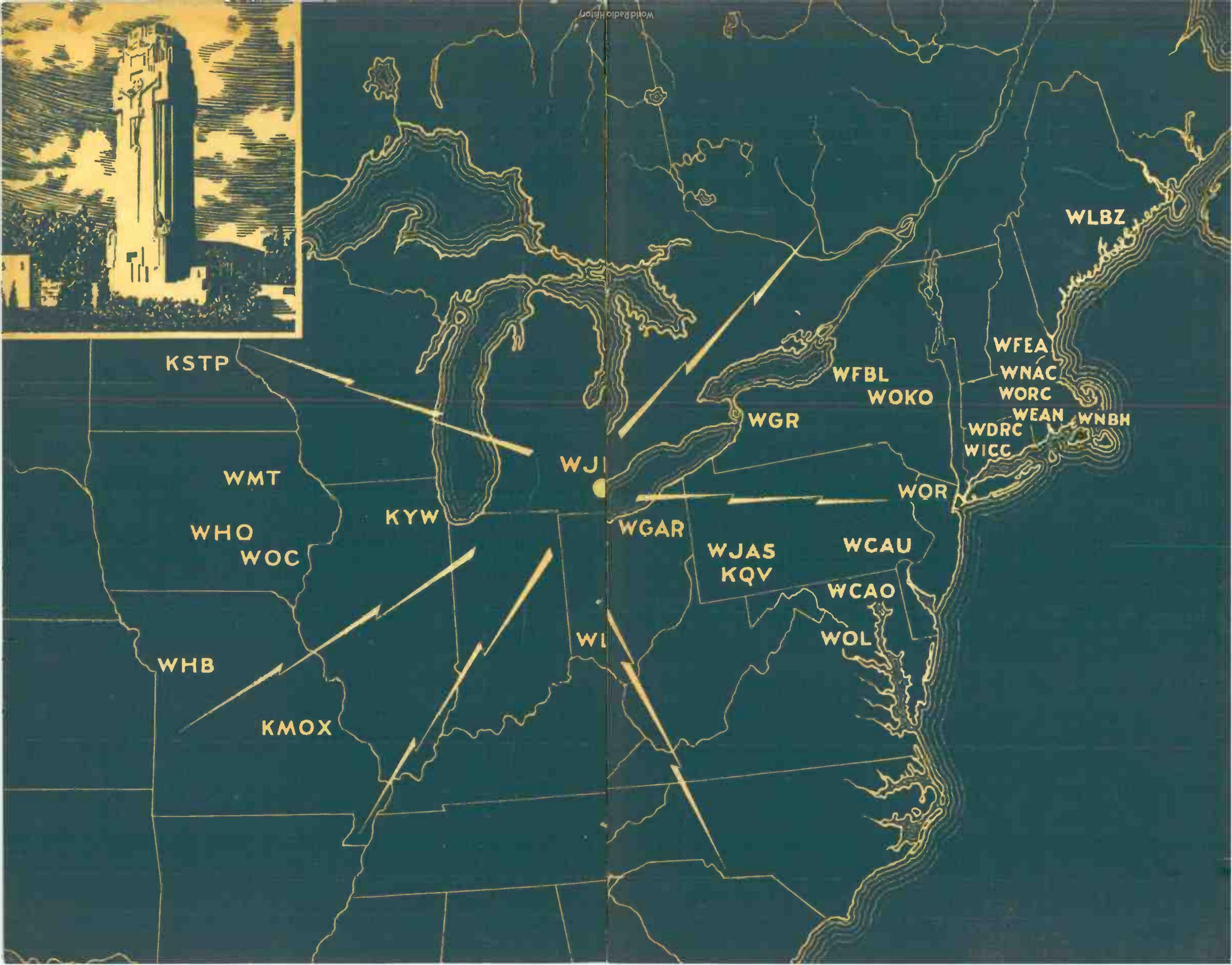
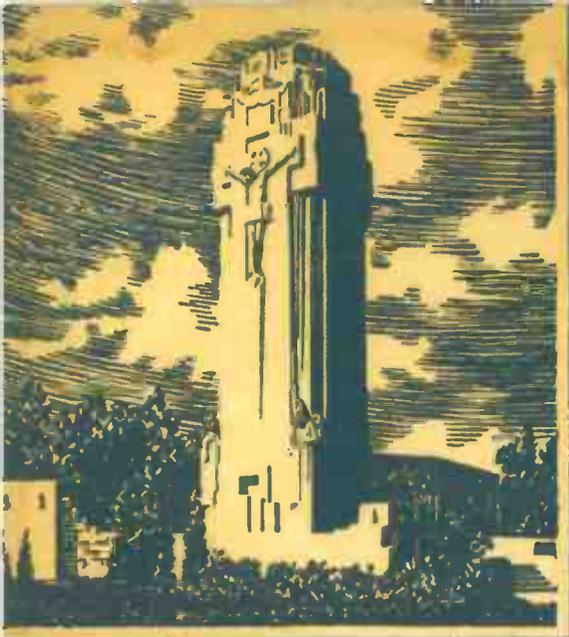


FATHER  
CHARLES E. COUGHLIN





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# FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

AN AUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY

BY

LOUIS B. WARD, M.A., Ph.D.



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DETROIT, MICHIGAN

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## [ DEDICATION ]

I DEDICATE this work to my wife Elizabeth and to our four little ones, Eleanor Mary, John Francis, Kathleen Theresa and Neil Brendan, in the hope that the coming generation will renounce the philosophy of neo-paganism and accept the principles of Leo XIII and Pius XI which alone will remove the economic stumbling blocks in the path of destiny.

THE AUTHOR

## {INTRODUCTION}

THE age long problem of man's relationship with his fellow-man is as active and seemingly insoluble as it was under the Pharaohs with their hewers of wood and drawers of water. The nations of antiquity solved it temporarily through the institution of slavery. It is true that under the pretense of lifting the yoke of oppression from the shoulders of men, formal slavery has been outlawed, but in its place a more subtle kind of slavery has been invented by the everlasting selfishness of godless men.

Under the guise of progress, a nefarious system of taxation has made it well-nigh impossible for a man to own his home or to retain his farm. Under this same guise wicked exploiters have invented a new kind of slavery known as industrial enslavement. While upon our statute books the illegality of usury has been cited, nevertheless a more cunning kind of usury has been invented to effect the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few.

The revival, therefore, of this new kind of slavery, which has stealthily been advancing upon us since the XVIth Century, has forced those who still cling to the principles of Christian charity and Christian justice to regard the solution and effacement of enslavement as the most momentous problem of the hour.

If society is to be preserved, the rugged individualism of this new paganism must be abandoned.

The Church Militant, as usual, has risen to the occasion. In the earliest days the Catholic Church insisted on the brotherhood of man as opposed to human subservience. First, the Apostles preached against the dominating passions of greed, of lust and of worldliness which made men slaves to sin. Next, their preaching resulted in the downfall of an empire that had been dedicated to the deification of wealth and power symbolized in an emperor.

In time the fruits of this teaching became manifest in the Ages of Faith. With wealth decentralized, with men happy and contented, abject poverty and ruthless domination were both destroyed—at least temporarily. The laws of the Church regu-

## INTRODUCTION

lated the economic life. The guilds developed the handicrafts. Wages and hours of labor were supervised.

But eventually the age of faith was succeeded by the age of reason. The Church was superseded by the State as the protector of rights, and the individual began to struggle through life under a new system of cut-throat competition accompanied by unrestrained freedom in industry. This change was evidenced by the Manchester School, which rose to formulate its economic philosophy of strict materialism and to enthrone property rights above human rights. Then began the exploitation of the poor and the entrenchment of wealth. The new capitalist maintained that the many existed for the few and that all profit must accrue to the investor.

Contemporaneous with this School came the Industrial Revolution, the birth of the factory system and the consequent realignment of human society. Mass-production appeared in our midst with its inevitable displacement of human labor. Quickly followed the multiplication of millionaires, and the material debasement of human beings under an economic system where poverty existed in the midst of plenty.

The first great voice to be raised against this unreasonable system was that of Bishop Ketteler. He had developed the sociological principles of St. Thomas Aquinas respecting the Christian theory of property and the Christian duty of charity. In this Divine Doctor of the Middle Ages, Ketteler found the real answers to every economic and social need of the present day.

Because neo-paganism was advancing under the protection of governments whose chief function appeared to be the propagation of capitalistic abuses which were thinly veiled under the cloak of culture, Leo XIII at length was forced to speak.

Thus came the *Rerum Novarum*, a most important document, which epitomized the Christian principles of capital and labor, of wealth and distributive justice.

Relatively few persons within the Faith studied this encyclical letter. It had little or no influence among those outside. Seldom did it reach an employer. In fine, the doctrines of Leo were not propagated effectively, as evidenced by the worst war the world has known, which grew out of industrial competition.

The present Pontiff, Pius XI, in 1931 was forced to reiterate the doctrine published by Leo XIII. Thus was given to us the

## INTRODUCTION

*Quadragesimo Anno* by a leader who feared a revolution unless the malpractices of capitalism were immediately rectified.

However, little was done to popularize the principles of this Encyclical until the advent of Father Coughlin.

It required both the genius and the method of Father Coughlin to bring these teachings into the homes of the people. Only one man in the United States, or for that matter in the whole world, seemingly dared to teach the people the principles which were contained in the *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*—the principles in which was contained the true solution to the problems of the present economic and social order.

Father Coughlin preached. Sunday after Sunday millions of interested listeners returned to their radio sets to drink in more and more of a doctrine which up to that time had been withheld from them. Who understood the morals of money until this priest had spoken? Who understood the hidden usury of modern banking or the immorality of non-productive bonds until the pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower had made these questions plain? Who among all of us understood or grasped the frightful situation in this nation? Who until this man, in language, in logic, and in method comprehended by all, convinced the nation of the necessity of re-establishing Christian philosophy in place of paganism? Who convinced the nation that Christian justice should replace exploitation, the fruits of which it was experiencing?

While a few hundred literati pondered upon the niceties of Leo and of Pius as though they had been written for metaphysical discussion behind the cloistered walls of a classroom; while pedantic groups here and there discussed the formation of erudite societies to propagate the truths enunciated in the *Rerum Novarum*, this priest, Father Coughlin, single-handed, succeeded in teaching the great mass of the American people the very principles which were still being academically discussed by mighty minds. Plain Christian philosophy was made still plainer to a truth-hungry people.

I recognize in Father Coughlin a keen intellect blessed with a thorough theological training and a sound philosophical grounding. Not only does he possess indomitable perseverance and warm enthusiasm in the pursuit of his work, but he brings to it a trained imagination, a wealth of rhetoric, and a sympathetic understanding of the human heart.

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As a teacher of the masses he is unrivaled because of that power of his for the pictorial, the graphic and the definite. He is an indefatigable worker. I made no mistake and have never doubted my judgment in putting him before the microphone.

One day I received a wire from a good friend of mine in the priesthood. It read, "Take that heretic off the air." I wired back, "Prove your heresy."

Father Coughlin has accomplished much, particularly for the future of mankind and the future of the Church. He has the happy faculty of taking the old truths as expressed by Christ and the Prophets, the Fathers and the Popes, and holding them in sharp distinction to the immoral tenets of neo-paganism.

I do not term him a national leader, but I prefer to regard him as a world leader. His arguments cannot be refuted nor can his method be withstood.

Had he lived in Russia before the Revolution and had he possessed the radio facilities, there would probably be no Communism, no atheism, no "League of the Godless" there today. He has dedicated his ministry to the future of mankind and to his Church. He has taught Christian principles and Catholic truth.

The author of this volume is Louis B. Ward, who by education, temperament, piety and zeal was well prepared for writing this work. His is one of the most brilliant minds of America's Catholic laity. Added to his lore of economics and sociology, he brought to his task a complete understanding of the Catholic Church, its history and its doctrines.

To felicitate him upon his achievement is my pleasure as I commend this book "The Authorized Biography of Reverend Charles E. Coughlin," to the clergy and laity alike.

*+ Michael J. Gallagher  
Bishop of Detroit.*

Given at Detroit,  
Sunday, June 4th, 1933  
The Feast of Pentecost

## [ AUTHOR'S PREFACE ]

THIS volume is a biographical sketch of Reverend Charles E. Coughlin, known to millions of Americans as the Priest of the Radio. It is not the glorification of a man. It is the simple recording of seven major phases of a most interesting life: namely, the preparation for his ministry; his rise to fame; the presentation of the moral economic doctrines; the resistance and reaction by the natural enemies of these doctrines; the response of the clergy; his typical sermons, and the acceptance of his teachings by millions of American people.

By no means does this volume follow the usual development of a biography. We are dealing with a priest, a priest unique among the clergy of the world.

The education of this priest is important. The task he attempted is all important to civilization. The method he chose to accomplish a life's work is new. The Catholic Church celebrates its nineteen hundredth anniversary the day this book is published. Yet for only seven of the nineteen hundred years has it used radio. And for less than three has it used radio to approach the millions on the moral economic doctrines which are nineteen hundred years old.

The content of the Father Coughlin discourses are of vital importance. Naturally I have adhered closely to his actual language in representing this doctrine.

The Detroit *Free Press* has lent invaluable aid to this biography. It has thrown the full resources of a metropolitan newspaper against this priest.

In attempting his destruction it has become "the devil's advocate." All that could be said against this man has been said by the *Free Press*. The inclusion of this material with a conscientious answer to each charge should silence the detractor and reveal the character of the calumniated priest.

I do not wish the reader to look for a beautiful unfolding of a life. Father Coughlin is a great leader of the Church Militant.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Neither battle nor war were planned with an exact prevision. The curtain on the future was always drawn. Hence the best preparation was his broad academic preparation.

Never could Father Coughlin follow the path of the heroes of many business biographies. Never had he the chance to set out in his youth to plan a lifetime of success and to win victory after victory over seemingly insuperable obstacles until he accomplished a predetermined end.

Rather was his work the simple battle for this day's obvious objective. Interruptions he had many. Interference always played its part. Yet seemingly could this life have been planned, no optimist would wager results in the social and economic order more sweeping, certain and revolutionary than he has accomplished.

Endless hours during the last two months have been freely offered and given the writer by Father Coughlin.

I have talked to the parents of this distinguished priest.

I have examined certain classes of letters he has received. I have had the others, the confidential ones, read by him.

This book is the result of such work. It is a simple book, concerning a humble priest, designed to be read, not by the profound and erudite, but by good souls who have heard a voice over the air, whose curiosity has been aroused and who may enjoy a plain and intimate picture of Father Coughlin and his work.

I thank Father Coughlin for the opportunity to write this volume. I appreciate the hours of association with him, the free access to his correspondence, his patience under constant questioning.

I thank likewise the Most Reverend Michael J. Gallagher, D.D., Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Detroit, for the illuminating information used in certain controversial chapters and for his generous reference to me in his splendid introduction.

L. B. W.

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PART I—PREPARATION



## [ CHAPTER ONE ]

### *Progenitors*

“Westward the course of Empire takes its way,  
The four first acts already past,  
A fifth shall close the drama of the day,  
Time’s noblest offspring is the last.”

**H**ISTORY faithfully records that from the flight of the Tartar tribes to the settlement of America, men have always moved westward. At one time the westward traveler was a refugee from the ruins of a burned out civilization. At another, he was a daring pioneer determined to escape the injustice of an economic slavery. Into the face of the setting sun he either drove his ox-cart or steered his crude boat—always hoping for better days.

Two thousand, five thousand, twenty thousand years, perhaps, were consumed since the first Scythian Celt left his native home near the Ural Mountains until his children established a kingdom on the coast of Ireland. These were the years required to build up the structure of a culture which had been formulated from sojournings among the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Syrians, the Medes and Persians, the Greeks and the Romans.

In the evolution of the United States of America from a land inhabited by hardy pioneers, with its vast forests and unpopulated plains, into the throbbing, pulsing patchwork of modern civilization, there is a romance which by far surpasses both in glory and in achievement the unbelievable expansion of the Scythian immigrant who played such a mighty part in the development of Asia Minor, of Northern Africa and of Europe. Many hundreds of years were required for this slow-moving, ponderous progress to reach the peak-point of its maturity.

Triremes propelled by the oar of the slave, ox-carts dragged over rough roadways and, finally, emulators of Pheidippides of

Marathon fame—these were the only means of distribution and of communication which were found in a civilization that had wedded itself to the economic doctrines of the past.

In contrast how quickly have we developed! One hundred and fifty short years ago the moose and the deer were still beating pathways through the virgin forests. Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore were then humble towns, over whose dirt street-ways and cobble-paved avenues there slowly moved boxes and bales of merchandise destined for the hold of an English merchantman; destined eventually for the factories abroad.

Beyond the Appalachian Mountains, as one crossed the valleys and topped the peaks of either the White or the Green or the Catskill ranges; beyond Albany, snug little settlement that it was, breathing securely at the upper reaches of the Hudson; far beyond the sites of modern Syracuse and Rochester, the daring traveler paused at the veritable outpost of civilization. That was Buffalo!

Those who still dwelt in the erudite surroundings of the comparatively peaceful east believed that Buffalo was within ear-shot of the rumblings of Niagara and not too far distant from the canyons of Colorado.

At any rate, as one trekked west from the Hudson River, it was certain that he must encounter an uncharted wilderness. He were fortunate if he should happen upon a settler's cabin hidden amid the trees as he peered upon the expanse of the Great Lakes.

Westward ho!

An occasional traveler told of Detroit, which since 1701 lived amidst the grandeur of the French traditions established by Antoine Laumet de la Mothe Cadillac.

Pittsburgh, too, was only in a state of conception in the year 1754 as from the flag staff of Fort Duquesne the French tricolor waved in the breezes that were wafted along the Monongahela River.

Not until 1767 had St. Louis been settled as a fur trading post by Pierre LaClède Liguest, a representative of the French crown.

Cleveland, so the east was told, was little more than a prosperous trading post as early as 1786.

