HOW TO LIVE TOGETHER AND LIKE IT

National Board of Fire Underwriters

Hotel Commodore
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Also at

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The United States recently engaged in a "great debate" on our basic attitudes toward Europe, launched by an address of former President Hoover. Now we are deeply involved in a protracted discussion of policy in the Pacific and the Far East, occasioned by the displacement of General MacArthur. At no time in modern history have the issues of American foreign policy been discussed with such vigor, such thoroughness, and such sweep as in the course of the last few months.

It is right that there should be such discussion. In fact, it is essential, because the United States, by the growth of its influence, by its emergence as the only unbombed, uninvaded great power in the last war, has come to exercise a leverage upon the destiny of the world which makes its policy dominant, if not decisive, in the fate of other nations.

A diplomatic episode of a generation ago illustrates our current relationship with the rest of the world. A Caribbean diplomat asserted that United States policy was having an adverse effect upon his country. The protest astonished the Secretary of State; he promptly asserted that we had no policy which, by any stretch of the imagination, could be regarded as hostile. The diplomat replied that the United States was so big relative to the size of his country that, unless the Secretary took care to observe where the shadow of the northern giant fell, the smaller nation might, unintentionally, be kept perpetually in shadow, deprived of the benefits of the sun. The Secretary later said that this episode altered his entire thinking about the relationship between the United States and smaller nations.

Today the long shadow of the United States stretches in the morning to the uppermost reaches of the Far East; as the sun moves westward its shadow covers Europe. The mere weight of this country in the world balance is so decisive that a slight shift in our equilibrium—political, economic, or social—may cause disturbances the world around. Therefore we can no longer make policy with regard to its immediate and obvious domestic consequences only; we must consider its indirect and ultimate impact upon people who, unless they are consciously
kept in mind, may easily be permanently overshadowed. There is no sense in attempting to halt the spread of Communism by deliberate means, while at the same time, by carelessness and ineptitude, contributing to fiscal, social, and political disorganization, thereby smoothing the way for Communist advance.

A second change in our foreign relations is equally fundamental. As there is an alteration in scale due to the growth of the power of the United States, so also there is a correlative change in method. We have come to the conclusion that our very greatness makes us vulnerable. This opinion was reached not alone by rational discussion, but in the intuitive way in which people accept the facts of life. Our interests have become world-wide; our reliance upon remote places for rare but essential strategic materials offers an instance. In his first general report last month, Mr. Charles E. Wilson gave a graphic demonstration of this dependence with a map. It is only one illustration among many which explain why disturbances anywhere in the world affect us vitally. Our fundamental security is no longer shielded by the two oceans; we can suffer damaging losses at vast distances from our shores.

Great as we are, we cannot have preponderant military power simultaneously at every place in the world where we have important relationships—even if we had any such mad, imperialistic ambition. Consequently there is no available security for our far-flung interests except collective security. Inevitably at some places and at some times our interests can be protected only by the friendly cooperation of others; that is what collective security means. It follows, of necessity, that we must accept a reciprocal obligation to reinsure the interests of others at times and in places where our active cooperation is essential. Surely men in the insurance business, accustomed to the mutualization of hazard and the sharing of risk, do not need to have that point belabored.

It is not a new idea in the international world, but its acceptance by the United States, as an active determinant of our policy, is very new indeed. It was proposed originally in the course of the First World War by a group of American citizens who organized the League to Enforce Peace; their purpose was to form a world-wide organization for collective security. When the League of Nations was established by the Treaty of Versailles it embodied ideas of economic pressure and the use of collective force. The United States did not ratify the Treaty
or join the League; our abstention weakened the organization immeasurably. Whether because of our non-participation or for other reasons, the use of physical force was never made effective and the exercise of economic leverage proved disappointing.

By the time the United Nations was created disillusionment concerning economic sanctions was so great there they were no longer regarded as possessing adequate leverage to hold transgressors in line; there was clear intention to use collective armed force. That expectation was livelier in the United States, and more persuasive to the public mind in this country, than in Britain and Europe. People abroad had come to doubt the efficacy of a general clause in the constitution of a world organization providing for military action in support of peace. It has now become clear to Americans, as well, that to make the idea effective the Charter would have to be drafted in different terms, for it did not explicitly take into account the possibility that the aggressor might be one of the great powers. The veto defeats the fundamental idea, at least so far as the permanent members of the Security Council are concerned.

