



Max M. Kampelman Papers

Copyright Notice:

This material may be protected by copyright law (U.S. Code, Title 17). Researchers are liable for any infringement. For more information, visit www.mnhs.org/copyright.

✓
Speech prepared for delivery on March 18,
1945 before Camphor Memorial Methodist
Church, St. Paul, Minnesota, by Max M.
Kampelman.

A keen observer with a sense of humor once made the following observation. He said:

"If you could get religion like a Baptist - experience it like a Methodist - be loyal to it like a Catholic - sacrifice for it like a Jew - be immersed in it like a Calvinist - enjoy it like a Negro - and pay for it like a Presbyterian - My, what a wonderful religion you would have!"

Being here in church with you this morning gave me somewhat of the same feeling of religious unity and universality.

Here I am a Jew - participating in a Methodist service - speaking before a congregation of Negroes who have graciously welcomed into their fold today a number of their White neighbors.

With such an environment of human brotherhood, it is no wonder that your church, which has suffered so greatly through the sacrifice of its young men going to war - should nevertheless have as its theme this morning: "Society Obedient to CO₂".

Rev. Nelson has presented an accurate and moving account of what C.O.₂ are doing during this war. There is very little that I can add to that picture without going into details that should better be dealt with at some other occasion.

With your permission, therefore, I should like to point out one significant and yet often neglected aspect of our experience as C.O.₂. — For the first time ^{in this line}, many thousands of Americans are getting to know first hand what it is to be members of a minority group, meeting prejudice and discrimination from their fellow Americans.

You, as Negroes, and I, as a Jew, have known what it is to meet stone walls in our relationships with our fellow men. — Out of that has come, for many of us, — a yearning for real social justice and equality; — our insistence upon a spirit in society which respects the inherent dignity of man; — and our love for democracy as a way of life which best expresses our ideals.

Now, added to our ranks are the many thousands of C.O.₂ suffering indignities because of their

principles and sincere convictions of conscience; -
 better understanding the urgently important problem
 of minorities and the evils of bigotry - and
 being exposed to the resultant injustices which
 leads to true humility and breeds dignity
 and a sense of justice.

For there is much truth in the statement
 of the wise man who said: "I have known
 the torment of thirst. And so I build a well
 where others may drink."

It is not surprising, therefore, that the problem
 of racial discrimination and bigotry should occupy one
 of the leading places in the minds of COs; that all
 of us, from varying religious and cultural backgrounds,
 work and live together in CPS in harmony; and
 that Negro COs in CPS and in prison find a
 united spirit among COs which renounces Jim Crowism
 and other forms of discrimination.

And it is also, therefore, not surprising,
 that and, in fact, altogether fitting and proper, that
 we should all be together this morning discussing
 the role of the CO and society.

That brings us to another significant observation — namely, that our ends or members of minority groups are no different from the desired ends of common people all over the world, of whatever color, religion, nationality and background — a society based on brotherhood and equality which renounces hate and knows no war!

Yet, as the world goes through the horrible experiences of this second war in one generation and civilization pays the high price of self-destruction, it is time for us to ask how close we are coming to the realization of our ideals so that we know whether the means we are using are the correct ones, whether the sacrifices being made by the peoples of the world are worthwhile.

Lin Yutang in his brilliant book Between Tears and Laughter, after analysing the events of the war comes forth with the bitter conclusion that the war is not a moral one, and that the sacrifices are in vain for they are only leading to a 3rd World War. He says:

"This World War III will come. The

LV

ferocity of future war will not deter us; the
magnitude of sacrifice will not daunt us, nor will
the cries of mothers and wives keep us from the path
of duty, for young men of another generation, without
the experiences of this war, will go forth to save
civilization and die for 6, 7, or perhaps 8 freedoms.

It is this terrible fact which we have
to face in the future.

That men should die is hard enough.
That they should die in vain is heartbreaking and insupportable.

Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler some years
ago gave us some figures which should cause us to
pause as we digest their significances. He
estimated that the First World War cost 30
million lives and 400 billion dollars and
he figured that with that amount we could have
planted a \$2500 house with \$1000 worth of
furniture on 5 acres of land for every family
in the U.S., Canada, Australia, England,
Wales, Ireland, Scotland, France, Belgium,
Germany and Russia - with enough left over
to give every city of 20,000 inhabitants a mall in

all these countries a million dollar library
and a 10 million dollar university.

Our limited imaginations cannot comprehend
the cost of this new war and the waste in terms of
what we could have actually done for human
well-being. Suffice it to say that our own country
alone has already spent about 8 times as much as
we spent during the last war - and who is to
measure the cost of the destruction of cities like
Cologne.

It is here that the CO takes his stand
and bids his fellow human beings to listen.

"War is the enemy" - he says.

"You & we are all one family. Our religion
is one, though we may have 100 versions of it.

"The wars and mass killings we engage in
periodically are not only morally evil, but do not
work, for they do not solve human problems; they
only create new ones.

"WAR IS THE ENEMY", he repeats, and
the people who do the fighting and sacrificing must stop
engaging in war or ~~we~~^{they} will destroy ~~ourselves~~^{themselves}."

Carl Sandburg, in his inspiring poem, "The People, Ye"
has a part in it portraying a little girl who saw her
first troop parade and asked into they use.

"Soldiers", said the old man with her.

"What are soldiers?"

"They are for war. They fight and each tries to kill
as many the other side as he can."

The girl held still and studied.

"Do you know . . . I now something."