The year 1789 chronicled the foundation of the city of Cincinnati, when John Filson and John Cleves Symmes organized its first simple municipal government.

## PROGENITORS

The mighty metropolis of Chicago, when first settled in the year 1804, was originally known as Fort Dearborn.

It was not until 1839 that Swiss and Canadian refugees from Lord Selkirk's Red River Colony established the first settlement at St. Paul.

Des Moines dates its origin from 1843.

Kansas City, Davenport and Waterloo are almost contemporaneous in their birth—all called into being by Congressional legislation which opened the Western lands in the fight for free soil.

What a transformation has been achieved during the short span of one hundred and fifty intervening years! Almost yesterday the West was the homeland of nomad Indians and wandering denizens of the plain. Today, where pines and hemlocks formerly waved, now stately cities stand, throbbing to the hum of the dynamo, moving to the tempo of the pulsing motor.

The pathway of the moose has become the steel-clad highway of the iron horse. The sites of lonely cabins have changed like magic into the seats of stately universities. The crude altars upon which Hennepin, Marquette and the companions of LaSalle offered up sacrifice to the Living God have grown into beauteous cathedrals of imperishable renown.

The history of this development indeed is brief. The construction of the Erie Canal was the first attempt to join the wilderness of the West to the growing splendor of the East—Buffalo to Albany! Buffalo to New York! The first spadeful of earth for the bed of the Erie Canal was dug with ceremonious celebration in the year 1817. In 1825 this process of excavation was completed. It was the first great step in the engineering and industrial achievement which enabled the pioneer to subdue not only the obstacles of nature but also the giant expanse of a nation's territory, whose mere extent and almost immeasurable latitude were stumbling blocks in its orderly development.

Patrick Coughlin, the great-grandfather of Charles Edward Coughlin, Irish immigrant that he was, shined many a shovel and dulled many a pick at this herculean task of building a waterway from the East to the West.

His son, Daniel Coughlin, the grandfather of the priest, lies buried today in the Lackawanna graveyard hard by the Shrine of our Lady of Perpetual Help.

## FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

His grandson, Thomas Coughlin, proudly recounts to his own child, the Priest of the Radio, that these scattered towns and trading posts and wildernesses of the West, just referred to, have been joined together by the miraculous intimacy of the Golden Hour network. These cities already mentioned are cities today which are outlets for the voice now known to millions of Americans.

The great-grandson of Patrick Coughlin, the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin, stands in retrospect today as he visualizes in name every city and town from the Rockies to the Atlantic, from St. Paul to the Gulf, which are woven together more closely than mere neighbors by the magic thread of radio, which, though unseen, permits his voice instantaneously to be carried through the uncharted highways of the air until his name has become a household word throughout this land.

This is but another proof that history is stranger than fiction. The story of Herodotus, the fairy tales of Aesop or the travels of Gulliver are dwarfed when compared to the realities which have been chronicled in America in less than three generations.

From the '30s of the last century to the '30s of this century, the Coughlin family lived and labored, loved and died as they and sinew in the fashioning of these United States.

Born among the laboring class, they continued to live as laborers.

Daniel Coughlin, the priest's grandfather, was a carpenter who spent most of his life in the city of Buffalo. For years he lived on Seneca Street over an undertaking establishment conducted by the Driscoll family.

Little wonder, then, that a broad understanding and a deep sympathy for the laboring class have marked the dynamic career of one in whose veins there naturally flow the influences of heredity.

The father of Charles E. Coughlin, when but a mere lad in his 'teens, ventured forth, as did his progenitors, to fulfill the biblical command of earning his bread by the sweat of his brow. He chose to labor first as a sailor. Up and down the Great Lakes, west from Buffalo to Duluth, east from Buffalo to Prescott and Ogdensburg, he shoveled coal and stoked wood as he grew accustomed to the hardships of hardtack and of hard work.

## PROGENITORS

About 1885 this weather-worn youth contracted typhoid fever, was dismissed from his occupation at Port Dalhousie, and eventually was hospitalized by some friends at St. Catherine's, Ontario. Upon his recovery, determined to disengage himself from such a laborious and slavish life, he found his way to Hamilton, Ontario, where first he became sexton at St. Mary's Cathedral and later on was identified as manager of a baking company.

It was while acting as sexton at the Cathedral that he came to know and then to love a winsome country girl from Strabane, Ontario.

She had come to live in the city to learn the occupation of a seamstress. Theaters there were few, dance halls there were none. The focal point of all social activities for her was the Cathedral itself.

Thus were Amelia Mahoney and Thomas Coughlin endeared to each other as they set forth with the blessing of the marriage feast of Cana to guide and guard them throughout their course of conjugal life.

Thus their first-born child—born in the house of a laborer in the year 1891, October twenty-fifth, at Hamilton, Ontario—would have been untrue to his ancestry unless somehow, somewhere, the love for the laborer had found expression in his priestly utterances.

Was it only a coincidence that the year which marked the birth of Charles E. Coughlin likewise marked the publication of Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, the *magna charta* of the working class?

At this writing, Father Coughlin's parents are living. His father, a ruddy-faced, active man, is oftentimes occupied with some of the material details associated with the parish church where his son is pastor. His mother still presides over the family home, which is situated in the city of Detroit.

Needless to say, both she who bore the name of Amelia Mahoney and he who rejoices in the appellation of Coughlin have not lost in its entirety the atmosphere of those who migrated from the Cobh of Cork.

Amelia Mahoney's father was a mere lad in his twenties when he disembarked as an immigrant from Ireland. Tall, exceptionally handsome, a giant in strength, a philosopher in wisdom

and, I might add, a poet in his affections, this maternal grandfather of the priest played no small part in shaping his grandson's career.

At first, Jeremiah Mahoney, as did Thomas Coughlin, adopted the life of a sailor. Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, Buffalo, Cleveland and Chicago! These were names to conjure with in his vocabulary.

These were cities which as a young man he had visited, and which as an old man he employed as a background for the hundreds of stories which he addressed to his favorite grandson as the little lad nestled close to him night after night, wrapped in wonderment. These were nights of high romance for Master Charles Edward.

And the days of summer vacation! If the lad played baseball, his grandfather sat near by, puffing away at his clay pipe and dreaming dreams as he foresaw in the blue smoke a career of greatness for his dearest companion. If the occasion called for a fishing expedition along the shores of Burlington Bay or Lake Ontario, there were stories of storms and of shipwrecks, tales of mighty men and of mighty deeds. The old gentleman and the young grandson had grown to be inseparable.

Jeremiah Mahoney did not continue long as a sailor, for after retiring from the Great Lakes, he purchased a pleasant farm approximately fourteen miles from the city of Hamilton. It was there that he raised and educated his large family. It was there he followed the pursuits of many previous generations as he attached himself and his children to the fruitful soil.

Thus, somewhere in the veins of the Priest of the Radio there was engendered a natural love of those who till the soil. In after years he was destined to speak in defense of the farmer as well as raise his voice to protect the exploited laborer. Daniel Coughlin and Jeremiah Mahoney, grandfathers, had not lived in vain.

## { CHAPTER TWO }

### *Home and School*

S A matter of record, it is necessary to touch upon the factual background in the early life of Charles E. Coughlin in order to understand not only the sympathies of heredity but also the priestly activities which have characterized his later career. His was an ordinary Catholic home. Although his father earned but twelve dollars a week, he was so industrious, frugal and ambitious that he managed to put aside sufficient funds to build a comfortable residence. Those were the days when, if a home meant anything, there was the implication that it was owned by the inhabitants thereof. Spacious rooms, including a front parlor which was rarely used, a dining room which was mostly an ornament, and a magnificent kitchen where the family lived and moved and had their being, made a picture common to most homes of the laboring class some thirty or forty years ago.

The word "garage" had not as yet been introduced into the American vocabulary. Thomas Coughlin, fond almost to a fault of fine horse flesh, spent his free hours in grooming a huge, black stallion. None of this for the son! Along with the rest of the parish boys he attended St. Mary's School, where the good Sisters of St. Joseph devotedly prepared them to pass from grade to grade and thence to high school.

Charles was the only living child in the family. His infant sister Agnes had died, leaving his mother in a chronic state of poor health. But there were plenty of children in the neighborhood with whom he played. Baseball and football, broken window panes, and the many escapades which are experienced in the normal boy's life were found in his. The bane of his boyhood days was a sturdy, upright, mahogany piano, whereat he was constrained to practice in season and out of season. This was the price which he paid for the anticipated pleasures of the baseball field or

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

of a snowclad hill. Each morning there was Mass at the Cathedral, with the esteemed honor of serving at the altar and of being close to Monsignor Mahoney, whom every child in the parish revered, honored and loved.

Incidentally, I have inquired of Father Coughlin where he discovered the style of preaching so fluently and so picturesquely to the children of his own parish. He replied that he was merely trying to imitate the great Father Mahoney, whose nine o'clock Sunday Mass found the church crowded to the doors as both little folk and big folk marveled at the clarity with which he explained the gospel in the vernacular of a child. From him arose the idea of giving the children parties, such as that one back in 1931, on June 14, which 50,000 people attended, over 30,000 of them little children, or that crowning of the Queen of the May, for example, on May 28, 1933, when thousands of children appeared in procession.

Home, church and school—these three institutions lapping and overlapping each other with their influences of parents, teachers and parish priest, took turns throughout the first twelve years in moulding a sound mind within a sound body.

Then came a seemingly long span of terms spent within the walls of St. Michael's College, Toronto, Ontario. One can hardly understand how his supremely devoted mother and father had courage to surrender their beloved boy to the care of others at such a tender age. Although the cords of their hearts were sorely wrenched, yet the prevision of their minds imposed this loss of companionship upon them as they foresaw as a result of their sacrifice a priestly career for their son.

St. Michael's College housed both high school and college boys. Its classes were conducted by the Basilian Fathers, a sodality of priests whose vocation it was to train primarily the Catholic youth resident in the Archdiocese of Toronto. The boys congregated there from afar, and at least half the States in the Union were represented, as well as all the Provinces of Canada.

This was no place for softness. Rather strict discipline, hard work and hard play were demanded by those in charge of the institution. The high school students were always encouraged to work diligently to acquire the honor of matriculating at the great provincial University of Toronto.

In 1907 Charles Coughlin was one of the matriculants. In October of that year he was registered at University College of Toronto University as a student in Honor Philosophy. He was still resident at St. Michael's, and was still subject to the stern, although reasonable discipline, imposed by the Basilians.

These were momentous days in his plastic life. He played harder than ever, becoming an expert at handball, a credit to his college in football, and an adept at baseball. More than that, a real desire to achieve scholastic success was beginning to assert itself in this young collegian.

It was only natural for this development to appear. The dynamic influence of Reverends Doctor Carr, Vincent Murphy and Albert Hurley could not be withstood. The personalities of Professor Alexander, of Doctor James Mavor, one in English, the other in Economics, were magnetic. Thus, through the first two years of his college course, Charles Coughlin began to put off the things of a child and to adopt the stringent responsibilities of a student.

During the last two years of this Honor Philosophy course, his development must have been truly marvelous under the erudition of the eminent Doctor Vaschelde, of Father McBrady, and of the most lovable and learned Doctor Cushing. These profound scholars acquainted their charges not only with the beauties of the imperishable classics, but they also unfolded to them the secrets of Thomas of Aquin, of Duns Scotus, of Bonaventure, with such forcefulness and beauty that the sanctity and the intellectuality of the middle ages walked once more both in the corridors of old St. Michael's and in the lecture rooms of the University.

In my career both as a teacher and as a layman in the world, I remember no student paying so much homage and such deep tribute to his professors as I have heard from the lips of Father Coughlin. These must have been like to the giants who, Scripture tells us, once mingled with the sons of men.

From Socrates, to Aristotle, to Zeno down the centuries of time to the mighty scholastics, then pausing to discuss Immanuel Kant and the hosts who followed him—Descartes, Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer—what a fund of information joined with the ability to sift the wheat from the chaff was attributable to these mighty professors!

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There were excursions into the teachings of the French and English philosophers. The encyclopedists, Hobbes, John Stuart Mill and Spencer—reading matter sufficient to occupy a lifetime was evaluated and weighed in the scales of truth.

At length commencement day arrived. It was the month of May in the year 1911. The campus of the University was lively with cap and gown. Professors and students mingled with parents and friends for this momentous event.

Charles Coughlin was there with his classmates. He was thin, fatigued from study, but triumphant, as the degree in Honor Philosophy was conferred upon him.

Here, then, was a mind which, like an intellectual field, had been well plowed by the steel point of discipline, carefully harrowed by competitive athletics, diligently planted with the seed of Christian philosophy and neatly hedged in both with the classics of the ancients and the artistry of the moderns. Time alone must prove the fruit.

## Training



THROUGHOUT the course of his scholastic career at St. Michael's College, Toronto University, Charles E. Coughlin had manifested a predilection both for the study of English and for the forensic activities of debate. More than that, his spiritual exercises were carefully directed under the supervision of practical, saintly men in whose hearts there was no room for sham. Sanctity was taught by these priests, whose lives were veritable examples of their doctrines. Justice was not only praised but it was administered. Charity was not only extolled, it was also practiced.

*Ecce quam bonum habitare fratres in unum*—"behold how good it is for brothers to live in unity" was the community motto.

*Doce me bonitatem et disciplinam et scientiam*—"teach me goodness and discipline and knowledge" was the motto they borrowed from Holy Scripture to guide them in their vocation of instructing those under their care in the rudiments of godliness. Discipline, first and most important, with goodness following in its footsteps and a mastery of the arts and sciences. These crystallize the Basilian program.

Father Coughlin owes more than human words can contribute to the practical policy of discipline and goodness without which all his learning and his understanding of the science of political economy would have proven abortive.

In the fall of the year 1911, Charles Coughlin, who had just returned from a three months' European tour, decided that he would enter the Basilian novitiate to pursue his studies preparatory to the priesthood. Plato and Aristotle, Cicero and Livy, Shakespeare and Milton found no entrance in the sacred halls of the novitiate.

Here was a year to be spent chiefly in prayer and in meditation. The curriculum, including biblical readings and an introduction

to the lives of the chief exponents of Christianity, was crowned with an exacting discipline in duty. One solid year must be spent secluded from home, from theaters, from entertainments, from every species of social activity. One complete year was regulated with early rising, attendance at Mass and Holy Communion, the recitation of the Office, all of which were interspersed with manual labor such as washing floors, cultivating gardens, plowing fields.

It was a year never to be forgotten. More than any other period of time in the life of this sturdy Priest of the Radio, he was schooled in poise, in humility and in spirituality.

Then came four years devoted to the study chiefly of dogmatic and moral theology. The Reverend Albert Du Mouchelle, brilliantly gifted, unfolded chapter by chapter for his students the history of religion, until he made live again upon the stage of his lecture room the personalities of the Fathers of the Church who, by the sheer force of their spirituality and learning, beat down one after another the pagan heresies of the past. Here was a man, this teacher, who made you walk once more the paths of pilgrims, introduced you as an observer in the papal court, concealed you in an advantageous position as you listened to the debates of the Council of Trent and escorted you to the canonization of a Dominic or Francis and to the coronation of a Leo XIII. With him history and dogma were neither meaningless nor dead.

Once more the venerable Doctor Cushing instructed his class in the intricacies of ethics and morals. This was an important class for future America. There it was that Charles Coughlin learned to interpret the Industrial Revolution of England, the mechanization of labor, the use and abuse of money, as he listened in wrapt attention to the unfolding of the *Rerum Novarum*, which was supplemented with excursions into the lives of Bishop Ketteler and Antoine Frederick Ozanam.

How often after the evening meal was this kindly professor found surrounded by a group of eager young men, wishing and willing, literally, to drench themselves in the words of wisdom which flowed from this fountain of information!

There was unfolded year by year the pages of a course of studies where Scripture and ecclesiastical history, dogma and moral theology completed a volume of science given only to few to read.

Father Coughlin was not ordained to the priesthood until 1916.

His theological course had been interrupted for a year when, due to failing health, he spent a year at St. Basil's College, Waco, Texas, teaching philosophy, participating in athletics and absorbing the healthful sunshine. He had worked too hard, intent on excelling, not only in his priestly studies, but in pursuing a supplementary course outlined by the curriculum of Toronto University in Honor English and History.

On his return from Texas he received Minor Orders, then two of the Major Orders and was ready for the anointing oils of the priesthood. On the twenty-ninth day of June, 1916, at St. Basil's Church, Toronto, Ontario, as he was surrounded by his relatives and friends, his dear mother and proud father being most noticeable, the dream of his boyhood was realized.

He was a priest forever!

In the following September he was stationed at Assumption College, Sandwich, Ontario, directly opposite Detroit, Michigan, where he was appointed to teach philosophy, English, and certain high school subjects.

Something of greater consideration, he began to preach.

In his seminary days, especially after he had received the diaconate, he had occasionally preached in public. With meticulous care each sermon had been prepared; each delivery had been well practiced.

Now he was assigned to preach regularly, and to assist at the parish of St. Agnes' Church, Detroit, Michigan, where he appeared every Saturday and Sunday for almost two years. His sermons had a freshness about them—a freshness not of doctrine but of presentation. Old examples gave way to new. Characteristic words of the dead past were replaced by current words of the vibrant present. Voice, language, expression, gesticulation and, above all, a depth of sincerity began to attract the attention of the parishioners.

“Whence came this young priest?”

“What is the secret of his power?”

“Where did he study his history?”

In the course of time, Father Coughlin ministered in other parishes in the City of Detroit, for during those years Basilian priests were accustomed to tender their services to the rapidly expanding diocese of Detroit.

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In 1918, when the new code of Canon Law was promulgated, an order was issued at Rome disbanding all pious Sodalities of priests. They must become priests living either in Congregations, such as the Redemptorists, or in the Orders, such as the Franciscans, Benedictines, Dominicans and Augustinians, the only four prime Orders in the Catholic Church.