Except for the brief interval of a few months in 1950, when the Russian boycott of the Security Council suspended its use of the veto and released the organization for action, the United Nations has not been in a position really to test the utility of world-wide collective security through the use of force. Even within the limits of its potential use, there is a defect which, for the time being at least, is fatal to the concept: there is no method of determining the proportion of force to be supplied by the several members in any situation requiring military action. The disparity between the men and materiel sent to Korea by the United States, upon the one hand, and the other active members of the United Nations, on the other, is so great that the present war is only a kind of token collective action, rather than a full manifestation of the substance of collective security.

The relative impotence of the United Nations because of Russian intransigence led to the adoption of measures outside the structure of the United Nations, though not out of harmony with its basic purposes. Russia's threats to peace in the Middle East, the Balkans, and Western Europe led first to the Truman Doctrine, aid to Greece and Turkey, then to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The twelve nation treaty represented a retreat from the concept of world-wide security to collective responsibility more intensive and more limited in
geographical scope. It still seeks to protect a large area, stretching as it does from Alaska on the west to Algeria on the east; it is now proposed to extend it beyond the Bosporus into Asia Minor.

The North Atlantic Treaty is a far more decisive break with our tradition than was adherence to the Charter of the United Nations. It runs directly counter to a tradition unbroken since the days of George Washington. In 1778, we entered upon a treaty of alliance with the French. In altered circumstances, after the government under the Constitution was established, Washington felt that this treaty might lead the United States into actions contrary to its basic interests. Indeed, his neutrality policy, which Madison called a “mistake” and Jefferson thought was “pusillanimous,” was designed to avoid, so far as possible, bringing into force obligations under the French treaty. The maneuver was conducted with such skill that in his Farewell Address he could refer to the French alliance as unbroken; Washington asserted that, while he was not “capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements, . . . it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.”

Moreover he stated the case for avoidance of future alliances with great clarity: “Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies” into which we shall be drawn only if we create artificial ties. “Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. . . . Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation?” Then he enunciated the policy which became classic—“to steer clear of permanent alliances” and “trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.”

Four years later this principle was summarized by Jefferson as “peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none.” The treaty of alliance with the French, which had long since become distasteful and then was made essentially meaningless by our naval war with France, has been formally abrogated in 1800. Thereafter in the American mind the adjective “entangling” became inseparable from the noun “alliance”; all alliances were regarded as “entangling alliances” and none was made until 1949.

So strong did this prejudice against alliances become that Woodrow Wilson not only made no alliance in the First World War, even such a temporary one as George Washington had
specifically endorsed; he carefully avoided use of the word even colloquially. As a consequence the Treaty of Versailles refers to "Allied and Associated Powers." This phrase reflected the President’s belief that we were tied with the French and British and others only by moral bonds; we were “associated” and did not share the same treaty obligations which bound together the other participants in winning the war; indeed he used our “detached” position to resist unwelcome consequences of such treaties among our associates.

In the Second World War, Franklin Roosevelt made “executive agreements” and “joint declarations,” but he never signed a treaty of alliance. He did use the word “allies” colloquially, but it was merely a loose form of expression. The explanation is that even so bold an innovator felt obliged in this matter to defer to history. It is striking that one who defied the equally old tradition limiting a president to two elective terms, and did it with impunity, hesitated to run counter to public prejudice against alliances.

It was a complete break with tradition, therefore, when we entered upon a formal treaty of alliance. On the 4th of April, 1949, we agreed with eleven other nations “separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid” to “maintain and develop . . . individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack”; we committed ourselves to go to war by agreeing “that an armed attack against one or more . . . be considered an attack against . . . all.” and promised to take “action . . . , including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.” Furthermore, this was not a “temporary alliance” because its minimum duration is set for twenty years. Nevertheless the Senate by the overwhelming vote of 82 to 13 advised and consented to its ratification.

