

## American Malvern

These are the high spots of organized U.S. Protestantism's super-protestant new program for a just and durable peace after World War II:

- ◆ Ultimately, "a world government of delegated powers."
- ◆ Complete abandonment of U.S. isolationism.
- ◆ Strong immediate limitations on national sovereignty.
- ◆ International control of all armies and navies.
- ◆ "A universal system of money... so planned as to prevent inflation and deflation."
- ◆ Worldwide freedom of immigration.
- ◆ Progressive elimination of all tariff and quota restrictions on world trade.
- ◆ Autonomy for all subject and colonial peoples" (with much better treatment for Negroes in the U.S.).
- ◆ "No punitive separations, no humiliating decrees of war guilt, no arbitrary dismemberment of nations."
- ◆ A "democratically controlled" international bank "to make development capital in all parts of the world without the predatory and imperialistic aftermath so characteristic of large-scale private and governmental loans"

This program was adopted last week by 375 appointed representatives of 30-odd denominations called together at Ohio Wesleyan University by the Federal Council of Churches. Every local Protestant church in the country will now be urged to get behind the program. "As Christian citizens," its sponsors affirmed, "we must seek to translate our beliefs into practical realities and to create a public opinion which will insure that the United States shall play its full and essential part in the creation of a moral way of international living."

Among the 375 delegates who drafted the program were 15 bishops of five denominations, seven seminary heads (including Yale, Chicago, Princeton, Colgate-Rochester), eight college and university presidents (including Princeton's Harold W. Dodds), practically all the ranking officials of the Federal Council and a group of well-known laymen, including John R. Mott, Irving Fisher and Harvey S. Firestone Jr. "Intellectually," said Methodist Bishop Ivan Lee Hold to Texas, this is the most distinguished American church gathering I have seen in 30 years of conference going."

The meeting showed its temper early by passing a set of 13 "requisite principles for peace" submitted by Chairman John Foster Dulles and his Inter-church Commission to Study the Bases of a Just and Durable Peace. These principles, far from putting all the onus on Germany or Japan, bade the U.S. give thought to the short-sighted selfishness of its own policies after World War I, declared that the U.S. would have to turn over a new leaf if the world is to enjoy lasting peace. Excerpts:

- ◆ "For at least a generation we have held preponderant economic power in the world, and with it the capacity to influence decisively the shaping of world events. It should be a matter of shame and humiliation to us that actually the influences shaping the world have largely been irresponsible forces. Our own positive influence has been impaired because of concentration on self and on our short-range material gains...If the future is to be other than a repetition of the past, the U.S. must accept the responsibility for constructive action commensurate with its power and opportunity."
- ◆ "The natural wealth of the world is not evenly distributed. Accordingly the possessions of such natural resources...is a trust to be discharged in the general interest. This calls for more than an offer to sell to all on equal terms. Such an offer may be a futile gesture unless those in need can, through the selling of their own goods and services, acquire the means of buying."

With these principles accepted, the conferences split up into four groups to study, respectively, the social, economic and political problems of the post-war world and the problem of the church's own position in that world." Discussions waxed hot & heavy, with one notable silence: In a week when the Japs were taking Java, discussion of the war itself was practically taboo. Reason: The Federal Council felt that, since five of its other commissions are directly connected with the war effort, the conference's concern should be with plans for peace. One ware statement—"the Christian Church as such is not at war"—was proposed by Editor Charles Clayton Morrison, of the influential and isolationist-before-Pearl Harbor *Christian Century*. This statement was actually inserted in a subcommittee report by a 64-58 vote after a sharp debate. In the plenary session, however, it was ruled out of order.

Some of the conference's economic opinions were almost as sensational as the extreme internationalism of its political program. It held that "a new order of economic life is both imminent and imperative"—a new order that is sure to come either "through" voluntary cooperation within the framework of democracy or through explosive political revolution." Without condemning the profit motive as such, it denounced various defects in the profit system for breeding war, demagogues and dictators, "mass unemployment, widespread dispossessions from homes and farms, destitution, lack of opportunity for youth and of security for old age." Instead, "the church must demand economic arrangements measured by human welfare...must appeal to the Christian motive of human service as paramount to personal gain or governmental coercion."

"Collectivism is coming, whether we like it or not," the delegates were told by no less a churchman than England's Dr. William Paton, co-secretary of the World Council of Churches, but the conference did not veer as far to the left as its definitely pinko British counterpart, the now famous Malvern Conference (*TIME*, Jan. 20, 1941). It did, however, back up Labor's demand for an increasing share in industrial management. It echoed Labor's shibboleth that the denial of collective bargaining "reduces labor to a commodity." It urged taxation designed "to the end that our wealth may be more equitably distributed." It urged experimentation with government and cooperative ownership.

- **Despite their zeal for world political, social and economic unity, the churchmen were less drastic when it came to themselves. They were frank enough to admit that their own lack of unity was no shining example to the secular world, but did no more than call for "a new era of inter-denominational cooperation in which the claims of cooperative effort should be placed as far as possible, before denominational prestige."**

"Every individual," the conference declared, "has the right to full-time educational opportunities...to economic security in retirement...to adequate health service [and an] obligation to work in some socially necessary service."

The conference statement on the political bases of a just and durable peace proclaimed that the first post-war duty of the church "will be the achievement of a just peace settlement with due regard to the welfare of all the nations, the vanquished, the overrun and the victors alike." In contrast to the blockade of Germany after World War I, it called for immediate provision of food and other essentials after the war for every country needing them. "We must get back," explained Methodist Bishop Francis J. McConnell, "to a stable material prosperity not only to strengthen men's bodies but to strengthen their souls."

Politically, the conference's most important assertion was that many duties now performed by local and national governments "can now be effectively carried out only by international authority." Individual nations, it declared, must give up their armed forces "except for preservation of democratic order" and allow the world to be policed by an international army & navy. This League-of-Nations-with-teeth would also have "the power of final judgment in controversies between nations...the regulation of international trade and population movements among nations."

The ultimate goal: "a duly constituted world government of delegated powers: an international legislative body, and international court with adequate jurisdiction, international administrative bodies with necessary powers, and adequate international police forces and provision for enforcing its worldwide economic authority."

—*TIME*, Mar. 16, 1942 (pgs. 44, 46, 47)

### Note from Charlotte Iserbyt, 4/11/95

*Interesting how major media (TIME) covered the news back in 1942! The young journalist had not yet been brainwashed in the public schools and the old-timers were real Americans. This coverage would today be considered radical right wing, something put out by the militia folks or fundamentalist Christians. One doesn't even find this kind of straight reporting in the mainstream conservative media... one has to give the "insiders" credit: they sure stuck to their guns, were consistent, never changing their agenda one iota. Its no wonder the U.S. Department of Education (Secretary Riley) was successful in forming his mainline Christian denomination partnership with the government schools. Reproduce and distribute widely and get ready for the glazed expressions!*