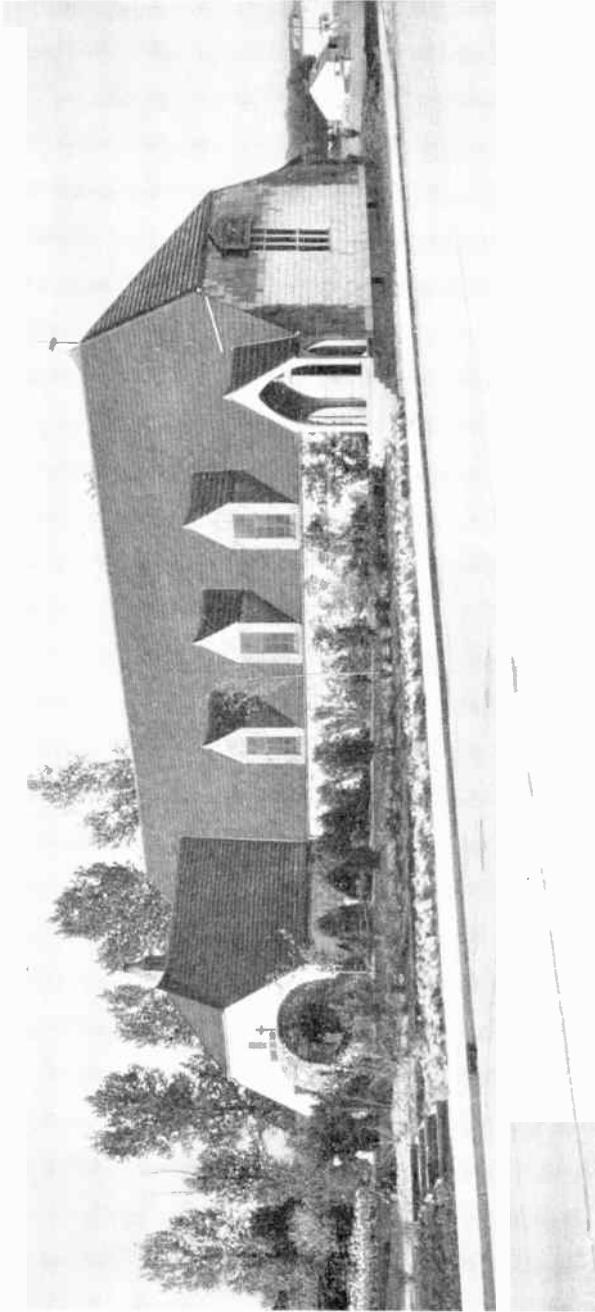
All who cared to become Religious, therefore, could either take vows in a Congregation or else have themselves assigned to a religious Order, since the pious Sodality was a thing of the past. On the other hand, the choice of remaining as they were, real secular priests, was extended to the members of all pious Sodalities.

Father Coughlin, and a great number of his confrères living in France and a few at Assumption College, chose to remain as they were, namely, priests, secular priests. He was incardinated into the diocese of Detroit by the Right Reverend Michael James Gallagher on February 26, 1923.

As a matter of historical record, Father Coughlin was assigned as an assistant at St. Augustine's parish, Kalamazoo, Michigan, where he remained about three months, then to St. Leo's Church at Detroit, where he served eighteen months. Following this he was appointed to his first parish at North Branch, Michigan, to which was attached the mission of Clifford.

It was not until May, 1926, that the order came from his Right Reverend Bishop to build a new parish at Royal Oak, Michigan.

It will be advantageous for us to pause as we review the spirit of 1926—a spirit which played no small part in moulding the Father Coughlin, the crusader, the defender of justice, the protector of the poor.



PARISH CHURCH - *St. Therese of the Holy Face and of the Child Jesus*



## [ CHAPTER FOUR ]

### *The Shrine Background*



ONE hundred and fifty years ago it was the custom for producers to transport their raw materials from the nearby fields to some British merchantman awaiting at the port of Boston or of New York to be carried abroad and there fabricated into finished materials, that policy has been altered very noticeably by reason of our rapid advance in the field of mass-production.

It was in the year 1926 that the wilderness of the West, and Detroit was still very far west to the New Yorker, put on the garments of respectability. Within the short period of less than twenty-five years the Motor City increased its population by over one million persons.

Alabama and Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky and many other states began to pour their excess population into the manufacturing cities such as Detroit. More than that, the rural counties of Michigan were becoming deserted. Once more the drama of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" was being enacted. County after county, village after village was literally deserted as men—mostly young men—forsook their native soil and its agricultural pursuits to become wheels and cogs and human parts in the dynamic industries of mass-production.

In less than a quarter of a century the automobile industry, born in a blacksmith shop, developed until vast tracts of land in and about Detroit were occupied with stupendous factories employing hundreds of thousands of men.

America was prosperous. In 1926 there were one hundred pennies in the dollar. Wheat was high and so was cotton. Real estate values were bloated to the bursting point. Six dollars, seven dollars, eight dollars, ten dollars a day was common enough salary for the mass-productionist laborer. It was almost futile for the factories in this strange automobile kingdom to make parts and

fabricate bodies for the many thousands who were demanding motor cars. Train load after train load were hurried to the East and to the West. Warehouses were stored with them, waiting transportation to Europe. Detroit was hectic with success. Money-madness was the mania of the hour.

So quickly grew Detroit that its population spilled over its boundaries into the neighboring towns and villages. Greater Woodward Avenue was built to care for the growing traffic. Homes sprang up like mushrooms in the fields that surrounded the city. Pavements and sewers, schools and churches necessarily followed in this mad march towards the New Jerusalem of prosperity.

Such is a mere outline of the events which predestined the establishment of a church approximately twelve miles north of the Detroit City Hall at Royal Oak, Michigan—the church of the Shrine of the Little Flower, established in the month of June, 1926. The newcomers must be cared for. Industry must be served.

Let me quote from the delightful volume, "What Price Wall Street?" by Forrest Davis, who describes most vividly the spirit of 1926—the spirit of mammon worship, which aroused Father Coughlin to action.

It was an age veritably of magic. Jones sat at home, comfortably sipping a mug of homebrew, and heard the views of Senators and beauty experts. He twirled a knob and the clatter of a night club stimulated his hormones. Television, he reminded himself, was just around the corner; a device which would enable him to watch Battling Greenberg fell Young Jack Dempsey without stirring from his fireside. Lindbergh flew the Atlantic, alone and on schedule. Stunt aviators were taking off and settling down at all points of the compass and on all the continents. Jones read in his Sunday supplement repeated stories from Schenectady and Pittsburgh of laboratory-engendered thunderbolts capable of shattering mountains. The atom was splintered, ships and airplanes were directed by remote control, invisible electric beams worked their will on massive mechanisms and opened and closed doors. Robots moved about at the instances of impulses transmitted by telephone—crude substitutes for man-power, yet pregnant with suggestions as to the future . . .

Primarily, the most important factors were the dynamics supplied by the swollen tide of industrial profits during the new Jerusalem, a tide which overflowed consumption channels and irresistibly flooded Wall Street. Surplus, war-won yellow bars, resting in fortified sub-cellars of the Federal

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Reserve Bank, mutely inciting to credit inflation . . . the disproportionate share in corporate profits—mainly due to technological advances, high pressure advertising and installment buying—which fell to the rich and the newly-emerged class of high salaried entrepreneurs, experts, vice-presidents, advertising counsellors, sales advisers; the ruck of plausibly useless yes-men who went into conference, “contacted” and plagued the administrative and sales ends of big business during the New Era . . . Secretary Mellon’s wholesale scaling down of income super-taxes . . . the towering edifice of credit by means of which the country lived beyond its income for several glittering years. These and other elements helped to catch up the bemused American, giddy with the concept of unlimited industrial expansion, and hurl him into the midst of the boom.

But something more than an immense credulity and a fattening bank account was needed to propel the forty thousand millionaires, and several millions of well-off Americans, into the whirlpool of stock market speculation in the winter of 1926-'27, when, in the midst of a minor depression in trade, the latest frontier dangled its illusive delights. An impulse was needed to incline the speculative toward Wall Street, which the public had not visited since 1901. Pioneers to lead the way!

Who were the pioneers staking out the new frontier? Appropriately, perhaps, they came out of the West, some of the hardiest indeed hailing from the latest industrial boom town, Detroit. Ten men, or a dozen, or, as a credible version has it, twenty-five, laden with excess millions exploited from the story-book rise of the motor car and related industries descended into a lackadaisical stock market, whipping it into a cascade with the freshets of their millions. Untutored in the mechanics of theory of security exchanges, but armed with the unyielding optimism of the pioneer, the western money barons found a resourceful and like-minded boss bull to guide them in William C. Durant. Never was so concerted a bull movement. And as they bought, prices went up. Baldwin Locomotive—from 92 in 1926, to 261 in August, 1927—Union Carbide, Sears, Roebuck; International Harvester, Texas Corporation, United States Steel. The Fishers were buying in Baldwin, Westinghouse, American Rolling Mills, American Steel Car. Prices rose steadily, day by day, as the new bulls concentrated on key stocks. Bears operated vainly for the most part; professionals trading cautiously. The bulls overwhelmed them—buying, buying, buying. And presently the public took notice; tentatively in 1927, and increasingly, until in 1928, the market, as everyone knows, became maudlin, irresponsible.

Durant, self-confident, mildly eccentric, fanciful as any poet of tradition and perhaps the wiliest bull of his time, led the big parade. Broke in 1920, having lost \$90,000,000 in his attempt to retain General Motors,

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he had a new grub stake by 1923. Four years later he dominated the Stock Exchange. The story of his operations is circumstantially related by Mr. Earl Sparling, who wrote: "He rode the greatest bull market by means of a bull consortium so gigantic in aggregate wealth and power that there is nothing in Wall Street's one hundred and forty years of Arabian Nights to furnish even a contrast. He used not only his own new millions on the constructive side of the market but the millions of many associates, of at least twenty-five multi-millionaires who had confidence in him and his judgment. He was the bull of bulls. He handled in 1928 more than 11,000,000 shares of stocks, representing an investment of more than \$1,250,000,000. He handled stock investment almost as large in 1926 and 1927. In addition to the \$1,250,000,000 put into the market under his personal direction in 1928, at least two or three billions more were invested individually on his advice by members of the clique, three or four billion dollars in all, marshalled under the command of one man. No man in Wall Street's history had ever wielded such power."

But I had almost forgotten to mention the little church itself. Like everything else in Detroit, it was built hurriedly and expensively. These things, however, are incidental. The major fact associated with its building is that it was dedicated to Almighty God under the patronage of Ste. Therese of Lisieux, popularly known as the Little Flower. She, the saint raised up in the decadent days of decadent capitalism, when frenzied finance and mass-production were bent on working only *for a profit* and not *at a profit*, had a mission to perform.

The socialist was haranguing his dissatisfied followers with the strange doctrine that production should be *for use and not for profit*.

The Wall Street financier and philosopher was teaching both banker and industrialist that production should be *for a profit and not for use*.

Only one gifted with the vision of prophecy can pierce the veil of the years to discover if she, who promised to spend her heaven doing good upon earth, will be powerful enough advocate and strategic enough leader to teach the men of every nation and of every creed that production can only be organized at a profit by seeking first the kingdom of God and His justice, through which all things else will be guaranteed.

Thus, under such circumstances, was the Shrine of the Little Flower established in the year 1926. Unbridled mass-production

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and the theory of "getting rich quick" through the medium of inflated credit and artificially controlled stock values were preparing the way for the destruction of capitalism. At any rate there were very few persons who even suspected that from this new parish a voice soon would echo a warning against communism, to which the laboring class was being attracted; against unreasonable mass-production and against an immoral financial system. From the humble, shingled walls of this new parish church there was destined to proceed an attack against the idol of Mammon and the money-changers who were desecrating the temple of America.

This antagonism, especially relative to the immoralities of finance, was indicated on the first Sunday the doors of the parish Shrine of the Little Flower were opened. One singular practice was being firmly established in this new house of God and by this new, far-sighted pastor.

It was evident to him that if ever in the history of the world the abuses laid at the door of money were rampant and rapacious, this was the heyday. Too many priests were engaged in getting money from the people instead of to the people. Too many parishes were aping the theatrical world and the entertainment arena by charging admission to the Church services.

Despite the fact that Canon Law had explicitly forbidden the collecting of money as an entrance fee into a church, it was becoming difficult to find a house of God where one could enter for Sunday Masses without contributing perforce his quarter-dollar.

"This must be stopped," thought Father Coughlin. The love of money is the root of all evil. From the first day until this present day, not one penny has ever been charged to one single person either to get in or to get out of the church. Seldom, if ever, is the pecuniary topic mentioned. Once each Sunday, without announcement and without flourish, but one collection is ever taken. Here was a new departure in ecclesiastical economics.

But the material Church must be maintained. Early in 1926, the League of the Little Flower was established, an organization devoted both to the financial and the spiritual interest of the Shrine of the Little Flower. The members of this League contributed a nominal sum each year as a fee for the purpose of making the story of the Little Flower better known among men.

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It is not the specific purpose of this book to incorporate any comment on Ste. Therese of the Child Jesus. Most readers will understand that her purpose on earth seemed to be to make God better loved. The way to make God better loved, however, was to make Him better known. The result of knowing and loving would inevitably be the dedication of lives to the service of God.

This is simply the doctrine taken from the first page of the penny catechism. This is the answer to one of the first questions the child is ever asked, "Why did God make you?" The answer reads the same through the years. "He made me to know, to love and to serve Him in this world and to be happy with Him forever in the next."

One of the first principles of pedagogy is to proceed always from the known to the unknown. Perhaps the years spent in a classroom as a teacher, perhaps the analysis of the word "supernatural," which is the truly descriptive word of Christianity, led Father Coughlin to conclude that before it were possible to instruct those who had not been brought up in the tenets of Christian faith, a foundation must be laid. Such truths relative to the immortality of the soul, to the Trinity of God, to the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to the sacramental system and constitution of the Catholic Church, as taught by its theologians must be established. Upon natural truths must this supernatural structure of religion be founded.

The virtue of justice, to his mind, was the most sinned against virtue in the year 1926. The elementary teachings of natural ethics were unknown to many and sinned against by millions.

America was groveling in a policy which inevitably pointed to widespread poverty. Mass-production, unregulated as it was, could breed nothing more than mass-idleness. Fictitious valuations placed upon stocks could generate nothing but actual starvation.

It was imperative that the system of heretical philosophy, of ethics, of economics, which presided over this cult of the false prosperity engendered in the year 1926, must be exposed, destroyed, and replaced by the eternal truths of justice and of ethics.

To know God supernaturally men must begin to know God in the natural manifestations of his natural law. Any spiritual architect intent upon building a spiritual tower, up the staircase

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of which souls could wing their way to the spiritual kingdom beyond, must begin by reconstructing the natural foundation upon the solid bedrock of natural truth. To know God and His eternal justice as exemplified in the right rules of life 'about us is the foundation for knowing God Whom we must learn to love with our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind and our whole strength.

## [ CHAPTER FIVE ]

### *The Priest of the Radio*



IT WAS the evening of August 15, 1926. A mere handful of devout parishioners had gathered at the Shrine to pay their devotions to the Immaculate Mother of God on this the feast of her Assumption into heaven. I am not exaggerating when I say that the group was limited to fifteen or seventeen devotees.

What a difference, at least in quantity, between the many hundreds of religious minded Christians who had crowded the walls of St. Leo's where formerly Father Coughlin had been assistant! Perhaps the young, ambitious pastor was disappointed. Perhaps he was endeavoring to arrange the thronging thoughts which were clamoring for expression in his mind. Here he was, the pastor of the first parish church dedicated to the Little Saint whose desire it was to preach the Gospel to every human being! But the anomaly of it all was concretely present before him as he counted the fifteen or seventeen interested parishioners.

After services he complained zealously to several of the gentlemen who were waiting to greet him. Out of a clear sky the young pastor announced to them that he planned to broadcast services from the Shrine. It was a thunderbolt to these staid parishioners. They were conservative men who were timid to venture beyond the fringe of the forest of fears. Broadcasting was expensive. Broadcasting was treacherous. Broadcasting was a novelty. Broadcasting was irreligious. More than all, these gentlemen did not feel capable of supporting even the ordinary burdens of a parish let alone this extraordinary and unprofitable expenditure which would be more appropriately undertaken to advertise cigarettes and soap and motor cars than to disseminate the principles of Christianity.

These well meaning men did not understand Father Coughlin. Had they been acquainted with the fierce, determined full-back

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who had played through an entire game with a fractured jaw when his team was fighting for the Junior Canadian Championship, or had they realized that his greatest inspiration to accomplish anything was to be told that it could not be done, they would have adopted a different policy in dissuading him from putting into practice the idea which already was glowing fervently in his mind.

He was determined to break through all the confines of precedent, if necessary, to let the Little Flower have her day in preaching the Gospel to every creature. His formula was simple. Was it not explicitly expressed in the Scriptures that "faith cometh through hearing?" Had not the invention of radio merely multiplied audiences and extended the possibility of hearing on the one hand and the possibility of preaching on the other? In his mind there was no valid conflict between faith and science. The omniscient God is the Author of both. Therefore, why not employ His latest gift to man, the radio, for the dissemination of faith? There was nothing immoral, nothing smacking of levity or of irreligion when the Church employed the telegraph, the steam engine, the laboratory, the printing press and ten thousand other inventions to enable her to carry the Gospel to every land.

The printed word had done much to assist in the evangelization of Europe and of America, although it was limited only to those who were educated in reading. The spoken word certainly would do more since its limitation was bounded only by the understanding of the vernacular. These were thoughts which already had matured in the mind of this pioneering priest.

Father Coughlin was always more or less impatient with the slow-moving process of events which leads to accomplishment. Had he been more conservative in his methods, he would have been content to "watch and pray." However, I suppose that he is categorized among those few warriors of the Church Militant who have dared to add to the scriptural warning of "watch and pray" the complement of "work and fight."