The North Atlantic alliance, consequently, is an experience quite new in the history of the United States. Adjustment to that novel situation presents great difficulties. There are clear evidences that the art of living happily with an ally requires special technique which we are far from having fully mastered.

The first requirement is the international application upon our part of a phrase now quite out of fashion—noble oblige. Its meaning is that persons holding positions of privilege and power must, by reason of that status, reveal unusual self-discipline; they must instinctively do the generous and cour-
eous thing and do it without expectation of reward. We must have a care, so to speak, where our shadow falls. That will require an effort, but it takes much less effort for the powerful to be considerate than for those of lesser station.

Even so the self-discipline involved in the concept of noblesse oblige is not easy to attain. Unconscious arrogance commonly accompanies conscious strength. Historically this sense of dominance has not been absent in the United States. One has only to recall Richard Olney’s claim that “it’s fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition. Why? . . . It is not simply by reason of its high character as a civilized state, nor because wisdom and justice and equity are the invariable characteristics of the dealings of the United States. It is because, in addition to all other grounds, its infinite resources combined with its isolated position render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers.” This was a needlessly brusque and pompous statement.

Because we have been “successful,” the feeling develops that achievement is due wholly to our virtue; that therefore whatever we do is virtuous. Our power is now so great that we should remind ourselves of the famous aphorism of Lord Acton, “All power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” That is the central flaw in Russian behavior; absolutism has completely corrupted it. Certainly that sense of power was one of the factors which made Hitler behave with utter madness. Remembering these things we must resist any tendency on the part of the United States to tell other nations to model themselves on us, and all will be well. Nothing irritates proud nations more than to be asked to give up their own characteristic methods because we think ours are better.

Power tempts nations to impatience—to press for a “showdown,” to deal harshly with delicate matters. An overacute sense of power tends to label all negotiation as appeasement and insists upon an all-or-nothing attitude in international relations. Recent history demonstrates that ends achieved by power are transient to the point of being evanescent. The ephemeral quality of a victory which did not bring us peace should teach us that basic lesson. Only things achieved by justice and reason are permanent; we should therefore discipline ourselves, difficult as it may be, to hold our sense of power in right perspective and put our main reliance upon reason and justice.
What are the evidences that we have not yet mastered the technique of noblesse oblige? There are many. Among the most prominent are tensions which exist between us and the other key member of the alliance—the British Commonwealth. The relationship between the United States and the peoples of the Commonwealth is the central factor in the international strength of the free world. Contacts with the French and other members of the new alliance are often difficult and sensitive; nevertheless they do not compare in critical significance with the necessity for good teamwork between the English-speaking peoples. At this moment our relations, though basically friendly, are in an irritated state.

One of the most influential English publications, The Economist, has been a stout defender of the Atlantic Pact. Indeed it has gone so far as to declare, "The first thing for Britain is that the Atlantic alliance should hold fast." When, therefore, it speaks of American opinion as "headstrong," it is criticism from a friend and should be heeded. If one turns to less friendly journals, the adjectives multiply in number and tend toward invective.

It always increases understanding if we put ourselves in the other fellow's shoes. To do so, we have only to cast our minds back to the issuance of the Monroe Doctrine. In 1823 a good many people felt that we should not take sole responsibility for the policy but should act in concert with Britain. John Quincy Adams, one of our most skillful Secretaries of State, realized that the United States would be a junior partner in any joint action; his pride was so fierce, his faith in the future of America so strong that he refused, on the ground that he did not want the United States to come in as "a cockboat in the wake of the British man-of-war."

