

WSM, May 23, 1948
Rep. Albert Gore

Good Morning, Friends:

The attention of Washington for the past week has again been divided between foreign and domestic affairs. With some apprehension, Washington officialdom has watched the unfolding of Russia's propaganda offensive, the apparent purpose of which is to convince the world that it is the United States not Russia that is responsible for world tension and the consequent armament race. *and possible drift to war.* The first major Russian move was the adroit public reply to a note from our Ambassador by the Russian foreign minister, Mr. Molotov. It was followed during the week by a statement from Russia's dictator, Marshal Joseph Stalin himself, in which he proposed the acceptance, as a basis of a discussion between the United States and Russia, of a so-called open letter addressed to him by the third party presidential aspirant, Henry A. Wallace.

Insofar as the statement of policy made public by our Ambassador Bedell Smith, I, for one, was wholly unable to see anything new whatsoever in it. *nevertheless,* Russia seized upon *one sentence of* ~~the statement of~~ Ambassador Smith's *statement* that so far as America is concerned the door is always wide open for discussion and consultation between Russia and the United States, *and attempted to make much of it.* Surely, this is nothing new on the part of the United States even though Mr. Molotov undertook to picture it as an invitation of the United States to confer and negotiate a settlement of the problems at issue in the world and in so characterizing this statement by Ambassador Smith, Mr. Molotov undertook further to color it as a tacit admission on the part of the United States that she had been to blame for the development of tension between the two nations. And now comes Marshal Stalin's further effort to seize the propaganda initiative for peace. As far as I am concerned, I hope

America will always hold the door open for discussion and consultation with any nation for purposes of peace. It would be fatal to become so militaristic and bellicose that we lose either the desire or the capacity to do so.

As I understand our foreign policy, it is two handed. Our right hand is clinched into an armed, strong, determined fist. At the same time, the left hand is an out stretched hand of friendship and cooperation with the world and every nation in it. The clinched fist of the right hand symbolizes our determination to remain strong enough to defend ourselves against any combination of foes and furthermore, to give aid to any nation resisting aggression. On the other hand, the open hand of friendship symbolizes America's great efforts to bring about world peace and understanding, America's great contributions to world rehabilitation, to the alleviation of human wants and ills around the world.

So I say, I see nothing new in Ambassador Smith's statement that the door is always open with America for free discussion of peaceful objectives.

It is different with the statement of Mr. Henry Wallace. In the first place, the statement of Ambassador Smith was an official ^{government} statement, while the statement of Henry Wallace is only that of a candidate of a third party for President. In the second place, the statement of Ambassador Smith sought to clarify America's ^{to} policy for the benefit of Russia, while Henry Wallace's statement served to confuse international issues to the advantage of Russia.

One wonders what good purpose would be served by further agreements with Russia when the crying need of the world is for full faith fulfillment by Russia of agreements already reached with her not only with the United States but agreements reached with her by both the United States and Great Britain. One wonders also what hope there would be for the reaching of any agreement with

her even if conferences were held since in conference after conference Russia has persisted in endless wrangling and studied efforts to confuse issues and avoid agreements. One's doubts on these scores are ^{further} fortified by Russia's actions in the United Nations, ^{the} constant use of the veto, the refusal to even make an effort to reach an agreement on atomic energy. Nevertheless, we must never lose our unwillingness to consult, we must never close the door which Ambassador Smith says is wide open for free ~~discussions~~ with any nation upon problems of mutual concern. To agree to confer is in no way a commitment to reach an agreement at any price. ^{That is a horse of a different color.} Not at all. Our policy must remain firm and our aims should be crystal clear even though the application of the policy may become hazardous.

Indeed, the statement of Ambassador Smith was but a reaffirmation of this policy. The policy of strength and determination to protect freedom everywhere on the one hand, and offering peace and cooperation to all nations desiring it on the other.

Surely, Marshal Stalin knows that a campaign speech of Henry Wallace could not become a concrete program for peaceful settlement of our differences. I have a copy of Mr. Wallace's statement before me. The first point is a general reduction of arms -- "outlawing all methods of mass destruction." Now what would be the affect of this first point of Mr. Wallace's proposal? What are methods of mass destruction? Does he mean atomic weapons? Surely, that is a method of mass destruction. Who has atomic weapons? Only the United States. Does he mean strategic air power? If so, ~~when~~ who would be more affected by this? ~~Of course, the United States, of course.~~

Is it any wonder then that this first point of Henry Wallace's proposal would be attractive to Marshal Stalin? I will not undertake this morning

to discuss all the points of Henry Wallace's statement. This very first point is indicative of the whole statement. I would like, however, to briefly refer to one other point -- ~~the~~ fifth point, which is this, "the resumption of free exchange of scientific information and scientific materials between the two nations." Does he mean by this that we must not only make available to Russia all of the details of our scientific development of not only atomic weapons ~~but~~ every other advancement, but also actually to give to Russia the very instruments which we have perfected? Is that what Mr. Wallace means? His proposal could mean nothing short of this.

In view of these facts it is perhaps understandable that our State Department was caught a little flat-footed by Marshal Stalin's acceptance of the Henry Wallace proposal as a concrete program for ~~a~~^{discussion of a} peaceful settlement of our differences. Nevertheless, I do not think that even in this instance we should say, "no, we will not hold discussions with you." Let us be firm, let us be resolute, let us be strong, but let us not forget that that is but part of our two handed policy. If suspicion and distrust in the world is ever to be given second place to peace and cooperation, the United States, of all nations, must remain willing to discuss such objectives with any nation even though we doubt the sincerity of her proposals. The thought should never be out of our minds that our differences with Russia may have to be settled in one or two ways --

either find a basis for agreement with them some time, some how, or accept the
possible alternative of war. True, we must regard the U. N. ^{and} international co-operation through it as vital to world peace, but why not ask Russia if she is willing, & discuss that, too. ^{of course} On the domestic front the House passed the Mundt bill to outlaw
subversive activities of the communists. Washington's interest in the bill
was increased by the debate ~~with~~ out in Oregon between two Republican presidential
aspirants, Governor Thomas Dewey and former governor Harold Stassen, on the subject

of outlawing or not outlawing communism. The Mundt bill does not make it a crime

to belong to the communist party but it does outlaw the actions of subversion which are cardinal objectives and practices of the communist party. In practical effect the result may be much the same; but in principal, there is a difference.

Here it is a serious question whether under our Constitution a political party or the activities of a political party as such can be outlawed. Surely, there is no doubt, however, that ^{our} government has authority to prevent ^{and punish} actual actions on the part of any of its citizens to overthrow the existing government by force and violence. Like worms, the communists thrive and seem to do their dirtiest and most effective work under ground. Many able men who have given fullest study to the problem of combating communism advise against driving them under ground claiming that the problem is easier handled to keep the party and its membership above ground, open to the glare of public understanding and indignation.

The spirit of national party conventions is beginning to permeate the House and Senate. There was general approval of Democrats of this election of two stalwart leaders, Senator Alben Barkley and Democratic leader Sam Rayburn as Keynoter and Chairman, respectively, of the coming national democratic convention. These two men have labored hard and honorably for their party and the country, and their selection to fill these two positions of party honor is a fitting and deserved tribute to their loyalty and ability and their record of service.