It grieved him to think that in many instances the feet of the Apostles moved more quickly over the great military roads that Rome had extended throughout the empire than do those of the modern apostles who hasten so slowly into the uttermost parts of the earth. The sixty-three percent of the American people who

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officially maintained no affiliation to any religion whatsoever was a challenge to him in his effort to assist the Little Flower in her propagation of the Gospel. The empty churches and vacant pews in his own city of Detroit frightened him because of the smug though unconscious contentedness which characterized the efforts of local religionists. In brief, nineteen hundred years had brought Christianity in its broader sense to some six hundred and fifty million persons of whom three hundred and twenty-five million adhered to the Catholic faith. Still, nearly one billion two hundred million were living in paganism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Brahmanism and materialism amongst the hundreds of denominations, creeds and sects in the jig-saw puzzle of faith.

These must be approached. The fundamental truths of Christianity must be presented either for adoption or for rejection. The true missionary and the enthusiastic minister of religion, when he is thoroughly convinced in his own heart of the divine origin of the truths which form the content of his faith, must not be satisfied to keep his light hidden under a bushel nor to confine his preaching within the narrow precincts of a Church structure. Christ commanded his followers to "go, preach the Gospel to every creature." First men must "go," then preach. Radio permitted one priest to "go." Today, as of yesterday, the function of the true apostles shall, if necessary, be to leave the ninety and nine and seek the one that is lost.

## [ CHAPTER SIX ]

### *The Development of the Radio*

**R**ORTIFIED by the convictions evolved from the philosophy expressed in the preceding chapter, Father Coughlin took the first practical step in reducing his dreams to realities. In the latter days of the month of September, 1926, he sought out Mr. Leo Fitzpatrick, the manager of Station WJR at Detroit, Michigan. Incidentally, it is worthy to note that this brilliant, exemplary Leo Fitzpatrick, from that moment until this present writing, formed with Father Coughlin a lasting bond of friendship which is not measured by the narrow boundaries of commercialism.

On that September day Mr. Fitzpatrick encouraged the young priest to venture upon the romantic experiment of broadcasting.

But with the encouragement came a fund of sound advice. Briefly the radio manager pointed out the pitfalls which must be avoided: Beware of bigotry! Avoid commercialism! Plan never to broadcast unless you plan to pay full time, otherwise your message will be subject to the blue pencil of the patron!

The third Sunday of October in the year 1926 marks the first broadcast which originated from the Shrine of the Little Flower. Radio Station WJR had extended lines from its studio some twelve miles distant to the sanctuary of the Shrine. It was an eventful day for Father Coughlin. For three or four weeks his friends were constant in dissuading him from what they called a foolhardy venture. He was advised to confine his missionary endeavors, if not to his own pulpit, at least to the columns of the Catholic press.

While Father Coughlin has never belittled the efficacy of the Catholic press, nevertheless he appreciated that its services were limited not only to those who could read but also to a rather small portion of the Catholic population of the country. More than that, he realized that scarcely, if ever, did the Catholic newspaper

find its way into a Protestant home any more than did a Protestant journal adorn a Catholic reading-table. Therefore, to fulfill the mandate of leaving the ninety and nine and seeking the one that was lost, he believed it were impossible to accomplish this through the medium of a Catholic newspaper.

The die was cast. Thus, at three o'clock on this eventful Sunday afternoon, he began to preach his first sermon into a microphone. This sermon was an ordinary exposition of the Sunday gospel. Remembering that he was an invited guest in the homes not only of Catholics but of Protestants and of irreligionists, it was easy to avoid the least taint of what even his bitterest critics would call bigotry. He had none in his heart.

For one hundred and fifty-six consecutive Sundays this broadcast was continued over this single outlet of Station WJR. The elements of Christianity were explained. Questions were answered. Letters from the interested audience increased in number. From a staff which consisted of one young lady, his stenographers now numbered twenty.

Before Father Coughlin had been broadcasting one year he discovered that it was necessary to follow up the spoken word with the printed word, because so many in his audience were requesting copies of what he had preached, for the purpose of examining his statements and of preserving his discourses.

If at first Father Coughlin had gauged the work of broadcasting by the amount of effort expended by those who were sponsoring the sale of commercial goods from a studio, he soon realized that religious broadcasting was entirely different in this respect.

This thing of broadcasting was not so simple as he had first imagined. It was confined not to the one actual hour spent before the microphone. Its work was extended over every hour of the week. Letters by the thousands must be answered, letters which demanded personal attention, letters of condemnation, of encouragement, sorrowful letters from patient shut-ins, questioning letters and contrite letters from those who desired either to enter or to re-enter the Church.

The autumn of 1929 marked the date when Station WMAQ of Chicago and WLW of Cincinnati were added to Station WJR for the purpose of carrying Father Coughlin's broadcast. The popularity of this hour evidently was progressive, substantial and

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competitive. The following year, 1930, the Columbia Broadcasting System's basic network was used exclusively.

In 1931 a new departure in the history of radio was chronicled. Mr. Leo J. Fitzpatrick, acting for Father Coughlin, organized an independent chain of stations extending from St. Louis to Portland, Maine. These twenty stations were the choice selections of both the National Broadcasting Company and the Columbia Broadcasting System.

By 1932, the seventh year of his radio missionary work, Father Coughlin's chain was expanded to twenty-seven stations stretching from Kansas City to Bangor, Maine.

Chronologically, these sentences have expressed the origin and development of a romance which has had no parallel in the history of religion. Here was a priest speaking at one time to approximately thirty million listeners composed of Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Gentile. In one single hour he was privileged to speak to more persons than did all the Apostles address throughout the years of combined apostleship.

The entire ministry of a Patrick to the Irish, of a Boniface to the Germans, of an Augustine to the English, of a Francis Xavier to the Orientals, of a Cyril and Methodious to the Russians and Poles, of a Breboeuf and LaLamont to the American Indians, was surpassed, at least in quantity, as Sunday after Sunday untold millions of Americans listened enraptured by the plain spoken truths of this plain spoken priest who brought to a majority of his audience its first impression of the Catholic Church.

More than that, men continued to hear him with increasing enthusiasm, until he built the single largest sustained audience which broadcasting has ever enjoyed.

No doubt, the greatest impetus to the popularity of this hour was given by the publication by Pope Pius XI of his *Quadragesimo Anno*, a letter which touched upon the basic, economic and financial evils of the day. This letter has been sent by the Holy Father to every Bishop in America with instructions that its contents should be taught to the people. Following out this mandate of his highest superior, the power and influence of Father Coughlin's broadcast is primarily attributable to his obedience in living up to the spirit of this encyclical, which has since been pronounced by those competent to judge the most important document of our day.

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The first few weeks which marked the history of this presentation in 1926 over the one station, WJR, averaged not more than one hundred and fifty letters per week. One day following a broadcast in the year 1927 the mail reached three thousand letters. The newspapers learned of the fact. Photographers visited Father Coughlin's office to record this outstanding event.

Later there came a time when 1,000,000 letters were received as a result of a single broadcast.

One station, KSTP, serving a rather scattered section of the Northwest, received 137,882 replies to a single announcement asking bluntly whether it was the desire of the radio audience to discontinue the broadcasting of Father Coughlin. Four hundred and forty-two letters out of this total requested that Father Coughlin be denied the privileges of the air. The 137,400 and more requested the continuance of his presentation.

During the year 1933, Father Coughlin's broadcast carried on for twenty-seven consecutive weeks over a specially arranged chain of stations which are identified as follows:

WJR	Detroit	WOKO	Albany	WORC	Worcester
WCAU	Philadelphia	WHB	Kansas City	WFEA	Manchester
KYW	Chicago	WEAN	Providence	WICC	Bridgeport- New Haven
WGAR	Cleveland	WLBZ	Bangor	WFBL	Syracuse
WNAC	Boston	WOL	Washington	KQV	Pittsburgh
WNBH	New Bedford	WGR	Buffalo	KSTP	St. Paul
WHO	Des Moines	WJAS	Pittsburgh	WMT	Waterloo
WOR	Newark	WCAO	Baltimore	WDRC	Hartford
WLW	Cincinnati	KMOX	St. Louis	WOC	Davenport

The original League of the Little Flower developed into the Radio League of the Little Flower, whose audience by their voluntary contributions supported the expenses which Father Coughlin necessarily incurred. Full commercial rates were paid to all the radio stations as well as to the American Telephone and Telegraph Company for the expensive network of wires connecting the cities.

One outstanding friend, Mr. G. A. Richards, the president of Station WJR, has been the most generous financial supporter of this nationally known radio hour throughout these years of broadcasting. The fact still remains that there is not now and never has been any endowment.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RADIO

Grotesquely enough Father Coughlin constantly was charged with receiving money from special interests, from big business and from financial organizations.

I quote from letters received which typify the widely current rumors of the day:

"I have the lowdown. Raskob is paying you for your services to the wets." "The distilleries are taking care of you." "Henry Ford bought you and bought you cheap." "Wall Street bought you to secure for themselves Detroit banks." "The American Legion bought you but you didn't stay put." "You are on the payroll of William Randolph Hearst." "The Democratic slush fund paid you to attack Hoover and build up Roosevelt."

The truth is that Father Coughlin's broadcasts were never subsidized by any corporation, by any millionaire or by any group of millionaires, but only by the small contributions of thousands upon thousands of people. The Golden Hour broadcast was out of tune with the policies of entrenched wealth. Because wealth refused to admit that there was anything basically wrong with decadent capitalism, it was sometimes actively hostile to the priest who occasionally was forced to castigate the rich. Neither Father Coughlin nor the source of Father's teaching, the *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII nor the *Quadragesimo Anno* of Pope Pius XI, were popular in the ranks of the wealthy.

Thus, the income which has supported the Golden Hour of the Little Flower originated from the masses of the people who requested printed copies of the sermon, and from those who gave their voluntary and unsolicited offerings to keep alive this broadcast.

The people, who regarded the Priest of the Radio as their greatest leader, in opposing the gross injustice which had resulted in the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and the exploitation of the laborer, were his staunchest friends. Although the main purpose behind the broadcast of Father Coughlin was the salvation of his immortal soul and the souls of his fellowmen, nevertheless he realized that the spiritual ministry of the Church would continue to be impeded as long as it refused to battle against the immoralities which bred poverty and war in a world which was overflowing with plenty.

In the next chapters there are detailed both the task confronting Father Coughlin and the method he employed in approaching it.

*The Task*

**M**ANY hours have been spent with Father Coughlin discussing his appreciation of the task which confronted him as he embarked upon his career of broadcasting. As expressed hitherto, his ultimate end was and is the salvation of human souls. But it is clear that his proximate object was and is the renaissance of distributive justice.

My notes, resulting from many conversations with him, show that he approached his work with a keenly historical and observant mind. The story of the Industrial Revolution in England fascinated him with its ramifications. He pictured the England, the France, the Germany, and the Spain as they were previous to the XIXth Century. Those were the days not only of peasantry and feudal lordship; those were the days of the handicrafts.

Wool that was spun by the facile fingers of the housewife was woven into cloth on the slow-moving hand-operated loom. Clothing was carefully fabricated by hand. Both great cathedrals and modest homes were evidences that the wood-carver, the stone-mason, the iron-monger and the artist in glass were innocent of tools and of machinery except those operated by hand. Careful but slow production was the order of the day.

Then came a litany of names to be conjured with. James Watt in 1763 appeared upon the scene of tranquil existence with his steam-engine. Hargreaves followed with his spinning-jenny; Arkwright with his roll-drawing; Crompton with his mule; Cartwright with his loom; Whitney and his cotton-gin; all contributed by 1793. André Marie Ampère startled the world with his discoveries in electro-magnetism. George Stephenson in 1814 captivated the imagination of England and of America with his steam locomotive. These and other geniuses began to unfold one by one the secrets of mechanical inventions, until it became evident that the production of all fabricated goods and materials

## THE TASK

along with the old-fashioned transportation of raw materials from field and forest and mine were undergoing a substantial and basic change.

Little by little the machine began to supplant the man.

Accompanying this transformation there was the steady and irresistible growth of a new system in political economy. It was capitalism.

Adam Smith in 1775 had written his monumental work, "The Wealth of Nations," in whose pages this new system of economy was indirectly canonized. David Ricardo (1772-1823), with his theory of interest; and Malthus (1776-1834), who unconsciously sanctified the overlordship of the machine by the very lines in which he damned the over-production of children; and finally John Stuart Mill (1806-1873);—these were the apostles, consciously or unconsciously, who were spreading the doctrine of modern capitalism, without which, so it was incorrectly taught, mass-production could never succeed.

Feudalism, which had been predicated upon the ownership of land by powerful lords, had passed away. The French Revolution had taken care of its burial. Capitalism, designed, in one sense, to cure the abuses of the fallen system and to hurry apace the development of a new world, was premised on the theory that money bred money; that it was possible to borrow from the future to supply the present; that the livelihood of the laborer depended upon the supply of work organized and regulated by those who invested money in the machine and thereby in its products.

With the development both of industrialism or mass-production on the one hand and with capitalism on the other, there began to appear a new type of overlord who differed from his feudal forebear in that the former controlled all the land, while the latter determined to control all the money.

Meanwhile protests against this new system were current. Adam Weishaupt (1748-1830) in his idealistic but crude philosophy assailed the new theory of capitalism with the weapons of radicalism. Karl Marx in 1848 in his book "Das Kapital" began to theorize on socialism. He had been banished both from Germany and France as a dangerous revolutionist.

America, once the farm of England, became the nursery where the child of industrialism developed into the giant youth. New

applications of the steam-engine were announced almost every month. New mechanical devices made their appearance almost every week. Thomas Edison (1847-1932) with his dynamos and motors, Henry Ford and the host of contemporaries who pioneered with him, literally changed the industrial face of the new world.

In one sense, Detroit became the hub of it all. Henry Ford at Highland Park; Horace and John Dodge at Hamtramck, the seven Fisher brothers, the Lelands, Everett M. Flanders, R. E. Olds—these were only a few of the names associated with the upbuilding of the world's largest mass-production city. A veritable empire of mills and factories, where gigantic stamping machines, whirling lathes, inexorable assembly lines and hundreds of thousands of men, many of them nothing but wet nurses to the machines which they served, began to turn out one, two, three, five, seven, ten thousand automobiles each day within the walls of factories whose doors seldom closed.

Production became the watchword. There was no such thing as a saturation point. It was determined by the manufacturers that Detroit must stand supreme in the motor field—stupid captains of industry who failed to visualize that there was a limit to consumption.

Hand in hand with this uncontrolled production there began to grow the immorality of wages for piecework, wages for an hour's work, while the theory of a just and living wage for a life-work was being relegated to the ash pile.

That there was a saturation point; that soon England and France and Germany and Canada would enter as competitors into this field of mass-production; that a day would come when the whining motors and spinning dynamos would be silenced; that piece work and hour wages would soon be insufficient to sustain a family where the cost of living had mounted step by step with the speed of production; that a vast market would be decimated if labor's wage were not sufficient to support luxury goods—these things were all evident to Father Coughlin as he outlined the genesis of the Industrial Revolution that occurred in the late XVIIIth Century and which matured with all its viciousness in the early days of the XXth Century.

To him it was evident that this unbridled system of political

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economy was destructive. It was a Samson intent upon tearing down the pillars of civilization, destroying the prosperity of the masses as well as the prosperity of its devotees.

That a counter-revolution must be organized was plain and evident to this historic-minded Priest of the Radio. This counter-revolution must fall neither into the snares of communism which proclaimed that the State owns all, nor into the fallacy of socialism which claims that production should be for use and not for profit.

Here was one task which Father Coughlin imposed upon himself as he determined to assist in restoring the Christian principles of distributive justice. It was only one task.

Allied with it there was the cognate task of restoring a sound financial policy to a money-mad nation. That there was an undue concentration of wealth in the hands of a few was perfectly evident to the pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower. In his files there were records of the American millionaire—files which detailed their investments, files with overpowering proof of the unjust profits accruing to capitalists.

Father Coughlin was not opposed to a man being a millionaire. He was opposed, however, to the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few who used it as they pleased. Because a capitalist owned a mass-production machine, that was no argument why in justice he was deserving of ninety-five percent of that machine's productivity. Because a group of bankers could "rig" a market, that was no reason why they were justified in acquiring ill-gotten profit. Something was radically wrong in a nation where ninety-five percent of its golden wealth had fallen under the control of less than four percent of its population. Capitalism, as a system of political economy, in theory may be correct, thought he. In fact, Father Coughlin esteemed it the best system invented by the natural mind of man. But the abuses of capitalism where bankers and speculators, capitalists and brokers not only owned money but controlled credit and withheld circulation, making gold their god and money the synonym of wealth—that system must undergo a substantial change.

Equipped with both retrospective and prospective talents, Father Coughlin, as suggested in the previous chapter, knew the historical development of capitalism and was intimately ac-

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quainted with its modern application, and clearly envisioned the results which it was destined to produce. He understood, however, that his own mind and his own abilities were limited and incapable of assisting in rectifying the wrongs of the day unless he relied with meticulous precision upon the principles expressed in the pages of Holy Scripture and in their application as exemplified in the writings of the teachers of the ages—Thomas of Aquin, Bonaventure, Bellarmine, Leo XIII and Pius XI.

Both his attack and his method would be abortive, thought he, unless he adopted the method of the masters.

## [ CHAPTER EIGHT ]

### *The Method*

**T**HE history of the Church Militant is in one respect the story of her opposition to the world, the flesh and the devil. Singularly enough the English word "devil," originally derived from the Greek "dia-ballo," is suggestive of error, of heresy, and of false principles. Thus, during the course of his readings on the Fathers of the Church, it was very apparent to Father Coughlin that if they succeeded in overwhelming the arch-heresies, it was chiefly due to the method which they had employed.

