

WSM Radio talk, April 30, 1944

Good Morning, Friends:

The unexpected death of the Honorable Frank Knox, Secretary of the Navy, stunned the Nation's Capital and, undoubtedly, gave to the Nation a very true sense of loss. Secretary Knox had served his country ~~ably~~ and well. It was an unusual privilege to play a major and vital part in the building of the great United States Naval fleet. A staunch Republican, he was the Republican candidate for Vice-President in 1936. Despite his being a member and leader of the opposite political party, President Roosevelt appointed him Secretary of the Navy in July of 1940. At that time many members of the Democratic party were incensed at the President for appointing an outstanding Republican to this high post of trust and great responsibility. But as time wore on and apparently inevitable events unfolded, the wisdom of the President in appointing both Secretary Knox and Secretary ^{of War Henry L.} Stimson, another staunch Republican, became apparent. To have ^{both} the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy ~~both~~ members of the opposition party was perhaps the nearest approach to a coalition government which we can make under our system.

When the war broke out ^{in Europe} the contending political parties in Great Britain declared a truce. ^{and} Leaders from both parties were brought into the government to form a coalition government for the prosecution of the war. Their national elections have been called off, and the coalition government continues to direct the destinies of that nation through this troublesome

period.

In our country where we operate under a written constitution, the elections could not be postponed, so the President went a long way in trying to bring ^{political} unity and in trying to make our national defense program a non-partisan endeavor by appointing two able, outstanding Republicans to these two high positions of authority and leadership. ^{We can now see that} These appointments have borne abundant good fruit. In serving his country so ably, Secretary Knox has carved a permanent place for himself in American history as ~~the~~ an illustrious public servant.

Great men die and careers end, but the problems of government are endless and never settled. For instance, governmental seizure of the Montgomery Ward plant in Chicago has been the occasion of many heated exchanges on the floor of Congress during the week. As I see it, ~~it is~~ there is nothing particularly admirable about this spectacle on either side of the question. The government's use of troops in the seizure of this mail order house was presumably designed as a demonstration to the country to use whatever force necessary to uphold and enforce the wartime orders of the government. The principle criticism of the administration in this case comes from those who assert that the government had no authority to seize the plant and, second, ~~from those who said~~ that although the government may have the authority, it ^{does} ~~do~~ not use the authority with the same determination in a comparable defiance of order by labor union. ^{On the other hand, there is no apparent virtue on the company's defiance of a war time order of the govt.} So the argument goes.

In so far as the future is concerned, the most significant act

of the week in Washington was the beginning of a joint cooperative study and effort between the Department of State and a bi-partisan committee from congress to develop and formulate a plan for an international organization to keep the peace after the war is won, which it is hoped, the United States will present to the other United Nations as a basis of consideration. The Department of State and the President have been severely criticized because they have not laid down to this country and the world a blue print of the United States' proposal of foreign policy. These critics want to know the particulars of our future course of action.~~that~~ They ask, for instance, what are we going to do with Germany after Germany is defeated. Well, the answer to that is, that it would do no good for the United States to say, flatfooted, what she is going to do with Germany after Germany is defeated unless the other nations agree to it. It's ~~not~~ a question^{not} of what the United States is going to do with Germany, but what the United Nations who defeat Germany are going to do with her.

Then again, no good probably would be served by having the Secretary of State or the President announce a foreign policy which the country would not support. All of us remember what happened to President Wilson's plan for keeping world peace after the first world war. No doubt, the Secretary of State had this fresh in his mind when he asked the Congress to appoint a bi-partisan committee composed of an equal number of Democrats and Republicans from the Senate, to be latter followed by a similar committee from the House, to confer and consult with him in the preparation of an

international organization to keep the peace, which, ~~is~~, after an agreement *has been*
reached the
between/legislative and executive, *it is hoped* this nation can present to the
other United Nations. This is, indeed, a significant, historical step. designed
primarily to prevent a situation in which the Executive Department would *follow*
a definite course
~~travel one road~~ in the field of foreign policy only to be stopped by the
Senate ~~to~~ ~~the~~ Congress, whose assent and support is necessary, ~~perhaps~~
~~it would be appropriate here to ^{ask} what is our foreign policy.~~

Added -

*U. S. Foreign Policy
Speech - American Forum
of the Air*

April 25, 1944