"Yes. What is it that you know?"

"Sometimes, they'll give a war and nobody will come."

The CO, by taking his stand and announcing ^{that war is the} ^{every and}
that he is not coming beginning with now, is preparing
for the day when "they'll give a war and nobody will come".

Whether that day comes in time to stop World War III
a World War IV will depend on how soon the people
the world - and that includes all of us - are ready to
stand up and say "We Are Not Coming!"

Humble... Not only courage, but because you represent a picture of America we have in mind; one we admire

Also epitomize the stage of America's conscience and morality. The extent too to which it knows itself.

It is not for naught that US become beacon light of world. Its sole right to that respect, is that it was born as a land of refugees and knew it. Hence all through the 19th century, period of greatest growth, teeming millions entered.

Study of period shows 2 emphases. Not solely humanitarian; also practical. Refugees were not looked upon as merely downtrodden, but as people of industry and of genius who could make enormous contributions to the welfare of the country.

And we were fortunate to have that view. [If Puritans had not been compelled to emigrate from England because of the Anglican Church, we would never have had a Washington, Franklin, Jefferson.

✓ If Samuel Lincoln, a Quaker, had not been driven out of England, we would never have had an Abe Lincoln.]

In the 100 years preceding WWI, we invited 37 million immigrants to this country. Indeed, they were urged and all but dragooned into coming. We needed them. They were allowed political and religious freedom, were taught to read and write English..Gave them protection of laws, right to enage in almost every business. At one time we even allowed them to vote.

14th amendment "nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws".

This feeling that we were all alike, all American families were refugee families: some from famine, fear, persecution, others poverty, but all refugees.

Led to growth of American prestige, democracy,

We gained. [Statistics: periods of depression in this country coincided with those of restriction of immigration. (1863-1873: 100 to 400 thousand a year, prosperity; 1874-79: reduced 60%, depression; 1896-1913: immigration increased by 15 million, employment increased 63%.)]

Not mere coincidence. Nation thrives on increase of population, Unemployment decreases with more demand of buildings, clothes, food.]

The problem is a real one for America. Our birth rate declining. In last 20 years, dropped from 25 to 16 per thousand. Continues to decline: stagnation....We are least populated of all countries of world. We have 41 per square mile; Britain 490...We easily have room for twice as many people if properly distributed.

But the problem is not merely to be described in form of statistics, It can be more concretely demonstrated.

[In England, ~~for example~~, the entire Leipzig fur industry was transferred through refugees....In US, recent refugees have established such new industries as manufacture of flexible resin for tubing, glass jewelry, gold screws for dentists, harmonicas, surgical and optical lenses, tools and dies. match lighting novelties.

As few as they've been, refugees have meant to America Einstein, Mann, Reinhardt, Toscanini,, Salvemini at Harvard, Borgese at Chicago..Hardly an institution of learning has not gained]

[When Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain drove out the Jews, they received following note from their traditional enemy, Sultan of Turkey: "I thank you from the bottom of my heart for having enriched my country while impoverishing yours".]

We should repeat that and yet we don't. We don't learn from history.

[After Spain expelled the Jews and Moroccans in 1492, it began its decline....France's trade declined after it drove out the Huguenots, the Turks lost their commerce after they massacred and expelled the Greeks and Armenians.]

Yet we haven't learned.

In the realm of international politics, America is at a critical stage. The 2 things it needs to do more than anything else, is gain the trust and confidence of the peoples of the world; and 2 make democracy work at home. (We had that)

1924 marks beginning of decline. With that year, we restricted our immigration to 100,000 a year and inaugurated a quota system against colored peoples of world and vs. peoples of eastern and southern Europe.....We cannot gain the friendship of people by asserting our superiority and discriminating against them.

We must demonstrate a virile society and yet we adopt a policy which will produce a static one, for our population is getting older and our labor force will be smaller.

Yet, speak of opening up our doors to the homeless of Europe, a claim which we in US have an obligation to pursue and don't as we put our energies for opening up Palestine instead- and opposition.

Many reasons: veterans (travel narrowing not broadening); Protestants (wish to keep proportionate importance); labor (strangers represent threat to security); Catholics (fear radical ideas by atheists communists);; but also JEWS, who fear a revival of anti-semitism and become complicit.

Fundamentally, an unwillingness on part of those here to move over and make room.

Fundamentally, it means America has lost faith.

This desire to hold on to what it is, also reflects itself in lack of dynamic world leadership. We fear future, want safeguard our present. Somehow, vaguely we trust in the durability of established patterns and hope that we won't have to adjust to new situations.

Yet, without this desire and ability to adjust to new situations, there can be no survival in the modern world. You know that too well. Your presence here is proof of it.

What does that mean to us? Talk must relate back.

As Jews, we know persecution. Einstein "If theory of relativity proved correct etc. "

As Jews another function, however. Historically, the Jew has been more concerned with principle and ideals than with person. He has sacrificed his person for these ideas. That has been his mission... I believe it to be reason for his survival. ...Historians say: monotheism.

I can only urge that Jews not forget that role they play. ...The problem of Jews is insignificant. After all, only a few... Others have disappeared. ...In the sands of time, their impact not by numbers, by whether they had a land a govt of their own, but by their role

The impt problem today is liberty and democracy. I have tried to show how in a sense your presence reflects and represents that problem by stating one phase of the problem...

My purpose is to enlist your aid in that struggle. Calls for dedicating not so much to Judaism, to Zionism, but to something which is part of Judaism, human cooperation.