From a natural standpoint this method was direct, factual, nominal and determined. If Arius denied the divinity of Christ, St. Athanasius conquered him and his tenets only by attacking him directly and by name as he hurled from his hand the spear of logic. If Nestorius maintained that Mary Immaculate was the mother of Christ's human nature but in no sense the mother of His person, St. Cyril of Alexandria routed him not by the use of dogmatic platitude and syllogistic bombardment. Victory belonged to St. Cyril because he used facts and names, being most definite and direct in his statements. So true was this characteristic among the early Fathers of the Church that the great heresies are known to the historian by the names of their founders.

Therefore this patristic method, noticeable for its fact-finding, for its mentioning the heretics by name, and for its fearlessness, was adopted by the Priest of the Radio as undoubtedly the best method to employ in attacking the modern heresy, which he so often expressed by the words, "industrial rights and financial rights are today preferred to human and divine rights."

Father Coughlin knew the mind of the American public. He was conscious of its limitations and cognizant of its reactions. He well understood that this mind loathed ambiguities, and sneered at pretenses to arguments which were founded upon the use of

high sounding polysyllabic words. Plain facts for plain people, couched in plain logic, became the adopted formula which he never deserted.

Moreover, he gauged the temperament of his widely scattered and widely diversified audience as he often recalled that no knowledge enters the mind except through the gateways of the senses. Thus, if the high-brow critics sometimes accused him of having been sentimental it was only because they did not understand the psychological background of such a tremendous audience. Feeling and fact, both of which were carefully employed with the practiced care of an artist, were two elements which characterized his method.

Oftentimes he has been severely criticized for having pursued the oratorical policies which lent color, force and conviction to the utterance of the Fathers of the Church. However, he was so religiously practical that results and not criticism mattered. He refused to be a pussy-footer when he chose to become a crusader. He listed the long line of international bankers by name, defending this practice by referring to the Prophet Isaias who dared condemn the wicked King Manasses, and to St. John the Baptist who was most impolitic, according to his critics, because he was not satisfied to condemn adultery "in the perilous language of a tremendous platitude," but because he chose to designate the adulterer, Herod, by name.

From the very beginning this was the method which he employed. In the broadcasting year 1928-1929, Father Coughlin had occasion to speak against the widespreading doctrine of birth-control. Its popularity in Michigan was growing day by day, partly due to its being sponsored both in public and in private, on the rostrum and in the classroom, by the president of the University of Michigan.

Instead of contenting himself with broadcasting a thesis in favor of generating children, the Priest of the Radio first compiled the arguments advanced for birth-control and then launched out vehemently over the air against Doctor Clarence Little who was using his high office to mislead the uninformed.

The chief characteristic embodied in the method employed by Father Coughlin was one which might be described as the "quotation." As a simple priest he realized that of itself his voice car-

ried little or no authority. Therefore, every principle which he enunciated was protected by a quotation. The *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII was his *vademecum*. This singular document, the most important pronouncement chronicled in the entire XIXth Century on the question of social justice, was known intimately by the good Father. He studied it. He analyzed it. He checked it with the ten thousand facts held safely in his file. He discussed it. He took it with him to the factory. He measured it with the policies of labor unions. He lived it until it became part and parcel of his everyday life.

Forty years before, when Leo XIII had published the *Rerum Novarum*, it had caused no industrial nor economic revolution. True, its doctrines had penetrated the classroom wherever the Catholic college or university stood. Likewise these doctrines were reflected indirectly in every legislative hall and even in many judicial decisions. But the ranks of the wealthy still believed themselves to have an imprescriptible right to capital and credit. Millionaires never admitted that they were only trustees of great wealth who held their properties, under God, for the benefit of men generally, the indigent, the orphan, the widow, and the aged. They had not distinguished between ownership and use.

Labor, likewise, was just as selfish as was capital; labor, at least, as represented by the communistic and socialistic principles which were found in the writings of Marx.

During a period of forty years the classroom had not produced students who carried this message of the *Rerum Novarum* into the pulpits, the streets, the factories, and the homes.

This is not written to minimize the great work of Dr. John Ryan, nor of Fathers Husslein, Smith and Millar, nor the host of editors and writers in the field of the Catholic periodical. All these I have read, and I appreciate their scholarly efforts.

Little therefore had been actually accomplished by the encyclical of Leo XIII.

Meanwhile, the press was in the hands of the capitalistic class. It was generally supported financially by the industrialists. The magazines of the nation were likewise supported by the advertising of organized industry. No prudent person, therefore, could count on much coöperation from these media in disseminating the views of the great Leo.

As a matter of fact, at no time in the history of America could the sermons of Father Coughlin be carried through newspaper or magazine. Limitation of space, and the unwillingness to print his ideas, which were opposed to the current principles of the day, precluded the possibility of reaching an American audience otherwise than through the radio.

Had the radio been in existence in 1891, and had the doctrines of Leo XIII been popularized at that date, this nation and the nations of Europe would have escaped such calamities as the World War, the panics of 1893, 1907, 1920 and 1929, as well as the frightful aftermath of the thirties.

It is a matter of record that Father Coughlin was already broadcasting his moral-economic discourses when Pius XI published his *Quadragesimo Anno*, in which letter he reiterated and amplified the principles expressed by Leo XIII.

Naturally, this encyclical letter became the object of Father Coughlin's intent study because the priest had determined to use its thoughts, its sentences, its paragraphs, in approaching the almost hopeless task of reconstructing the social life of his country. He appreciated that the doctrines which he was preaching not only appeared to be radical but were generally classified as such by those whose business it was to defend decadent capitalism. Strategically, therefore, he wove in and out of the fabric of his discourse the thread of thought emanating from the mind of his highest ecclesiastical superior to the end that, when he was called a radical, at least he would be in good company.

If he spoke of unemployment he quoted authentic figures published in official documents, always referring to book, chapter and page. A copy of the Congressional Record was always on his desk. Facts meant nothing to him unless he could substantiate them. References were inane unless their origins were carefully checked.

He endeavored to employ as much care in formulating one of his discourses as if he were compounding a prescription with the nicety of a pharmacist.

All this was necessary in his method when he, an unknown, unheralded parish priest, like a Daniel, was attempting to beard the lion in his den.

This task demanded a courage, a stamina and a reckless disregard for the opinion of men that are seldom found today. To go

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before the millions of a radio audience for seven years demanded of a Catholic priest not so much a degree of rare intellectualism as it did Grace from high heaven combined with sound facts, sound principles and genuine humility. Realizing that he was subject to the criticism of thousands, he contacted the best students of government, of law, of finance, of foreign affairs, of history, of political economy and of international relations that could be found. The priest did not pretend to know it all, but he relied to a great degree upon this little group of men who found in him the predominate characteristic of intellectual honesty. These men formed for the priest a college of research. They knew he wanted facts. They knew that his judgment was no better than the facts upon which it was based.

Those who have studied the discourses as spoken by Father Coughlin have discovered that whether he speaks of property or wealth, of capital or labor, of the gold standard, of communism, of revaluation or of banking, he first brings to bear on the question the content of the encyclical letters of Leo and Pius; that he outlines the principles of political economy applicable to the particular subject; that he marshals the practical facts gleaned from the most trustworthy sources available; that he philosophizes upon the meaning or significance of these facts. Only then was he prepared to go into the homes of the people to find a subjective application to the lives of millions as they struggle onward to their eternal destiny.

The science of economics in his method was of little importance in itself. At all times Father Coughlin considered economics as merely a branch of the moral law. At all times he considered it only as a stepping stone to man's eternal happiness.

Filled with his subject as was this priest, he wrote his discourses only when saturated both with principles and with information pertinent to them. If at times he set forth to destroy, he never contented himself unless he could substitute something better for that which he was tearing down. He knew that before the solid superstructure of distributive justice could be erected it was necessary first to clear away the ruins of a system which had failed; then, to dig to the bedrock of solid Christian teachings before the foundation stones could be laid.

Another characteristic of the method employed by Father

Coughlin was the simple process of proceeding from the known to the unknown, from the concrete to the abstract. He started with the universal appeal to the emotions of men. Then he led his audience step by step into the sheer recognition of the primary and then of the advanced laws of political economy.

His discourses on economics expanded rather than contracted his audience. Strange to say, the further he went into the abstract, the greater his audience multiplied, as was evidenced by the increase in his mail. Stranger to say, the more he adhered to dogmatic principles and to the teachings of the *Rerum Novarum* and the *Quadragesimo Anno*, the more the interest grew, especially among Protestant and Jew and irreligionist. The old theory that when one talks to millions, he must "talk down" to their level was exploded. One can begin by "talking down," but he must end by "talking up." By concrete statements; by giving to everything a local habitation and a name; by referring to "international bankers" as the "Morgans," the "Kuhn-Loebs," the "Dillon-Reeds"; by translating the vague term of an "affiliate banking company" into the name of "Charles E. Mitchell" and the "National City Company"; by defining a "holding company" in the more easily understood language of "Samuel Insull"—these are examples of what is meant by going from the known to the unknown, from the concrete to the abstract.

And so each discourse was prepared with the years for the background—years of study, of discipline, of perseverance. They are discourses written with care and correction. Were it the reader's privilege to witness this priest as he is in the act of translating his thoughts to the typed page, he would see him prepare first an outline. This he elaborates, extends, illustrates as he applies his teachings. Hours pass by. Then he reviews the entire argument. He corrects, amends, softens, rearranges and modifies his work. Ordinarily he submits it to his Bishop for approval as late as Saturday evening.

Then comes Saturday night! Few in the audience realize when they hear Father Coughlin on a Sunday afternoon that he has had little if any sleep the night before. Few realize that the final check-up on facts comes to a conclusion some time after the midnight of Saturday. Then comes the next re-writing. Then the timing, then the re-reading, then the internal and external check.

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All night long he has worked until the final draft is made in the late hours of Sunday morning. Only then does he betake himself to the Shrine to offer up the Sacrifice of the Mass.

The author has seen many men work. I have known only one other mind that could function equally in concentration all day and all night. No man ever treated his audience with the insatiate love of facts, of truth and the practicability of doctrine as has this man, Father Coughlin. No man ever spent the hours to have things worthy of the millions who believe in him.

Every word in the Coughlin discourse was written to be spoken, not to be read. The imagery was particularly selected. In one instance Christ was called back to gaze into the open window of a Connecticut sweatshop. In another instance the "unknown Soldier" returned to visit his brother. To the soldier who fought in France, Father recalled the scene of the battlefield. To the farmer he depicted the waving field, the mortgage payment, the overburdening tax and the commodity price that spelled insolvency. To the laborer there was characterized the bench or machine, the long hours of toil, the longer hours of unemployment, the less-than-living wage, the home with its loved ones and the discouraging future.

The task which confronted Father Coughlin, and the method which he employed, have been sketched in order to present a background for the analysis of the doctrine which he has spoken. The more complete picture would carry the reader into the chapel, where, surrounded by his scores of helpers, prayers were said, sacrifice was offered, novenas were undertaken, all for the purpose of drawing down God's blessing upon this venturesome but needed work.

Even though the combination of the home, the school, the seminary and the Church prepared the Radio Priest for a career, rather unique and extraordinary, nevertheless, it is very probable that under normal economic conditions his voice would have been confined within the humble walls of a shingled church.

Although Father Coughlin gained an extraordinary reputation and was destined to play a mighty part in a peaceful, reasonable revolution in the sphere of economic life, he has never attributed his success to any exceptional native ability. He is sensible enough to realize that he is a product of a watchful Providence Who through the agency of natural circumstances guided him and gifted him.

## [ CHAPTER NINE ]

### *Practical Psychologist*

**D**URING the broadcasting season of 1931-32, Father Coughlin demonstrated to his radio audience his determination to destroy prohibition by assailing it with the bayonets of sharp facts. He exhibited a rare skill in the application of the science of psychology, understanding that his arguments lacked force unless they appealed to the heart as well as to the mind.

Those who have read the discourse entitled "Perjured Scoundrels" appreciate in part, and those who were fortunate to hear this oration grasp in full the consummate art of persuasion which the priest employed.

Doctor Clarence True Wilson had referred to the American War Veterans as "perjured scoundrels" because some of them had been guilty of drinking alcoholic beverages. Seizing upon this defamiation, the radio orator inimitably pictured a battlefield in France with its carnage, its suffering and its burning hell.

Thousands of American boys never returned. They were victims whose voices were stilled. Other thousands did return to go on record as being opposed to the policies of prohibition. Now in the words of Doctor Clarence True Wilson, "The conspiracy to drive out prohibition is the work of moral cowards. Those who are supporting them are moral cut-throats of the basest character."

That statement was sufficient to permit Father Coughlin to turn once and for all the tide of American sentiment positively against prohibition.

In his discourse, he quoted verbatim an essay from the Baltimore *Sun* in which Mr. Gerald Johnson portrayed his personal experience of the battle front. Johnson referred specifically to three soldier lads who had sacrificed their lives. He pictured them as they were about to enter battle. He made live again the sound of cannon, the whine of shrapnel and the last broken gasp of life.

“Perjured scoundrels” who before their death had been guilty of drinking wine!

Then, launching into his own inimitable style, Father Coughlin said: “And so, buddies, thirteen years have passed! And here I am talking about you as I wander with mistress memory up and down the aisles of white crosses.

“And somehow or other, old Sergeant W., Corporal S.,—somehow as I kneel down here beside your graves I know that death has lost its sting and its victory. I know that no fanaticism can ever defame your names.

“Perhaps, you are not a martyr in the strict meaning of the word. You never claimed to be one. But you and every other buddy whose cold corpse rests beneath these miles of white crosses—you were heroes and no ‘perjured scoundrels.’

“Perhaps, old smiling Corporal S., your clean, pure soul is still smiling down at me and upon the hills of North Carolina, smiling from the parapets of heaven as I kneel here beside your grave and kiss the cross and murmur my ‘Pater Noster’ as a token of eternal friendship for your kindly soul. After all, I know you are in heaven; because I learned at my mother’s knee that any brave man who had consciously given his life in defense of his country’s honor, in vindication of violated justice—oh, buddy, I long since learned that God made heaven for the likes of you. Isn’t that what the good padre preached to us when he told us the story of the Great Soldier Who gave His life on Calvary: ‘Greater love than this hath no man that he lay down his life for his friend?’

“Thirteen years! And that is where my memory took me, back to France.

“Thirteen years! And we in America have lived to see the day when the gray-haired mothers who bore those sons into life, now in their death, are told that they are ‘perjured scoundrels.’

“God forbid the fanaticism that gave birth to such thought!

“If my voice is carried to the hills of North Carolina or to the stockyards of Chicago, I hope and trust to God that it will dry a mother’s tears—the mothers of those boys of whom I have been speaking.

“Mother, I want you to open your own Bible at St. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. Or perhaps, I had better read it for you. Your eyes are too dim. It says: ‘If the dead rise not again, neither

is Christ risen again. If Christ be not risen again your faith is vain. As in Adam all men die, so also in Christ we shall be made alive.'

"O, come now, let us all dry those tears. Our Blessed Saviour said: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.' Therefore, the history of Lazarus shall be enacted once again for every sister and woman who learned to love a man. The story of Jairus' daughter shall live ten thousand times in reality for every parent who wept bitter tears upon the flower strewn coffin of a child. The drama enacted on the dusty streets of Naim shall be perpetuated for us and for every mother whose boy's body lies in foreign fields. November winds are singing their sad requiem. But to our beloved dead across the chasm of time we will stretch forth our hands and our hearts. Hands full of gifts; hearts full of respect.

"Oh, soldier boys, if your intellects can grasp the meaning of my worldly words, I ask you in the name of those thousands of your fellow legionnaires who today join with me in memory of your heroism, to count each tear as a precious pearl which we lay at the throne of Almighty God—pearls that will form a rosary of kind thoughts, sweet prayers and tender memories. If you are still biding time midway between earth and heaven, it is our earnest prayer that flights of angels will sing you to your rest. Heroes, saints of God! Never, never shall we who revere your memory or those of us who have shared your friendship join thoughts or words with those who call you 'perjured scoundrels' to justify their un-Christian and un-American opinions.

"Centuries ago this so-called blasphemer was done to death and willingly gave His life for His friends. The cross whereon He died has since become a badge of honor. The revilings which He suffered have become His crown of glory. Your cross, and the vile epitaph that has been written upon it by the modern pharisees shall be honored as long as America is America.

"A so-called blasphemer was and is the Son of God. A so-called 'perjured scoundrel' and 'moral cut-throat' is and will be the hero of our nation."

This priest was more than a cold blooded statistician. His was the mastery of those hundreds of keys and stops which, when touched, played either a melody of hope or a requiem of sorrow, upon that great organ, the human heart.

When the nation was bowed in sympathy for Colonel and Mrs.

Charles A. Lindbergh, it was Father Coughlin who not only broke the news to an anxious people, but told them that the gangsters were being employed to rescue the stolen child. More than that, in his appeal to the kidnapers he sounded a note of spirituality that oftentimes has been referred to as the high-water mark of any radio pronouncement.

The threads of motherhood and of childhood, of suffering, of devotion, of baby fingers clinging to maternal breasts—these were woven into a fabric of love supreme as the eyes of a nation were wet with the tears of repentance.

“Kidnaper, remember when you were a little boy. For a moment remember your mother whose breast suckled you and whose arms encircled you. Just for a moment remember your mother, who went down into the valley that you might have life. Oh, she loved you more than she loved the entire world. And she would have given her life for you, not only at your birth, but if it were possible for her, she would lay down her life for you this moment to relieve you from the mental anguish which you are suffering.

“But there is another mother, too—Anne Lindbergh! Do you realize that you have her first baby? Do you realize that you are holding away from her arms flesh of her flesh and blood of her blood; that you are not injuring the baby half so much as you are crushing her heart as in a great press, making her bleed the wine of sorrow?”