There are times now when it seems to the British, whose power position relative to the United States has been reversed since 1823, as if they are forced to come in as a cockboat in the wake of the American man-of-war. We have a recent illustration in the uproar over the appointment of Admiral Fechteler to be the commander of the fleets in the North Atlantic. Criticism of the British Government's consent to his designation came from two sides. Winston Churchill and the Tories protested loudly, but equally vigorous were the rebukes of Aneurin Bevan and the left-wing Labourites. This kind of irritation is bound to manifest itself every time we do not exercise tact as well as energy.
The British have recent evidence of such heedlessness in the famous atomic bomb statement made by Mr. Truman speaking off the cuff at a press conference. It was so explosive that it could have upset the Atlee Cabinet. Members of his own party, as well as the opposition, reacted so violently that the Prime Minister hastily flew to Washington, which had even more hastily sought to "correct" the wrong impression which sheer carelessness had caused.

It is natural that pride should be sensitive when a nation which has long held the position of leadership finds itself superseded in that role. This episode demonstrates that, whereas the area of agreement is not only broad but deep, the surface of that agreement is tense. There is a good deal of soreness which should be relieved lest it develop into real trouble.

British sensitiveness is heightened by the fact that we are often careless as to form. Americans must be cautious in rejecting this criticism because "shirt-sleeve diplomacy" has, in times past, been a point of pride with us. It is a phrase developed to describe the application of plain common sense to great problems, their practical solution by neglecting the rituals of "effete and outmoded diplomacy."

Whatever the merits of shirtsleeve tactics in dealing with an opponent, those advantages are by no means clear when cooperating with an ally. Rough and ready direct action often results in failure of coordination, and forces the ally into the humiliating position of following a course concerning which its views had not been adequately ascertained, much less taken into sympathetic consideration.

The atomic episode passed, but Arnold Toynbee's amendment of the American Revolutionary slogan, "No taxation without representation," into "No annihilation without representation" became a watchword in Britain. It condenses into an apt phrase one of the vital realities growing out of alliance: one nation can precipitate a war that many nations would have to fight. It takes only one to start what becomes the obligation of others to finish. London, heavily bombed in the last war, is chary of negligent references to the atom bomb. It is too near, and too obvious a target, for philosophical detachment, much less for loose talk with incendiary possibilities.

This was by no means an isolated case of failure to coordinate policy with that of our principal ally. Another instance was the sudden pressure on the part of the Secretary of State
for German rearmament. It greatly hampered French negotia-
tions with reference to the Schuman Plan; it equally embar-
rassed the British because of marked differences from their
German policy.

We also failed to act in concert with our allies in the neu-
tralization of Formosa. From the current American point of
view the strategical position of Formosa clearly outweighs all
other considerations; but in times past there have been great
differences of opinion, even military opinion, about Formosa.
It must be remembered that as late as January 1950 the Secre-
tary of State left Formosa outside our "defensive perimeter,"
despite clear recognition of special responsibilities in Korea.
That position was reversed suddenly and without full consul-
tation with our allies. It was done unilaterally, although, as
victors in the war, they have a joint responsibility with us for
its fate. We took pains officially to depend upon the United
Nations for our status in Korea, but acted on Formosa with-
out consultation with the British whose point of view was
known to be different; it proved to be intensely annoying.
Time and circumstance are drawing us more nearly together
on that issue, but neither time nor circumstance can overlay
the fact that we did not consult.

The evidence is clear that in those and other instances not
quite so conspicuous, but also irritating, we have moved with-
out proper consultation when our principal ally was deeply
cconcerned or have committed acts which involved it without
prior notice. Consequently the British have reasonable ground
for thinking that we have not carried on the work of the alli-
ance with that sensitiveness to the feelings of others which is
the root of good human relations whether between individuals
or nations.

A second source of irritation arises from American assump-
tions regarding the polarity of modern international relations.
It has become customary to assert that there are really only
two great powers remaining in the world, the Union of Soviet
Socialist Republics and the United States of America. So
deeperly has that idea become embedded in popular American
thought and speech that there is a strong tendency to test the
validity and wisdom of every diplomatic act anywhere in the
world by its effect upon the tension between the two "super
powers."
Evidence of the dominance of this idea of polarity appeared the other day. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff testifying before congressional committees referred to the possibility of more extended operations against China as "the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time and with the wrong enemy." Thus the highest military sanction was given to the popular impression that Russia is the enemy. Clearly the inference is that the "right" war, if one can use such an expression, would be with Russia.

