The Queenstown News

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Friday, January 8, 1954

How Strong Are We?

As a new year begins, it is the part of wisdom for a nation, like a business, to review its assets and its liabilities.

On the credit side, the United States has an unrivaled standard of living. Our men and women enjoy wages and conditions superior to existing anywhere. The tide of goods and services flows endlessly from American production and distribution line staggers the imagination. Materially speaking, business, agriculture and labor are doing well.

We have a political system which comes as close to being responsive to the wishes of the people as any one can. In the last presidential election the people took from power a party that had been in control for years and put another in place. In some future election the party now in power will be replaced. But the roll; no purges are made. The losers are not liquidated. All are free to air their views.

We are no longer actually at war, unsatisfactory as the Korean situation is. If recent reports are correct, our military strength and that of Western Europe have shown remarkable improvement. The chance of another world war is less than it was.

So much for the credit side of the ledger. What of the debits?

The most disheartening domestic development of recent times has been the growing dependence of millions of people on government, mainly the federal government, to provide services and benefits that, if a free system is to be preserved, must remain the responsibility of the individual and the family group. There has been a blind seeking for a kind of cradle-to-the-grave security whose end, in the sweep of history, has always been the sapping of moral fiber and spiritual values and ultimate slavery. The most obvious manifestations of super-government are crushing taxes and mount-national debts. and the inevitable undermining of economic and political freedoms

Another phase of the debit side is found in the long strides that have been made in either socializing outright American enterprises and resources, or in subjecting them to so much government dictation and control that socialization comes ever nearer. And socialism, historically, is but the forerunner of communism or some similar system of government by oppression and terror.

It is true that our present government is pledged to reverse this deadly process. It is true that some heartening steps in that direction have been made. It is equally true that the forces that would destroy our free system and replace it with a very different kind of system are still awaiting their chance.

As a matter of self preservaton we must put the welfare of the nation first in considering important national issues, because our jobs, our businesses, our farms, and our liberties depend upon the perpetuation of a strong nation of self-governing people.

What the decision will be depends entirely upon our moral strength. Will we welcome policies and programs that are in accord with the philosophy of maximum freedom for all—and will we accept the temporary financial dislocations that such policies and programs may create? It will not be easy to end the era of do-all, give-all government. But, if the traditions and ideals to which we all pay lip service, and which have made us great and strong are to be preserved, it is as necessary as the air we breathe.

Nineteen fifty-four will be a year to test whether the American people will have what it takes to maintain themselves as independent individuals.

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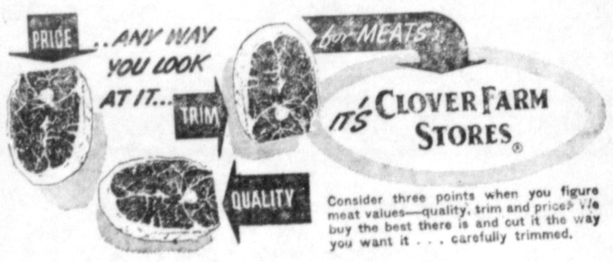

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