It is difficult in passing from such deep emotional thought, to understand the heart and mind of a priest who spoke such words as are chronicled above, and then pronounce the discourse known as “The Secret Is Out.” Difficult, I repeat, unless one understands that the same heart which bled for Anne Lindbergh had been pierced to the quick by the needless, useless, criminal suffering which was increasing day by day throughout the nation.

Congress had legislated the expenditure of millions of dollars for swine and cattle. Obstructed by some mad philosophy this same Congress had refused to levy a penny for starving men, women and children. The granaries were filled to overflowing, unemployment was on the increase, rapacious usury, greed and graft were seated like a trinity of gods upon their throne of gold sneering at the helpless people. It was high time that the policies

which had engendered such a tragedy should be blasted. Taxation had become unbearable. The nation's money was being spent like a flood water for useless purposes. Father spoke:

"Thousands upon thousands of clerks are employed in writing and mailing this paternalistic literature. Tons upon tons of it are franked free through our post office. And millions of dollars are exacted from the citizenry of the United States to continue a bureaucracy whose main purpose is to perpetuate a political organization. We are paying a tremendous price for keeping filled the modern 'pork barrel' of politics. And I might add that this innocent expenditure is entirely negligible to the millions of dollars wasted by the Department of Justice in its futile attempt to maintain reverence for the Volstead Act among a people who are openly protesting against the sinful waste of our national revenue.

"Practically every community in every State of the Union has joined its voice in this protest. Affairs have reached such a pass that if the farmer and laborer and small home owner are further taxed to bear the unreasonable expenditures of a spendthrift government which had billions to bestow on foreigners and millions to sustain foreign banks from failing but not a penny for home—they have reached such a pass that immediate and drastic measures must be taken to prevent a calamity.

"Remember that a government which cannot protect and preserve the homes of a nation has proven its uselessness. Further taxation spells further confiscation. And further confiscation is the back door to communism."

In such language Father Coughlin took his courage in his hands as he attacked boldly President Herbert Hoover, whose meaningless and inept promises such as "prosperity was just around the corner," were stimulating a spirit of diffidence throughout the nation.

On February 14, 1932, the Priest of the Radio, throwing aside all discretion, determined to tell the American people why children starved in the midst of plenty, and why farms were confiscated and homes destroyed to satisfy the gluttony of the royal court of greed.

"Now there must be some philosophic principle behind this inactivity to protect the common man and the zeal to protect the banking class. I wonder what the principle of the thing really is!

“Last Friday afternoon (February 12, 1932) I secured from the Detroit Public Library a collection of magazines bound in book form. It bore the name of *The Mining Magazine*. It was edited by a Mr. T. A. Rickard and was published at Salisbury House, London, England.

“Glancing through the issue for the month of May, 1912 A.D., I happened upon one of the most astounding articles ever composed by an ethical human being. It fully answered the perturbing question: ‘What principle is at the bottom of the political inactivity to protect the common man, and of the ardent zeal to protect the banking class?’

“The title of the article in this magazine to which I refer is ‘The Economics of a Boom.’ It fully exposes the code of morals regulating the relations between financiers and stockbrokers on the one side and their clients and investors on the other. Or, to put it in another way, the attitude of the promoters towards the promoted.

“I dare say that any important public library has a copy of this article, the author of which is none else than the President of the United States, Mr. Herbert C. Hoover, who in 1912 and for many years was resident in the British Empire.

“Before quoting for you the disturbing statement made by Mr. Hoover in this article, photostatic copies of which I have made, and legal proof for the book’s existence having been fully established—before quoting for you the statement made by Mr. Hoover in May, 1912, and subscribed to by him with his name, I had better explain that he wrote this article to *The Mining Magazine* to show how a mining project is financed and incidentally to moralize on the financial loss so often resulting to the gullible public who purchase stock in the mine.

“In floating a mine, he tells us that there are three expenditures of money required. Of course, he writes in terms of English money. I will translate his language into terms of American money.

“The first outlay of money is for the actual development and equipment and management of the mine, which he presumes will amount to \$500,000. The second outlay of money is for the registration of the company, the directors’ fees, the secretary, etc., all of which amounts to \$25,000. The third outlay of money is for

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brokers, jobbers and salesmen, which approximates \$75,000. These three expenditures total \$600,000.

"Then Mr. Hoover explains that the mine is capitalized for a cool five million dollars. This last investment represents what the investing public pays. The promoters themselves use and spend only \$600,000 of that amount.

"From this point on, Mr. Hoover moralizes. Assuming that the entire mining venture is an absolute failure and proves to be nothing more than an empty bubble, he writes the following most incomprehensible words which I am quoting exactly as they are found in *The Mining Magazine* of May, 1912, and which I have on the desk beside me as I read. He says:

"It is quite possible that the Blank mine may be capitalized at £1,000,000 (\$5,000,000) and that the Insiders may sell the shares to the Outsiders at that figure, but the £880,000 (\$4,400,000) representing the difference—if we assume that the mine should fail absolutely—is not itself an economic loss. It simply means that this much of the national wealth was transferred from one individual to another. . . . Further, from an economic point of view this £880,000 (\$4,400,000) of capital in the hands of the Insiders is often invested to more reproductive purpose than if it had remained in the hands of the idiots who parted with it.'

'Idiots who parted with it! 'Idiots!' I hang on that word 'idiots.' It is a word to conjure with—I-D-I-O-T-S—'idiots.'

"In 1912 Mr. Herbert Hoover termed 'idiots' those people who would listen to the suave, salesman talk of promoters who, by deceit and subterfuge, coaxed money from widows to invest in many mining ventures which were failures before they started.

"At that date, 1912, he termed 'idiots' simple people who would save their money, but who were persuaded to part with it so that the 'Insiders,' as he calls them, could reap \$4,400,000 profit on an investment, as the 'Outsiders' acquired for their portion nothing more than a scrap of paper known as mining stock. And he adds that this 'is not itself an economic loss. It simply means that this much of the national wealth was transferred from one individual to another' where it 'is often invested to more productive purposes than if it had remained in the hands of the idiots who parted with it.'

"My friends, we are deeply indebted for this shocking piece of

information. We now know the philosophy at the bottom of modern progress. We are now taught that it is quite moral and just to filch money from innocent 'Outsiders' and pass it into the soft hands of the guilty 'Insiders,' where it can be used to better advantage. It is the fulfillment of Christ's prophecy which says: 'That to everyone that hath shall be given: and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him.'

"Of course, I would not stultify myself to stand before this microphone without being positive and absolutely certain of what I have quoted.

"This, my friends, is the same philosophic theory which has been in vogue in this and in other countries during the past few years. The 'Outsiders' exist for the 'Insiders,' so they believe. It is absolutely ethical to exploit the investing class and the laboring class because the money is better off in the hands of the promoting class. It is quite ethical to protect the banks and the financiers. But it is foolish to protect the depositors and the over confident investors—the 'idiots'!

"This is the philosophy condemned by the Catholic Church. This is the oppression referred to by Leo XIII and Pius XI. This is what was intimated last week when the Head of our Church invited every priest during the Lenten Services to preach upon the 'economic distress, the world unemployment problem and the other issues common to all countries.'

"No wonder we have lived to see the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. As Pius XI says: 'This concentration of power . . . is a natural result of limitless free competition which permits the survival of those only who are the strongest, which often means those who fight most relentlessly, who pay least heed to the dictates of conscience.'

"To quote the same Pius XI: 'The sacred law is violated by an irresponsible wealthy class, who, in the excess of the good fortune, deem it a just state of things that they should receive everything and the laboring class nothing. . . .'

"The same Holy Pontiff continues by saying: 'This concentration of power has led to a threefold struggle for domination. First, there is the struggle for dictatorship in the economic world itself; then there is the fierce battle to acquire control of the government so that its resources and authority may be abused in the

economic struggle; and finally there is the clash between states themselves.' ”

“Destructive criticism,” many have termed this excerpt. It was more than destructive. It was devastating. It was the razing of a pagan philosophy. It was the process of excavating before the solid foundation of the “New Deal” and of Christian principles could be laid with security. This discourse was the death-knell of Herbert Hoover’s political career.

Incidentally, the Mr. T. A. Rickard mentioned as editor of *The Mining Magazine*, close friend of Mr. Hoover’s over the years, is one of the preferred on the J. P. Morgan list of those who help underwrite securities by being able to have them assigned at seventeen to twenty points below the market price. Let no man infer that Mr. Hoover profited. It was Mr. Rickard. The “Idiots” were paying thirty-seven for Alleghany. Those “Inside” were paying twenty. Thus there is no economic loss. Just the transfer from one individual to another where it is often invested to more productive purposes than if it had remained in the hands of the “Idiots” who parted with it!

## PART II—THE CONQUEST OF THE AIR



## [ CHAPTER TEN ]

### *Communism*



AS PREVIOUSLY related, Father Coughlin's radio activities had been confined to the one radio station, WJR of Detroit, Michigan, until the month of October, 1929. That month marks the date when the Pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower began to win recognition outside his own parish and his own diocese. His voice was being carried over stations WMAQ of Chicago and WLW of Cincinnati. Throughout November and December of that year he had not found himself. He was still groping. Nevertheless, it would not be fair to state that he was searching for an opportunity to establish himself in the limelight of publicity. The Sunday gospel along with the ordinary theological theme were the only topics which, until this date, occupied his radio activities.

Then came Sunday, January 12, 1930. For his discourse he planned to discuss the Christian family, because in the liturgical calendar of the Church, this was the proper subject for that day.

Every political and ecclesiastical student had long been interested in the news flashes which were originating in Russia. This had been especially true since the year 1917, the date of the Russian Revolution. Every student realized that the new government of the United States of Soviet Russia was the most radical political establishment the mind of man had yet conceived.

The most sanguine dreams of Karl Marx had not only been realized, they had been surpassed. Lenin, Kerensky, Trotsky, Stalin—these names, springing from the obscurity of the womb of revolution, already had attained gigantic proportions.

The old Russia was dead. A new Russia had been cradled! The old Russia with its Czars, its cruelties, its oppressions, its servitude, its serfdom and its illiteracy had been swept away by the force of a red tidal wave. In its place there had been established a more diabolical kind of oppression. Wealth was confiscated.

Homes and farms were nationalized. A tyranny of hatred was evoked. Men, women and children were branded as chattels of the State. God was expelled from the schools. Churches were converted into theaters. Communism was established.

All this was accomplished by a small, organized minority who had as their principal allies the twin demons of debt and oppression.

On January 6, 1930, the Russian Soviet Government rashly proceeded to destroy the last vestige of Christianity within the borders of the new Republic.

During the previous three or four years the doctrines of communism were publicly preached in America. Little heed was paid either to the preacher or to his doctrines. Less heed was paid to the abuses identified with industrialism and financialism—abuses which called into use soap boxes, coined radical phrases, bestirred passions and wove red rags of communism.

This was the background of thought in the mind of Father Coughlin as he approached the microphone on this eventful Sunday afternoon. He began to speak. He began to discuss the hidden communism which was beginning to ravage our nation. He said:

“What a choice morsel of news has come out of Russia this week! By a governmental decree the mistletoe and holly of Christmas have been abolished. The Star of the Magi, the Manger of Bethlehem and its innocent occupant, the Prince of Peace, have been purged both from the vocabulary and the minds of the Russians.

“The last vestige of the Christian religion is hereby legally destroyed by the Soviet. It is the discordant finale of a tragic comedy whose first scene was enacted almost thirteen years ago. Thirteen years ago, the Russian State decreed that all children of Russian parentage belonged not to the father and mother who bore them, but to the Soviet under whom they lived. A short thirteen years ago, Russia annulled the contract of matrimony, replacing it with a license for legalized lust.

“Events do follow logically. One crime necessarily begets another. Thus, it required but thirteen years of Soviet, Bolshevich rule to wring the lamentable but logical conclusion of Christlessness from the skull and cross bones of murdered Russian family life.

“Strange anomaly of history! The Prince of Peace banished by the Bolshevich on the eve of a laudable endeavor to coöperate with our European neighbors in harnessing the red, rampant Horse of the Apocalypse—War and Destruction!

“These thoughts are uppermost in my mind today as I recall for you the fact that this Sunday long since has been set aside to honor the Holy Family composed of Joseph, the foster-father, of Mary, the virgin-mother, and of Jesus Christ, the divine Son.

“Here is the model Christian family governed by fundamental principles which were established by Almighty God—principles which will not be flouted except at the price of destruction.

“We Americans are seriously tainted with the purple poison of Bolshevism and its doctrines. Ending with the first of November, 1929 A.D., there were 195,936 decrees of divorce granted in these United States during the eleven preceding months. For every six marriages performed within the confines of our country there was granted one divorce.

“I make mention of this sordid thought fully conscious that the eternal Muse of History is rigorously logical in the sequence of her events. I make mention of it to open-minded citizens in order to attract their attention to an insidious condition which far outstrips the seriousness of the events which preceded and impelled the Civil War. It is a condition which breeds national destruction. It is aiming its spear at the heart of Christ’s principles. Fanatical though it may sound, it is snapping one by one the links of the chain which binds in democratic unity the great American nation.

“It has ever been the thought and teaching of Christianity that families do not exist for the State. Rather, it is the State which exists for the conservation, the preservation and the prosperity of the family which either in itself or in its ancestors freely called the State into being. No State may indiscriminately nationalize the children of a family. No State dare legalize either fornication or adultery.

“Children primarily are the property of the parents who beget them. Parents, by the indissoluble bond of matrimony, cannot be traded nor exchanged either at the will of lust or by the decree of a senate. Attempt this, and the primary principle of Christian political economy is desecrated. Dare to inscribe this on the law books, and the ultimatum of Jesus Christ—‘What God hath

joined together, let no man put asunder'—must be shelved and disregarded as religious extremism.

“Both Protestants and Catholics adhere to this teaching. Protestants, it is true, are more lenient to a degree than are Catholics in the interpretation of this ethical principle in that they permit absolute divorce for the reason of adultery. But no one who even hypocritically clings to the name of Jesus Christ will stultify himself in the face of the Scriptures by advocating absolute divorce either for cruelty, for incompatibility of temper or for any other human subterfuge founded upon a philosophy of selfishness.

“There are in America this afternoon approximately 2,000,000 men and women, who, during this last ten years, have scorned the basic family and national doctrine of Jesus Christ. These have sought divorces with the right to remarry despite the sanctity of the contract by which they joined hands and hearts for better or for worse. These are the two million whose happy dreams of youthful romance have been dissipated. These are the two million who regard with more sanctity the permanency of a contract for a portion of real estate than they do for the lastingness of a contract for human flesh and human blood and human dreams of joy.

“Because of their own poor judgment and their lack of foresight they have joined the rabble in this modern Pilate's Hall as they shout: ‘Give us Barabbas—Crucify Christ. Give us the political economy of Lust, of Russia, of Bolshevism, of Christlessness.’

“Russia legalized lust thirteen years ago. Then she was forced to nationalize the offspring of these temporary marriages. This week she has ousted Christ and His religion. If it had not been this week it would have happened in less than a score of years when the orphans of infidelity would have grown to manhood and womanhood hateful of the parents who bore them, hateful of the God whose representatives those parents were.”

The above excerpt, when spoken over the air, must have had a tremendous effect. As might be anticipated, it won many letters of applause, but unexpectedly, it drew hundreds of letters of condemnation. All week long Father Coughlin read these protests. He was startled by the number of professors and of seemingly well educated persons who wrote to him in defense of communism.

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These letters became premises from which he drew a practical conclusion. Although he realized that the American industrial-financial situation required a thorough house cleaning, yet he further realized that even before this could be attempted, he must warn his audience against the red serpent of communism which was preparing to strike.

Moreover, he deemed it highly diplomatic to assure his radio audience that he was absolutely opposed to the radicalism of Marx and to the extravagances and immoral doctrines of Lenin. Otherwise, he himself would be branded as a communist, should he dare criticize publicly the entrenched wealth of this nation. The protest that the communist had made was identified with an irrational, unjust, unworkable remedy. His protest against wealth must at a later day be fortified with a sane, Christian, practical remedy.

Selecting one of the many letters addressed to him during the week of January 12, although careful to protect the name of his correspondent, Father Coughlin began a vigorous attack on communism with the hope of arousing his apathetic American audience to the meaning of events happening in their midst.

It is better to reproduce this discourse of January 19, 1930, not only for the purpose of making manifest the style of this new crusader, but also for the purpose of chronicling what many critics have considered to have been the beginning of the most efficacious series of lectures launched against the spread of communism in this country.

This lecture of Sunday, January 19, was entitled "Christ or the Red Fog." It follows:

"One week ago this afternoon I had the pleasure of addressing the radio audience of this Golden Hour on the subject of the Christian Family.

"If you recall the tenor of the lecture, it dwelt chiefly upon the topic of divorce, which in the first eleven months of 1929 destroyed 195,936 American families.

"Reference was made to the Red Ruin of Russian Bolshevism, which thirteen years ago decreed that matrimony was not a binding contract. Having permitted promiscuous cohabitation, then having logically decreed that the orphans of infidelity become the property of the State, Bolshevism culminated its devastation by banishing Christ and His religion from the nation.

“Bolshevism or communism is logical if nothing else. It starts by attacking the home. It proceeds by undermining the government. It ends by denying Christ. ‘We have rid the earth of its kings,’ writes Lunacharsky, Commisar of Education, ‘let us now rid the sky of its false king.’

“America is seriously tainted with the purple poison of Bolshevism. Between it and the Catholic Church there is war unto death. Our weapons are truth and charity. Never in the history of our nation have there been such subtle and outspoken attacks upon the home through attempts to abolish the stability and the sacredness of the marriage tie, which, if accomplished, mean the gradual destruction of the government.

“The proponents of free love and companionate marriage hawk their nauseous nostrums of communistic philosophy from theater, forum and press. They have established distribution centers in the libraries of many of our public schools and colleges where students of sociology and kindred sciences are sent to dig in the literary muck heap for reference data until they become dizzy with dirt, their moral sense having become confused and benumbed by the Red Fog which enshrouds them.