Overaccentuation of polarity produces the impression that every diplomatic difficulty is of Russian instigation. It is responsible for the feeling that there is no escape from an ultimate showdown with the "real" enemy. It accounts also for the recurrent suggestion of a "preventive war." Of course, that phrase is a contradiction in terms. You cannot prevent war by making war; nothing comparable to typhoid inoculation has been discovered for war-fever. What is really suggested by an inapt phrase is that we should get the jump upon an inevitable opponent instead of letting the ineluctable struggle be launched by him, in the area of his choice, by the means he selects, at a time most favorable to his success.

This general thought was given expression in an address in Boston some months ago by the Secretary of the Navy. It is easy for Americans to shrug off such an episode; with good reason it upsets our allies. It would be impossible in Britain for a cabinet or subcabinet officer to stay in office after a public address which differed so clearly from official policy. It is difficult for the British to understand why a supreme commander in a vital theater should be removed for deviation from presidential policy, while a Secretary of the Navy continues to function, apparently without rebuke, after broadly hinting at a "preventive war."

Our allies do not realize that cabinet officers in the United States have no standing outside their official position unless the President chooses party leaders, which has been done only rarely in this administration. There are such marked differences between the system of parliamentary government on the one hand and the separation of powers under our Constitution that the lack of harmony, not to say unity, within our administration is difficult for them to conceive. It therefore seems to them that such speeches must be trial balloons, approved at
least tacitly, else they would never be given without loss of position on the part of the offender.

Another consequence of overaccentuation of polarity, is the implicit reduction of all other nations in the scale of world affairs. When this is carried to an extreme, as in Russia, allies become mere satellites. We have no hesitation in speaking of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania as satellites of Russia; so indeed they are. But there are nations which vote as consistently with us in the United Nations as those nations vote with Russia; on some issues they privately express regret at having to do so. They intimate that they sometimes think of themselves as satellites; occasionally some feel that we treat them as satellites. Such action on our part is unconscious; from the point of view of *noblesse oblige* that only makes it worse. It is felt that we are not adequately sensitive to the feelings of nations who do not want, without full consideration of their situation, to become satellites of either power.

Undue emphasis upon Russian-American polarity in international relations cuts across an absolutely vital element in British policy—the maintenance of the Commonwealth. We should have a profound interest in its continuance, for the strength of our ally contributes to our own security. Only with difficulty can we even approach an understanding of its fabric—a group of independent nations operating together in some respects, at variance in others, and always free to part company. To a Constitution-conscious American that does not seem like a very sound organism; to the Britisher it has a pragmatic validity—it works. It is the principal concern of Britain to see that it continues to work.

The chief problem in the maintenance of the British Commonwealth today relates to India. The ties with North Ireland are close; bonds with Canada, Australia, New Zealand are based upon populations predominantly British and upon historical relationships. Strong ties of sentiment hold those nations, independent though they be, within the Commonwealth. But the vast subcontinent of India was not granted dominion status without enormous pressure, amounting to revolution. It lacks the ties of race, religion, tradition, and sentiment. Holding it within the ambit of the Commonwealth must be achieved by tact, by lively sensitiveness to Indian feeling, and by everlasting emphasis upon common interests.
This necessity accounts for the ambivalence of British policy. It has sometimes seemed less considerate of the interests of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada in dealing with the United States than of Indian opinion. Public opinion in the United States, on the other hand, has little patience with Nehru's position—"Nehrutrality"; obsessed with the Russian menace, we fail to see that "Asia for the Asiatics" is a more instant and appealing program to India than "a world safe from Communism." India does not feel the Russian menace directly or immediately, as we think we are threatened. If India does not want to be closely associated with either Russia or the United States, that is its right under the assumptions upon which the Commonwealth operates. However impatient we may be with India's resistance to the dogma of polarity, Britain simply cannot afford to be.

Because of this ambivalence in policy, the British believe that every effort should be made to slacken the tension between Russia and the United States. They operate upon the traditional conviction, which appears in our labor relations and many other places, that as long as you are talking you are not fighting. They think, therefore, that discussions should not needlessly be broken off. Consequently when the United States hesitated to engage in conversations with Russia, the British felt that we were closing channels of negotiation—which they distinguish from appeasement.

