal of the authority of financial and social position which had set them apart in England. When the ordinary man in the colonies demanded to be heard in the affairs of government, he was reacting to circumstance, not developing any consciously held theory of politics.

Frontier life and the distance between America and Europe fostered the spirit of democracy. After the French and Indian Wars, the chief tie—the need of the protection of England against the French and Indians—between the colonies and England was severed. It is true that America was the child of England, but it was the child of 17th century England, not of the 18th. The colonists had taken to the new world the ideas and political methods of 17th

century England, but the hardships which these people endured developed new interests and viewpoints. When the control of England grew too irksome, they threw off that control and founded a new nation dedicated to the ideals of equal opportunity, of inalienable rights, and of government by the consent of the governed, a nation that knew no caste, no nobility, or other hereditary distinction, a nation that had passed through the leveling influence of the early frontier and of the Revolution.

Free land was an equalizer, for it admitted all comers to the chief instrument of wealth-production. On the frontier no man would work long for a farmer or pay rent when for a small sum he could secure land of his own. The town artisan had to be paid wages large enough to keep him from turning farmer. The abundance of opportunity on the frontier coupled with equal access to these many opportunities engendered a sense of social equality which gradually became a part of Americanism and in the older states hindered the social stratifications from too glaringly showing themselves.

The frontier has been also a maker of political democracy. In our early history there was a tendency toward class government and the growth of vested interests in the seaboard states where society was slipping into grooves. The younger states of the West showed a tendency to do away with class rule. The states of the Ohio Valley introduced into our political practice the abolition of property qualifications for voting, and of religious and property qualifications for office holding, the practice of having more elective officials than appointive ones, rotation in office, shorter terms in office, and the submitting of state Constitutions for popular ratification. The West stood for states rights as against federal authority, for state banks against the bank of the United States. From the West at different periods in our history has swept eastward Jeffersonian and Jacksonian

democracy, Lincoln Republicanism, Grangerism, Populism, Bryanism and Progressivism, together with the initiative, referendum and recall, the direct primary and the popular election of United States senators.

While the physical West has passed, there remains a spiritual West, the influence of which none of us should minimize. Edward Ross says, "From time to time there appear emancipating spirits who spurn man-made distinctions of place, rank and money and whose hearts go out toward every man as toward a brother. Such are the poets and the prophets, such are the humanizing Isaiahs, Garrisons, Mazzinis, Victor Hugos, and Tolstoys, who recall us to our natural fellowship, who impress us with our likeness even when conditions are exaggerating differences, who level men at the very moment new social terraces are arising."

A synthetic frontier is being developed during the present administration. The TVA, the rural rehabilitation projects, better homing projects, relocation of people from congested cities to industrial and agricultural areas, etc., are attempts to further economic democracy.

Since democracy is on trial, and since the essentials of democracy are not always understood, it would be well for us to devote some time to the factors essential to the democratic system of government. We should remember that political democracy implies the right of the masses to vote, equality of voting power, the rule of the majority, the right of the people to choose their public officials and popular responsibility and control, but that it does not require universal suffrage, nor the unlimited right of the majority, nor the popular election of all officials, nor rotation in office, nor does it mean absolute equality of all men. But above all we must remember that democracy is more than a system of government; it is a system of society, a way of life, and that this system must be contin-

ually modified and changed to meet the exigencies of the times.

The people must be qualified for self-government. This does not mean that they must have a college education or be learned in literature and science, but it does mean that they must be informed upon public questions so that they can vote intelligently and wisely concerning election issues. The political failures of democracy center about the failure of the individual voter to exercise his franchise intelligently and effectively. There has been a great increase in honesty of voting, but the increase in intelligent voting has been discouragingly slow.

The burdens of democracy must not be made too excessive. Simplification of ballots, more appointive and fewer elective officials and cleaner campaigning are greatly to be desired. The short ballot adopted by Virginia has simplified voting here, but in many states the ballot is too long to render intelligent voting possible.

The people must be interested in public affairs and encouraged to make whatever sacrifice of time or service may be necessary to discharge the public duties of citizenship. The intelligentsia are very often to be found on the golf links on election day while those less fitted are exercising the franchise. If all our citizens felt as much interest in good government as many do in football, baseball, or bridge, we should probably have fewer complaints of bad government and the rule of bosses.

Not only must the people be well informed on matters of government and interested in public affairs, but they must possess the moral and civic virtues of incorruptibility, a high sense of individual responsibility and a willingness to abide by the will of the majority. There must be a gradual training of people to higher ideals.

The forces inimical to good government must be removed. Among these may be listed dishonesty and corruption; the operation of the spoils system which treats

office-holding as a racket; the use of the public treasury for the advancement of party interests; alliances between Big Business, politics and organized racketeering; abuses in the dispensation of justice in our courts; the tendency to infringe upon the fundamental liberties of the citizens as evidenced by the teacher's oaths and the attempts to outlaw various political parties, the propaganda used by the political parties in the hope of confusing the voters; lawlessness and intolerance.

Some historians argue that Communism and Fascism hold no threat to the democracy of America since both originated from special causes within the countries in which they developed. Russia was the most backward nation of Europe politically at the time of the World War and the terrible repressions of absolutism made some great explosion almost inevitable. Communism was a natural reaction to the overthrow of tyranny. Italy led the world intellectually in the Renaissance, but it lagged behind in political life. It had but a few generations of experience with free institutions prior to the World War and the parliamentary system had never worked effectively. On the other hand, frontier life in America bred a spirit of individualism to which nothing is more galling than taking orders. It is true that railroad, mill and department store teach hierarchy and obedience. The severe discipline of these must be modified, for the American has drunk too deeply of individual liberty to long endure the irksome collar of obedience unless he can be made to feel as does the school teacher and the college professor that he bows not to the will of his immediate superior but to the requirements inherent in all organizations.

The most important economic threat to democracy—unemployment—must be removed. Whether America can work out a program of economic betterment without the sacrifice of our fundamental liberties remains to be seen.

Popular intelligence must be raised to a higher level. In education lies the hope of democracy. The masses must be taught the true meaning of freedom so that they will be enabled to differentiate between liberty and license, which many seem unable to do today. They must be taught to understand the true meaning of democracy, and not only to guard the liberties which were gained through blood and sacrifice by our forefathers, but they must be made to realize that democracy is a growing and living thing, and that in order to discover the "straight road to Utopia" which the originators of democracy hoped it would take, they must work to eliminate the glaring inequalities of the present day. They must be made to genuinely desire, plan for, sacrifice, and labor for, the new rights which the new age necessitates; for the old complexities of man's nature have been multiplied by the complexity of man's machine. Even when some or all of these rights—namely, the right to be well born, the right to physical, mental, and economic security, equality of opportunity, the right to the widest sphere of freedom compatible with the equal freedom of others, the right to fair play, the right to the development of an active flexible personality, and the right to a suitable occupation—have been realized, there will undoubtedly loom on the horizon other rights to be achieved. Human life must be the prime object of democracy's concern. But through education and through the development of a higher type of patriotism which will put the common good above the desires of the individual and through the development of a new passion for liberty strong enough to accept tremendous discipline, economic, political, and social, democracy—which we feel is the best basis of social organization that has yet been discovered—can be preserved for America and so developed that it can be made the contribution of America to civilization.

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