“Today I stand fearlessly back of every statement I made last Sunday. Today I reiterate that anyone who faintly pretends loyalty to the name of Christian, or patriotism to the country of America, cannot subscribe to the communistic doctrine of absolute divorce for such trifles as incompatibility of temper, cruelty and selfish subterfuges. To do this is to discredit the prime sociological doctrine of Christ—‘What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.’

“For Christians this doctrine is beyond dispute. As a Christian I am ready to defend it to the best of my powers against any American communist whose sole argument is based upon temporalities and selfish conveniences.

“Perhaps there are some smiling at the seeming absurdities of these remarks. Perhaps you are hardly interested. But those who profess communistic beliefs *are interested*, and *were intensely interested*, last Sunday. Here is a sample of one of the hundreds of letters which I received from them. It is not anonymous. It is fully signed. I have the gentleman’s address and his telephone number. Here is his protest against Christianity:

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'C. E. COUGHLIN, *Ballyhooper*,  
'Shrine of Little Flower,  
'Detroit.

'OAK PARK, ILL.  
January 12, 1930.

'*Dear Sir:*

'I listened to a part of your talk this afternoon with a reaction the reverse of what you were hoping for. Your discourse was entirely theological and therefore unscientific, unliveable and stupid.

'You deplored the present divorce situation, but what practical remedy did you offer? None! Our present trouble is due partly from a transition from the Christian idea of marriage, courtship and family to a period of practical and scientific way of living and loving.

'You said that Christ is God. I say that you are a liar or a hypocrite. You certainly were an intruding guest in my home. You have apparently only partially developed your intelligence. If you had a critical mind I would suggest that you read the 'T\_\_\_\_\_ of C\_\_\_\_\_.' But since yours is a theological mind you probably wouldn't be benefited.

'You suggested that we play 'make believe.' Then you went on a very emotional spree—truly theological and so abhorrent.

'I take this means of informing you that my family is happy in its efforts to investigate life and religion from every angle and are fully cognizant of the terribleness of such as you and your organized churchianity.

'Respectfully submitted,

'O. W. C.'

'Thanks for your flattery, O.W.C. 'Your organized churchianity,' you say. 'Our disorganized Christianity,' is more correct. But that point shall be left to a future discussion. Today I am more interested in dwelling for a moment upon the Divinity of Jesus Christ which you communistic-minded persons disclaim.

'Intensely hated and intensely loved, Jesus Christ holds magnetized the heart of the world. Upon the stage of time, He set foot twenty centuries ago. Since His coming, His presence has predominated every scene in life's drama. Before His entry each scene in life's tragedy was but a partial prologue. The songs of David were filled with the hope of His coming. The prophecies of Isaias, of Ezekiel, of Jeremiah were like vagrant rays of dawn-light announcing the sacredness of His birth, the noonday of His mission and the blood-red sunset of His going.

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“From Him the apostles drew inspiration to venture into the arena of pagan civilization clasping the weapon of the cross in their hands and cherishing the policy of His charity in their hearts. It was love for Him that encouraged more than five hundred thousand martyrs in the reign of Nero alone to lay down their lives for His principles.

“Every stone in every college and cathedral was set in His blessed Name. For centuries every birth was patterned after His own. Every funeral cortege throughout Christendom mingled joy with sorrow when the mourners remembered the story of Naim, the tomb of Lazarus and the first Easter morn.

“Then, there are scenes where His enemies seem to conquer and overwhelm Him. There was not only a Thabor of glory, there was also a Calvary of thunder, of darkness—of death.

“So it has been down the centuries. Gethsemane has been perpetuated when priests could not watch one hour with the Sorrowing Master as He beheld His Bride, the Church, torn asunder by immorality, by worldliness, by dissension. If He wept over Jerusalem of old, He also shed bitter tears as the Red Napoleon and his like made shambles of Europe and a mockery of brotherhood. If He sorrowed on the mountainside because ‘many walked with Him no more,’ His heart must have been crushed as Clemenceau shut the door in His face and forbade the mention of His Name in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

“So, through the ages the story runneth. At one moment Christ, the hero of the human drama, is glorified. At another, treated as the veriest villain, He is condemned. At one moment listening to the shouts of those who would crown Him King; at another betrayed by a Judas. At one instant, the inspiration which filled monasteries with men like Francis; at another, the target of Julian the Apostate, Voltaire, the atheist, and Lenin, the communist. The eternal Christ Whom the world has either loved or hated, crowned or crucified! . . .

“Josephus, the historian of the Jews, refers to Christ, to His teachings and works and dares not deny them in the face of their widespread publicity. Publius Lentulus, the President of Judea in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, describes Jesus minutely, attesting to the fact that He heals the sick of all sorts of diseases with a word or a touch and even calls back the dead to life. There ap-

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peared not one Jewish piece of literature discrediting Christ or calling His miracles into question before the ninth century.

“Thus, if the science of history is of any value, it is most reliable and authentic in the matter of Christ. His birthplace has been hallowed throughout the centuries. The scene of His death has been preserved intact in the midst of persecution. The world is filled with His followers and bitter enemies. No one dares to discount Him in his calculation. Not even you yourself, ‘O.W.C.’

“Is Christ God? He was crucified because He claimed to be the Son of God. And to prove His claim He rose from the dead and made many appearances during the forty days He sojourned upon the earth with His apostles.

“The first jury of Christian laborers, the proletariat as you would call them, the eleven of the twelve apostles as we call them, gave their lives as a positive answer to this question. They had witnessed His Crucifixion. They beheld Him and conversed with Him after His Resurrection. The world is perfectly willing to believe stories whose narrators allow themselves to be martyred.

“The answer which the Master gave to the delegation, which approached Him from John the Baptist when His identity was called into question, is the same answer which we narrate to the followers of Lenin and Marx. ‘The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them.’ It is a gospel that is divine. No human brain could have devised it. No poet could have dreamed it. With one dramatic stroke, it robs the grave of its terror, the heart of its despair. It is the ‘Good News’ whispered to the laborer as he sweats and toils. It is the hope instilled into the soul of those whom the world has broken in spirit. It is the priceless gift of Christ’s brotherhood today and tomorrow and for all time. Let politicians and philosophers strive to perfect the conveniences of life. Christ succeeded in perfecting the happiness of eternity where there shall be neither tear nor sorrow, loss nor moan.

“Mr. O. W. C., I am not a liar nor am I a hypocrite. If I did not believe this with all the sincerity of my soul, I, too, would look forward to the grave as the end of all personality. I would employ the few brains with which you give me credit of possessing in striving to become, if necessary, the most adroit murderer,

the most expert forger, the most rampant free-lover to make for myself a sort of heaven of this earth. I, too, would become an anarchist, despising law and condemning order for my own private, selfish, personal gain and satisfaction. I would be a fool if I did not adopt such a policy. Those who sweat in their factories and starve in their idleness were fools, too, if they did not follow out the pursuits of communistic philosophy, disbelieving in Christ.

“The Gospel of Christ is the sole anchorage as the ship of civilization is buffeted about by the winds of passion. It is the love which Jesus Christ preached and the heaven in which we believe that breeds patience in our hearts and hope in our souls. ‘Not by bread alone doth man live.’ It is the faith in Him, the hope in Him, the love in Him that bows the factory worker’s shoulders to his daily burden of carrying the cross.

“Through the vicissitudes of time, this Christ, I repeat, has been loved and hated. His Gospel has been loved and scorned. Thus, the greatest miracle of all times is that every generation has had its Herod endeavoring to bury the Jesus Christ at Whom you scoff. But none have succeeded in sealing Him within a tomb. Nero boasted that he would rid the empire of Christ and His followers. Julian the Apostate, warred against Him. Simon Magus and Nestorius preached against Him.

“In more modern times a licentious pope like Alexander VI and a lustful monarch like Henry VIII failed to wreck the bark of Peter in which Christ slept. Neither Emmanuel Kant, the philosopher, nor Voltaire, the slanderer, disturbed its course. Ten million hypocrites who cling like barnacles to the hull of Christianity in our present day will not deter its progress.

“Harrassed by enemies without and by traitors from within, the Church of Christ still gives the answer to the soul-weary world—an answer that none but He can give—‘The blind see, the poor have the gospel preached to them.’

“Now, Mr. O. W. C., since you are so outspoken in damning the Gospel of Christ on the subject of matrimony, what other gospel do you either knowingly or unknowingly choose? None other but the one enunciated by the Soviet government, which absolutely abolishes the contract, the permanency and the sanctity of marriage, teaching that either the man or the woman can terminate their free-love union at will.

“You tell me in your letter that our present trouble is due partly to a transition from the Christian idea of marriage to a period of a practical and scientific way of living. This is loose language. Let me be more explicit with the radio audience and explain to them your scientific way of living.

“One of your papers, the Haverhill *Social Democrat* (1901), explains that ‘The marriage system of today is based on impurity.’ Your Mr. Hyndman, in his ‘Historical Basis of Socialism,’ page 952, writes, ‘Marriage for life is almost at an end—even now.’ The Honorable Bertrand Russell, who, by the way, was vice-president of the Teachers’ Labor League of England, and who obtruded himself before thousands of students in America, openly taught complete sexual freedom and all its indulgences without marriage. ‘Enjoy yourself sexually in this world; for when you die, you rot.’

“This, ladies and gentlemen, is the so-called scientific manner of living advocated by the International Socialists. Take it or leave it. Teach it to your children as you would teach it to your dog.

“Necessarily these quotations are short. But since I am on this subject of a typical communistic letter, may I dwell a few moments longer on the subject of American Bolshevism.

“A quotation from Mr. O. W. C.’s letter reads: ‘Your discourse was entirely theological and therefore unscientific.’ Unscientific! What is the definition of this word ‘science’? Primarily, it means the knowledge of a thing through its causes. I suppose psychology, algebra, surgery, biology, astronomy have no background to them. I suppose the subject matter of each of these sciences, be it human life for biology, a human body for surgery, or a silver star for astronomy, has had no beginning, no cause.

“Well, O. W. C., you are sensible enough to know that all these things have had causes. Causes go back one by one until they come to the first cause, the uncaused cause. That is God, call Him by whatsoever name you please. Now the science which deals with God is called theology. Being theological, therefore, is being unscientific!

“I am not interested in your personalities. I prefer to tell a few tales out of school relative to American Communism or Bolshevism. I will stand back of every word which I am about to say,

thus giving you previous assurance that these ideas are not the creation of a false fancy.

"First of all, International Socialism not only strives to break down the permanency of the American family, its aim is at the nation itself. In 1926, at 'The Play House' in Washington, there appeared Scott Nearing, formerly a teacher of economics at the University of Pennsylvania. He spoke to a packed house on the stability of the Russian Soviet Government. His audience, at fifty cents a head, applauded his every word. The climax came when he exclaimed: 'It is our business to prepare America by propoganda to do what Russia did in 1917.' This address was delivered within a stone's throw of the Capitol.

"An article published in the *Haldemand-Julius Quarterly*, April, 1927, paints a clear picture of what transpired at the Milwaukee Students' Conference, which was attended by approximately three thousand young Americans. Under the auspices of the Council of Christian Association, the Student Council of the Y. W. C. A. and the Student Department of the Y. M. C. A. were instructed in the advantages to be gained by becoming communists.

"Addressing them was J. Louis Engdahl, the editor of the *Communist Daily Worker* of Chicago. This well-known socialistic leader demanded that these students, assembled under the guise of religion and patriotism, should not only consider and favor anti-war resolutions in time of peace, but that they carry their opposition into the actual waging of hostilities. 'Communism' said he, at this sacrosanct meeting of Y. M. C. A. Christian American students, 'is native to the United States just as it is native to every other country.'

"Quoting from the *Milwaukee Journal*—a newspaper account of the conference—Dr. Edith Swift instructed the assembled students that transportation, means of communication and scientific invention have combined to make sex freedom absolutely accessible to our young people without the stigma of consequences which restrained the young folk of another day. 'I would not condemn the girl who enters into a pre-marital relation with the man she loves,' says she. That was the pith of a free love, communistic lecture, which was given under the auspices of a national religious conference of students.

## COMMUNISM

“Not content to spend money, time and propaganda in endeavoring to legislate men into heaven by keeping holy the Eighteenth Amendment, will the Y. M. C. A. of America prostitute their efforts in permitting such persons as Dr. Edith Swift to instruct their students how to break the Commandment of our Creator which is explicit in stating: ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery.’ I am saying this neither out of prejudice nor intolerance, but simply to awaken you from your lethargy. What was done in your circle yesterday is liable to happen within my own tomorrow.

“Not content to preach to Y. M. C. A. students, these communists keep busy during the vacation period working to win the children through propaganda camps.

“Again I turn to the pages of the *Chicago Daily Worker*, September, 1928, and read that Philip Frankfield writes: ‘Our purpose is—to have the children carry away with them the message of communism. In the morning we get the children out and the Red Flag is raised. Then they sing the ‘Internationale.’

“And now we come to Mr. Sibly,—Sibly, the pacifist. The mention of his name brings to my mind how thoroughly he sold himself and his disarmament propaganda to the Christian churches. Quoting from a personal letter which I have received from Harry A. Jung, Chicago publicist and patriot, we discover an illuminating sidelight on our so-called peace movement and disarmament campaign which is now in progress. Mr. Jung says:

“ ‘Our country should maintain itself in a state of preparedness commensurate with its mission and destiny. The hellish conspiracy fomented by the godless government of Soviet Russia to disarm us through the wrong kind of pacifism is becoming more apparent every day. There is an effulgence of evidence that the plot includes the stirring up of civil insurrection when we have become a disarmed nation. The Bolsheviks do not attempt to hide this as can be proved from official documentary evidence in which the whole plan is plainly advanced in cold type.’ ”

“So warns a patriot!

“My friends of the radio audience, this is a sample of the gospel of communism which O. W. C. and his like would substitute for the Gospel of Christ. Divorce is the primary social and economic doctrine. Bring it about by poisoning the minds of the young; by teaching them immorality and by abstracting the inherent virtues

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of purity and modesty from their souls. Then sow seeds of dissension in those souls. Bring about civil war and destruction by propaganda. Organize units of International Socialism in our universities. Feed pacifism to our gullible religionists!

"'Gullible' is the word. They are unwilling to assist in building up a better navy and a stronger army to protect a country where Christ is still King. Yet they consider scattering ten thousand soldiers on the borderland of Canada and spending twenty million more dollars to safeguard the noble experiment of prohibition, while communism breeds in our factories, in our homes and in our States.

"You think perhaps, that it is not breeding. Well, in 1924 there were only fourteen states in our Federation on the International Socialistic ballot. In 1928, there were thirty-four states represented. A gain of twenty states in four years has now made them a National Party with whom we must contend.

"What has all of this to do with religion, with Catholicism? It has this much: International Socialism—and there is only one kind of socialism in its last analysis according to Lenin—hates Christ, abhors His doctrines, boasts that it will rid the earth of Christians, and scorns our government. So the Catholic Church is courageous enough to raise her voice against this Red Rule.

"Have I any suggestions to offer? There are plenty of them. We can start with the leaders of industrialism. We can ask them to better the working conditions of their laborers, to devise ways and means of keeping the laborer steadily employed, to contribute as much money towards providing an old age compensation insurance as they have towards combating that figment of fancy they call prohibition.

"We can proceed in our churches, on our street corners, at our gatherings and assemblies by preaching the doctrines of Christ and by avoiding the atheistic immoralities.

"Christianity has not broken down. It is you Christians who have failed in your duty.

"Let not the workingman be able to say that he is driven into the ranks of socialism by the inordinate and grasping greed of the manufacturer. Let it not be said that we churchmen have spent our lives and prostituted our callings by straining out gnats and swallowing camels.

## COMMUNISM

“Charles Evans Hughes has warned us. He said: ‘Against this most insidious assault of socialism we must build our redoubts and man them with the patriots of peace.’ Frank B. Kellogg has not been silent. ‘I am not an alarmist,’ says he, ‘but I cannot be blind to the forces which are working in our self-governing country.’ Listen to the immortal words of Myron T. Herrick, our late lamented ambassador to France: ‘We intend to protect our country as vigorously from Bolshevism as our ancestors defended it against tyranny; and the fact that a government secretly sends against us the germs of a loathsome disease instead of openly dispatching armies, does not make the invasion less felonious or alter our duty to repel it.’

“Ladies and gentlemen, are you really Christian? Are you one only in name but not in deed? You prate of patriotism, but neither you nor I nor any workingman can be patriotic to our present Constitution unless from the highest to the lowest of us we adopt Christ’s principles. It is either the sanctity, the purity and the permanency of the Christian home or else its dissolution into barbaric Russian communism. It is either Christ or Lenin.

“I repeat that the communists are absolutely logical. The outcome of communistic family life is inevitably a communistic nation.

“St. Paul, writing to Timothy remarks that: ‘The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they keep to themselves teachers having itching ears . . . perilous times shall come for men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . without natural affection . . . despisers of those that are good.’

“Mr. O. W. C., I am glad that I received your letter and the hundreds of others in protest from communists and free lovers. Perhaps I lack intelligence as you say. But I do not lack faith in the easy-going, patient American people who will not mistake tolerance for immoral coöperation; who will not sell the birth-right of their country and the faith of their Divine Jesus Christ for an idle dream of a godless upstart.

“In conclusion, I ask you, my friends, to be doers of the Word of God and not hearers only. In conclusion, I ask you to ponder upon this statement of Engels, the high priest of socialism, who said: ‘Two of the three obstacles which block the path of the

present social reform are religion and the present form of marriage.'

"Follow this up with the utterance of blasphemy which Blatchford, the English socialist, enunciates. It is this:

" 'We cannot accept the God of creation, this savage idol of an obscure tribe, and we have renounced Him and are ashamed of Him. He is a ferocious and abominable personality—a blood-thirsty and unspeakable monster—we have no use for Him. We have no criminal so ruthless nor so blood-guilty as He. He is not fit to touch our cities, imperfect as we are. The thought of Him defiles and nauseates. We should think Him to be too horrible and pitiless to be a devil, this red-handed, black-hearted Jehovah of the Jews.'