Sometimes we can better understand criticism offered by others if we pause to reflect that our own self-criticism is often close to that of foreign nations, though differently expressed. When it is asserted abroad that we hesitate to negotiate with Russia because of lack of confidence in our capacity to hold our own, it rouses our resentment. But in another context we say much the same thing about ourselves. There are many evidences that we have a sort of inferiority complex about our diplomacy. It was epitomized in one of Will Rogers' most frequently quoted aphorisms: The United States never lost a war or won a conference. The assertion cannot survive careful analysis; but in a rather astonishing way it expresses in a single phrase a pervasive mood which often governs American opinion, however much it is at variance with historical fact.

Since the deputy foreign ministers have been meeting in Paris, Dr. Jessup and Mr. Bohlen have been persistent and ingenious in efforts to draw an agenda acceptable to all parties.
The British have come to see that negativism is no longer dominant. They also realize that the Russians daily continue to give full justification for our scepticism about success. To Americans ten weeks spent arguing over the words of a program for a meeting seem like the height of futility, especially when, if the meeting is ever held, the participants will probably pay little attention to the words. To those steeped in the history of European diplomacy the significance is very lively. Day by day we are making Russian responsibility for failure to achieve peace ever more clear both to doubting friends and suspicious neutrals.

I have referred to the ambivalence of British policy arising from India's status within the Commonwealth. Harsher critics call it plain inconsistency. We should be chary of choosing the harsher word, for consistency is not one of the most conspicuous crown jewels of any nation.

Our capacity to see motes in the eyes of our allies without first removing the beam from our own is illustrated by inflation. It is well known here, and is no secret abroad, that our government has not been willing to accept the political risks of adequate taxes, economy in non-defense spending, credit restrictions, sound debt management, postponement of public works, and other measures to control inflation. Indeed it is well known that many governmental activities definitely promote the inflationary spiral.

Such inconsistency is bad enough in its domestic effects. For example, every institution of higher education is suffering; a basic educational resource of the United States is gravely threatened by the economic folly of inflation occasioned by lack of political courage. That is only one single illustration among thousands which reveal the evil consequences of inadequate and inconsistent policies regarding inflation.

Defense Mobilizer Wilson says the problem has caused him "many a sleepless night." Inflation, he says, is a "cancerous growth" that could be "fatal." "For every $10,000,000,000 appropriated by Congress for rearmament, we have lost $2,000,000,000 worth of weapons of defense through inflation of costs. That is a casualty loss of 20 per cent . . . But if we suffer a loss of 20 per cent in equipment through inflation, we just suffer that loss ourselves without inflicting any corresponding loss—any loss at all—on the enemy. Suppose we let that kind of thing go unchecked. Very soon the defense program
would become too expensive for us to bear or it would have inflated our whole system and destroyed our economic strength."

It would be bad enough for the defense effort if inflation's damage were confined to the United States. But it is not; the ill effects at home are reflected abroad. Our allies find that our domestic failure makes their problems more acute. Since our intensive rearmament program has been launched, wholesale prices have advanced in 36 countries—in some to a disastrous degree; consumers costs have risen in 46 nations. Clearly inflation is our greatest export. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe reported only this week that American inflation is now producing "new economic maladjustments and tensions no less serious than those which were being overcome" by the Marshall Plan and otherwise.

Inflation not only affects foreign economies adversely, it not only increases costs, it not only slows the rate of participation in mutual defense; it adversely affects the stability of tenure of the men holding office. Nothing irritates politicians more! And politics must be taken into account.

Indeed, one of the most difficult and sensitive of all the problems connected with harmony among allies arises from exploitation of international differences for partisan ends at home. Though basic national policies are non-political and remain unchanged whatever party is in power, the tactical dispositions adopted to achieve the policies are subject to politics, and properly so. It is the essence of the democratic system that action by the party in power is carried on under the scrutiny and criticism of the minority. In Britain this is epitomized by the phrase, "His Majesty's loyal opposition." It is revealed in our government by fraternization across the aisle at one moment and tension between the two sides at the next.

