

CITIZENS FOR STASSEN, 1000 Pillsbury Building, Minneapolis 2

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(Authorized Advance for Address of HAROLD E. STASSEN of Minnesota, to the New York Herald Tribune Forum at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City, Wednesday evening, October 22, 1947.)

Mrs. Reid, distinguished guests, fellow citizens:

The central question - "Is modern man slave or sovereign?" - presented by this, the sixteenth of these remarkable Forums conducted through the unusual genius and perseverance of Mrs. Helen Reid of the New York Herald Tribune, is the fundamental query in the world today.

The same key question was overshadowing in its importance on this continent more than a century and a half ago during the founding of the United States of America.

Every citizen of our land today can well breathe a quiet prayer of thanks that the answer then given was that man in America was to be sovereign and hence free!

There are many parallels in the situation confronting America then and the problems facing Europe today. It is worthwhile to note these parallels.

After the victory in the War for Independence, the thirteen struggling colonies were left weak, heavily in debt, divided between themselves on many issues, and desperately short of consumer goods. With courageous leadership and great determination, but not without internal dissension and days of darkness, they not only decided that man was to be free and sovereign, but also to proceed in the extraordinary task of implementing that fundamental concept in definite political, economic, social and religious policies.

But with all their energy and desires, progress was very slow because of a desperate shortage of capital. The one source of capital in the world at that time was Europe. There was considerable opinion in Europe then, that the new country was a bad risk, that it was too weak and unstable, that there was too great a possibility of internal dissension. Gradually, however, the opposing view in Europe prevailed, that America was worth backing, that on a long-term basis investment here was sound, that the development of both markets and sources of materials was desirable, prevailed.

Beginning in 1790 Europe staked America. Europe, principally France and England and Holland, sent consumer goods and extended the loans to pay for them. Europe furnished credit to the merchants of the infant United States for use in obtaining imports from other parts of the world. Europe began to provide capital for public improvement projects in America. She sent over the major part of the money needed to build the Erie Canal in 1817, and in the succeeding twenty years invested in American canals and railroads and other public improvements almost one hundred million dollars, which in terms of proportionate relationship would be the equivalent of ten billion dollars today. In the Southern states funds were advanced to establish cotton planters' banks to finance the expansion of cotton crops. Extensive loans were sent over to Pennsylvania, Virginia, Louisiana, Ohio, Maryland, Mississippi, Alabama and Indiana. As a typical example, in 1839 over one half of the capital which had been borrowed by Alabama came from Europe.

Our early railroads, linking up the resources and the industries and the peoples of the struggling young nation emerging from the losses of the War, were built in a large part through funds furnished from abroad. These included the Camden & Amboy RR., the Wilmington & Raleigh, the Harrisburg & Lancaster, and the Philadelphia and Reading.

In the late 1700's Dutch capital was invested in three and one half million acres in New York through the Holland Land Company, which played a large part in the development of great areas in this Empire State. British capital invested in and developed land in the State of Maine through the investment house of Alexander Baring. The opening of the mines, the development of early oil fields, the beginnings of textile and flour mills were each made possible in a large degree by financial advances from Europe. Many of our earliest insurance companies obtained the capital essential for their stability and their growth from Europe. Then as large scale enterprises developed and communications and telephones and steel and banking grew, a continued flow of capital from abroad made possible a more rapid expansion, a greater rise in our standard of living, and higher production for the benefit of all than could otherwise have been obtained.

There are some significant characteristics of this entire period when Europe staked America. The ventures did not all turn out successfully. When the price of cotton dropped in 1837, nine states defaulted on their bonds. In a number of instances early railroad and mining attempts failed and investors lost money. But taken as a whole it turned out to be not only an essential step for more rapid progress in America, but also a very worthwhile investment for Europe.

In nearly every instance the Europeans specifically selected the purposes for which they would send funds, and would not make general unconditional advances.

With their capital they sent engineers, technical assistance, machinery, and advice, based upon their superior merchandising and business knowledge and experience.

They recognized the need of taking products from America and of stimulating the flow of trade, if their investments were to be sound and if progress on both continents was to be made.

The parallels today are so obvious that they almost need not be expressed.

Today it is Europe that has won at great cost its battle for liberation. Today it is Europe that is desperately in need of capital, goods, machinery, and help. Today it is America, who by the grace of God and the valiant fighting of her armed forces is untouched in its homeland by war. Today it is America that is the only source in all the world of substantial capital and major aid. Today it is the materialistic ideology of Communism rather than the older theories of the divine right of kings or of dictatorships which threaten the sovereignty and freedom of man. Today is the time for America to stake Europe.

I have a deep and abiding faith that man was meant to be sovereign and to be free. I have a firm conviction that man has a spiritual value, that he was endowed by his Creator with certain inalienable rights. But it is not enough to simply believe these principles unless they are intelligently implemented, courageously defended, and vigorously advanced.

Man as a sovereign being cannot be timid or petty or selfish or evasive. Man is sovereign in America today, and this nation of sovereign men must act in accordance with that status. America must keep herself powerful in a military sense and strong in its domestic economy with the essential harmony and balance between its elements for high production of the means of an enjoyable life. America must be generous, intelligent, and timely in its aid to Europe; generous by extending aid on a scale adequate to lift the peoples from the dreary morass in which the destruction of war has left them; intelligent in extending with our aid, in all humility, sound counsel, of priorities of investment, of methods of greater production, of opposition to centralized economies which will destroy the initiative of their people, of currency reform, and of the easier flow of goods between them, and of a program which will rapidly shift to private investment with joint efforts for production and success.

An essential part of the concept of sovereignty of man is a regard by one man for the human rights and dignity of another man. Man that is sovereign must exercise self-restraint and self-discipline. Man that is sovereign must give to the society in which he lives as well as take from it. And the society in which modern man lives is a world society. Recognition of this fundamental philosophy will in a large measure determine whether the remarkable scientific advances emanating from the mind of man will build or destroy.

I sound a note of optimism tonight; it is based upon both my studies and my personal observations of the opinions and attitudes and actions of the peoples across the length and breadth of this land and of Europe.

There is sound ground for concluding that America will stake the recovery of Europe, that America will keep her domestic economy strong without economic crashes and crises and with mounting production and steady improvement in its own darker spots. There is clear evidence that if the President will end his indecision and call a special session of the Congress, the majority of the Republicans in both Houses will join in prompt action to establish an American agency and make initial appropriations to carry out timely and practical aid. There is a wide basis for believing that Europe will respond and will move gradually in the direction of free economies and stable currencies and greater production. There is a firm foundation for the judgment that the United Nations will be strengthened without the tragedy of a Third World War. There is a bright reason for hoping that in the years immediately ahead increasing millions of the men and women of the world will say by word and deed, man is sovereign - and he shall be free!



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