There is, however, a Utopian expression which has appeared again and again in the course of American history: "Politics stops at the water's edge." It is a slogan designed to remove the national interest, as it clashes with other national interests, from the weakening effect of division at home. In moments of great crisis men tend to be careful, but usually the slogan is neglected. The reason is simple: the first objective of a politician is to stay in office. Politicians out of office fade away even faster than old soldiers.

In practice, therefore, no way has been found to prevent the exploitation of diplomatic differences for partisan advantage.
Blaming failure of the peace on other nations is as human as passing the buck; only great self-discipline can overcome it. When we were the smaller nation, twisting the lion’s tail used to be thought a sure-fire way to gain popular favor. If now some British politicians like to twitch feathers from the eagle’s tail, it must be tolerantly understood in the light of our own history.

In the give and take of diplomacy there will always be concessions—indeed without concessions there would be no diplomacy. There is no way that political attempts to exploit concessions as “surrender” can be wholly prevented. The recent Torquay tariff conference led to assertions in this country that American bargaining “failed” and that our interests were “sacrificed.” Simultaneously the Tories denounced the Labour Government for having “sold out” to America by cutting imperial preferences. Blaming failure on the “ins” is the obvious tactic of the “outs.”

The bad effects of partisanship on foreign relations can be ameliorated only by a sense of humor, and ultimately by punishing at the polls those who carry “politics” so far as to endanger the national interest by separating us from those upon whose help we may some day have to depend. During the last few months we have heard repeated assertions that the State Department pursues policies “Made in England,” and has not an adequately independent point of view. When we recall this, there is humor in the fact that one of the reasons for Aneurin Bevan’s resignation from the Attlee cabinet was that its policies were “Made in America.”

He declared that the evils of the Budget arose “because we have allowed ourselves to be dragged too far behind the wheels of American diplomacy.” “It is now perfectly clear to anyone who examines the matter objectively—the lurchings of the American economy, the extravagance and unpredictable behavior of the production machine, the failure on the part of the American Government to inject the arms program into the economy slowly enough has already caused a vast inflation of prices all over the world. It has disturbed the economy of the Western world to such an extent that if it goes on more damage will be done by this unrestrained behavior than by the behavior of the nation the arms are intended to restrain.” The sense of fair play is so strong in Britain that when Bevan overplayed this theme it reacted against him. He retired to the back
benches a far less influential person than he had been only a short time before.

When exploitation for partisan purposes goes too far, it endangers the national interest; that is not a subject for humor. The only solution then is to punish the party or the person at the polls. That is the ultimate manner in which public opinion controls foreign policy. Leaving firebrands at home is the sure cure for their misbehavior. That has happened many times in American history, and can happen again.

In speaking about living comfortably with allies I have put the emphasis upon what we must do. I am not pretending that the obligations are unilateral and I agree with those who say that our allies sometimes are hard to live with. When in the midst of Korean reverses they seem to drag their feet in a military sense and be overeager to make a diplomatic settlement even on unsatisfactory terms, it is difficult to swallow. When they were quick to recognize Red China on the ground that revolution is sweeping Asia, but cling to Hong Kong and its imperialistic tradition, it creates problems of good will. When they are reluctant because of domestic socialist dogma to participate in efforts to integrate Europe, it is profoundly irksome.

The problems are far from being all on our side. The reason for stressing American responsibilities is that those are the actions which we control. Only if we deal with differences with tactful tongue and sympathetic appreciation of the other man's problems, as well as with clean hands and a pure heart, are we in a position to induce concessions on the other side. In the last few weeks there have been hopeful signs of a modus operandi in the Far East and the trouble in Iran is serious enough to make cooperation essential despite other differences. It is clear that on our own side we have yielded ground in the matter of hasty German rearmament, under the magnificent leadership of General Eisenhower.

Alliance is a new experience for the United States. We must, therefore, examine with candor and good humor the implications for American life and American behavior, both in the substance of our action and in the manner of our action, in order to make the new status not only tolerable but happy and effective.