"Christian parents—American parents—is that the lesson which you wish to instill into the heart of your daughter? Do you want her to be the breeder of some lustful person's desires, and when the rose of her youth has withered, to be thrown upon the highways of socialism? Do you want atheism in her home and in her heart? Choose today! It is either Christ or the Red Fog of communism. It is either the marriage feast of Cana or the brothel of Lenin."

Immediately following the broadcasting of this lecture, Father Coughlin began to receive many letters from priests, from Catholic laymen, from patriotic Americans and especially from industrialists and financiers condemning him for fighting imaginary wind-mills.

Father Coughlin knew communism. More than that, he appreciated that it would certainly make strong advances in the United States of America unless it were vigorously checked. Possessing a passion for facts and for authentic quotations he proceeded on his way without realizing that in less than one year hence in his *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pius XI was destined to repeat in principle and thereby substantiate the warnings which were broadcast in 1930 from the Shrine of the Little Flower.

Following these two initial lectures, Father Coughlin continued not only to outline but to detail for his audience the advances of communism in America. On Sunday, January 26, 1930, in a speech bristling with authentic quotations and alive with specific, uncontrovertible facts, he drew a picture of this red serpent as it crawled from campus to campus of our universities. He men-

tioned by name Bertrand Russell, the atheist, the advocate of free love, the exponent of anarchy who was the guest at the State University of Indiana; Doctor William E. Leonard, the professor of English at the University of Wisconsin whom he nominated as the defender of the virtue of fornication.

Finally he defended the Catholic Church from the charge of being the servant of capitalists to the extent that in conscience this organization could not remain silent when confronted with industrial abuses.

This series of discourses relative to communism concluded on Sunday, March 9, 1930. As a result, two definite objects had been accomplished. First, the testimony of hundreds of thousands of letters was sufficient proof that without any aid from the daily press, which up to this time had been singularly innocent of even mentioning at any length the dangers of communism or its progress in our own country, Father Coughlin had aroused the American people to the imminent danger which this new radicalism was creating.

Second, it became evident to him that he was challenged by the idle laborer, by the over-taxed land-owner, by the machine slave and by the victim of speculators. He knew that the climax of the industrial age had been attained. He believed that there was a corner around which dwelt not prosperity but ruin, unless the abuses of the day were summarily eliminated. Communism was not the way out because it was an irrational protest, a fester of negatives bent upon eliminating not only the abuses of the day but also intent upon destroying the last vestige of civilization.

Nor was modern capitalism the way out. While its exponents pretended to practice Christ's principles in their private lives; while they built churches and orphanages with their superfluous funds; while they surrounded their homes and their families with the halo of Christian respectability, nevertheless they kept Christ ostracized from their offices, banished from their factories and excluded from their banking houses.

Modern capitalism had fallen into the error of excess at least on one certain point of Christian philosophy. Communism had chosen to follow the path of its defect. Modern capitalism over-emphasized the right to private property to such an extent that its practitioners believed that such a right endowed the possessor

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with unlimited use. Communism denied the right to private property in its totality. Both capitalism and communism as exemplified in the world of 1930 were determined to keep Christ out of government, out of business, out of industry—the one, openly; the other, surreptitiously.

To restore Christ's policy and the practice of Christian philosophy was the program which Father Coughlin deemed as necessary for him to follow.

Here, then, in the broadcasting year 1929–1930, Father Coughlin was serving notice of a future program which, when carried out, was destined to influence industrial and financial America in 1933.

In the conquest of the air, the discourse on "Communism" had revealed how dangerous was the condition of America. The moral, economic doctrines of 1930 and 1931 are presented in the following chapter.

*The Moral Economics of 1930-1931*

IN VENTURING upon this subject of labor and its relative questions of wages and unemployment, I am not forgetful that the path of my pilgrimage is both treacherous and narrow. On the one side there are the quicksands of idealism, of radical socialism, in whose depths there are buried both the dreams of the poet and the ravings of the revolutionist. On the pathway's other side there are the smiling acres of Lotus Land, where it is always afternoon, always springtime, always inactivity. It is peopled by those who are dulled by the opiate of their own contentedness to such a degree that they possess no prospect of what the future years hold in store for our nation.

"Thus, at the outset, I believe it is only proper both to myself and to the Golden Flower of the Little Flower to certify my position with the promise that I shall avoid faithfully the treacherous sands of socialism, while still refusing to be detained by the siren voice of those whose senses are numbed to the significance of our labor problem.

"That there is a chronic problem of unemployment to be settled is universally admitted. In one sense it is a world problem. But in a more particular sense it is a problem for Americans, who eventually will not be swayed either by false prophets or by purchased propaganda.

"Aware, therefore, that I am addressing these remarks to an intelligent people, to a people who are endowed with the innate courage both of confronting enemies from without and of meeting face to face the exigencies which arise from within, I esteem it a high privilege both as an American and as a Catholic priest to approach this vexed question absolutely independent of the entanglements of politics. It is not a political question in the sense that it is partisan, that it is Democratic or Republican. It is

an American question, God's question, which transcends the platforms of all political parties. . . .

"We who have builded cities where formerly forests stood; we who have transformed a wilderness within the short space of one hundred fifty years into a teeming nation of activity and industry must tear this pall of depression from our vision; must turn our eyes toward the east, where the new sun of prosperity is arising; must slay this modern monster of unemployment and discontent. If we ourselves do not accomplish this constitutionally, then there is the possible danger of either the socialist or the communist doing it for us unconstitutionally."

In language such as this, the broadcasting season of 1930-1931 was launched into the depths of the moral-economic problems, the solution of which was absolutely necessary before our civilization could be saved. Until this date, November 16, 1930, no great public utterance had been made over the radio, and no public campaign had been attempted in the press containing an analysis of the labor question as well as an unbiased criticism and remedy for the abuses relative to it.

Clerics in their pulpits, professors in their lecture halls, politicians in their pre-election speeches, and, above all, socialists in their meetings had touched upon the immoralities consequent to the development of machinery. But none of them except the socialist had dared to call before the bar of public opinion or to weigh in the scales of distributive justice the fundamentals associated with this new kind of slavery. Too often the cleric addressed his audience while he kept his weather-eye cocked upon the stuffed shirts and the collection basket. Sincerity was generally omitted from the politician's discourse, which was aimed at the double target of vote-catching and of newspaper patronage. The professor, as usual, forgot to arrange his tie and, therefore, was incompetent, unsound and a subject for burlesque.

Meanwhile, labor conditions degenerated from the ditch into the sewer. Unemployment increased almost in the same ratio as production increased. Wealth became concentrated in the hands of a few while poverty was noticeably spreading itself over the mass of American people.

To popularize these facts substantiated with factual proof was to venture into the realms of radicalism. To enunciate them from

a Christian pulpit was tantamount to forfeiting one's standing for orthodoxy.

For the first time in the history of American morals, politics or industrialism this risk was taken when Father Coughlin announced:

"Our factories have in the past ten years produced 42 percent more merchandise with 500,000 fewer factory workers than they did in the ten previous years. Railroads have handled 7 percent more business with an operating force reduced by more than 250,000 workmen. The coal miners increased their tonnage 23 percent, while there were approximately 100,000 fewer miners employed."

These were facts supplied by Mr. William Green, the president of the American Federation of Labor—facts corroborated in conclusions arrived at by the Federal Bureau of Statistics.

On this date, November 16, 1930, Father Coughlin enunciated a policy which demanded recognition. It was scoffed at, ridiculed and rejected on that day. But in the month of May, 1933,—three years later—when President Roosevelt determined that the Federal Government planned to become a regulatory partner in the industry of America, the radio priest was vindicated for having said:

"If the individual has the inalienable right to preserve his life, if individual citizens who are social beings must live under the just laws and regulations of a State which they themselves have formed, and which exists for the majority and not for the few, then in turn that State's government must provide labor in order that these citizens may live.

"There is no one who dares assert that any factory or mill or mine may run as it please without just supervision by the State officials, whose first care is the lives and the continuance of the lives of its citizens. This is the logical conclusion if you admit that a government exists of the people, by the people and for the people.

"Now, by no means does this government supervision imply that the State shall own either factory or mill or farm or mine. By no means does this logic lead us from the pathway of reason into the quicksands of socialism. It does imply, however, that both human rights and State rights, which latter, after all, are

only an amplification of the former, shall take precedence over industrial rights and commercial rights greedily guarded by the few."

In this discourse Father Coughlin quoted from the New Testament, as found in St. Matthew, Chapter XX, verses I to XVI, the Christian principle of a just and living wage:

"The Kingdom of Heaven is like to an householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And, having agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And, going out about the third hour, he saw others standing in the market place idle. And he said to them: Go you also into my vineyard, and I will give you what shall be just. And they went their way. And again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did in like manner. But about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing, and he saith to them: Why stand you here all the day idle? They say to him: Because no man hath hired us. He saith to them: Go you also into my vineyard. And when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith to his steward: Call the laborers and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even to the first. When, therefore, they were come that came about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first also came they thought they should receive more, and they also received every man a penny. And receiving it, they murmured against the master of the house, saying: These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them equal to us that have borne the burden of the day and the heats. But he, answering, said to one of them: Friend, I do thee no wrong. Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what is thine, and go thy way; I will also give to this last even as to thee. Or, is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good?"

"Here, my friends, we find the basis for the expression, 'a just and living wage.' To those who would bear the heat and burden of the day there was given a just wage. To those others who joined in the work of the vineyard at the third and sixth and the other hours there was bestowed not only a just wage for the meager time of their labor, but also a living wage. Through no fault of those who were hired latterly, because they said: 'There was no man to hire us,' were they deprived from working.

"Because they are citizens, because they are human beings who have a right to earn their livelihood, that livelihood must be extended to them, if the master of the vineyard or the government of the country fails to supply them with constant work.

"Someone is liable to interpose and say that such a policy is idealistic and impractical. Yes; impractical to such a corporation as I have in mind, whose profits during the past ten years amounted to practically \$1,500,000,000. But let that corporation bear in mind that the most practical Person Who ever graced our earth was Jesus Christ; that He possessed more wisdom and understanding and solicitude for the human race and for the citizens of a nation than did all the Solomons of history."

This doctrine was not pleasant to the ears of the Bourbons of capitalism. Day by day the hostile ranks of those opposed to the priest who dared preach such practical Christianity began to increase. Wealthy but ignorant Catholics began to besiege His Excellency, Right Reverend Michael James Gallagher, to extinguish the Royal Oak firebrand. The representative of a mighty industrialist issued a veiled threat to the effect that his Catholic employees would be discharged unless Father Coughlin were muzzled. But silence was neither purchasable nor obtainable. On the following Sundays of November 23 and November 30, 1930, the exposition of mass-productionism and the unholy concentration of wealth in the hands of a few was continued.

Introducing his discourse "Where Money is King," Father Coughlin quoted Leo XIII, who said: "A small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke that is little better than slavery."

To specify and to corroborate the generic statement made by His Holiness, the Head of the Catholic Church, indisputable reference was made to individual industries which were notorious for their slave wages. Paralleling this statement, there came the roll call of the American millionaires. Said he:

"Arthur Brisbane, one of America's leading newspaper writers and himself a reputed millionaire, tells us that there are three men in the United States whose wealth has been estimated at \$5,000,000,000. We have many other millionaires rated at \$100,000,000, \$200,000,000 and \$300,000,000. Twenty-five years ago, before the birth of mass-production, we had only about 1,000 millionaires. Twenty-five years ago the largest fortune was estimated at \$250,000,000. Today we have two fortunes rated at eight times that amount; two more at four times that amount, and hundreds at and around the \$250,000,000 mark. It does not require very

much knowledge of arithmetic to ascertain that the 40,000 millionaires have a total approximation of combined wealth of \$160,000,000,000 provided their average wealth is \$4,000,000 each.

"Here we have one-thirty-third of one percent of the population owning one-half of the total wealth of the country. These few control wealth in such a way that approximately eighteen billion dollars of the money made partially by the sweat of the American laborer has been loaned to foreign countries during the past few years. The savings deposits of our banks in this year of poverty and depression have swelled to abnormal heights, while millions of citizens do not know how they will buy their next ton of coal."

Once more the Christian principle which the modern capitalist refuses to adopt was boldly enunciated in the following words:

"When the communist is confronted with these facts, he runs to the bible of Karl Marx to discover a solution. 'Nationalize it! Confiscate it! Let the State be the manufacturer and the mass-productionist! Let the government become the capitalist! Let us wipe out the Seventh Commandment, *Thou shalt not steal*, and every other Commandment, because there is no God, there is no morality.'

"But thanks be to God, we Americans have not become communistic. Our Constitution was founded upon Christian principles which we can apply to rectify any error which insinuates itself into our social life.

"Before proceeding further, let me restate the Catholic, Christian principle of the right to private ownership as opposed to the communistic and extreme socialistic principle which militates against that right. This money, referred to above, and these fortunes, for the most part, were made absolutely in accordance with the laws which regulate our government. For the most part, according to the justice of our courts, they were honestly acquired.

"In the lustiness of our youth and in the haste of our development we have forgotten one of the basic principles of Christian ethics. Do not tell me that an owner can do as he pleases with his private property. Do not plead ignorance of the law of Eminent Domain or the sundry laws which bind together citizens. They are all expressed in the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, who

said, centuries before Karl Marx was heard of: 'The temporal goods which God permits to a man are his in regard to property. But in regard to use they are not his alone, but others also who can be sustained by what is superfluous for him. If the individual owner neglects his social responsibilities, it is the duty of the State to enforce their observance.'

"It is this thought which is at the basis of our system of taxation to which every government subscribes. It is the same thought intimated by a prominent Detroit paper in a recent editorial, which raises the question concerning the morality of those Americans who made their money by the sweat of the brows of American laborers and then expend tremendous portions of it in foreign countries to build up competitors in the industrial market against their fellow citizens whose only livelihood can be gained by labor.

"Private ownership of private fortunes does not argue their unrestrained, uncurtailed and unlimited private use. Or, to put it in a way that the humblest in this audience can understand: By the fact that I own an automobile, it does not argue that I may drive on the wrong side of the street or park the car on your front lawn. St. Thomas was absolutely correct, as was Leo XIII in his letter on labor conditions, when the one says and the other intimates that God has guaranteed the right to private ownership; but in regard to use, they are not the owners alone.

In other words, my friends, it is the sacred duty of our government to define limitations both of profit and of use so that no capitalist shall perpetuate such modern conditions as referred to in the textile industry, where abnormal profits are made by subnormal wages, or in the banking industry, where he uses his money against the best interests of his fellow citizens. It will not be long before the wholesale, uncurtailed and untaxed exportation of money for foreign investments in competitive industries shall be considered detrimental to the American laborer, who represents 98 percent of our population. Our country shall not become inhabited by a few thousand Indian princes, descendants of King Midas and followers of King James, to whom are subjugated the mass of the population.

"The heresy of the Divine Right of Kings and the divine subjugation of the population must not persist in a nation where human rights take precedence over property rights; in a nation

whose government is 'of the people, by the people and for the people.' ”

Here was the first time in the history of modern capitalism that the Christian doctrine of stewardship was brought home forcibly to an audience that was estimated by the Columbia Broadcasting System at thirty million listeners. A voice was raised against what Leo XIII had termed “rapacious usury, which, although more than once condemned by the Church, nevertheless, is present under a different guise, perpetuating the old injustice, and still practiced by covetous and grasping men,”—a prophetic voice, which, on Sunday, November 30, 1930,—almost two years before his election to the Presidency—boldly stated: “Another Roosevelt shall have the courage to uncloak the hypocritical human factors that have debased our system—men who have manipulated it to benefit the apostles of privilege at the expense of the public good.”

No one conversant with the evolution of American morals, or with the genesis of the “new deal,” which was still in a conceptive stage, can fail to recognize that the doctrines of Christ as generalized by Leo and by Pius and as spoken in the vernacular by Father Coughlin were receiving their first baptism of publicity in the hearts of millions of Americans. Here appeared a new champion whose radicalism was the radicalism of Christ and whose weapons were the sword of knowledge and the lash of rhetoric. He was advocating a peaceful, justifiable revolution. He was questioning the democracy of the plutocrat. He was castigating the tyranny of the industrialist. He was crucifying the leadership of a nation which had chosen the Barabbas of greed, having flouted the charity and justice of Christ. No wonder at the very outset of this conflict he exclaimed:

“During this past century a colossal change has transpired in industry. The laborer is fast ceasing to be the laborer. I mean that since the XIXth century machines are beginning to do the work which was formerly accomplished by hand and by muscle. We have electric welding machines. There are great presses which stamp out hundreds and thousands of automobile parts in a single day. There are machines for lacquers. Our ditches are dug no longer with spades but by the iron claws of the mechanical hoe. In other words, the machine is becoming the laborer. The laborer

is becoming the wet nurse of the machine with the duty to turn a switch here, to release a lever there.

“Associate with this thought just expressed the fact that we have practically one million students in colleges and universities of the United States; in our high schools there are more than two and one-half million students. In five states of the Union it is compulsory for every boy and girl to attend school until the age of fourteen has been attained. Three other states have fifteen years as the minimum. Thirty states have sixteen years; five states have seventeen years and five more states have eighteen years of age as the minimum for school attendance.

“Do you not see the vicious circle in which we are running? We are compelling the youth of the country to acquire an education with which they will be dissatisfied to become the wet nurses of machines . . . Today, as the laborer stands in the hall of Pontius Pilate, his brow crowned with the thorns of worry, his body bruised with the stripes of misfortune and usury, and his hands tied by the manacles of disorganization, neither you nor I dare find too much fault with him. He is more sinned against than sinning!

“Let certain high priests of industry and finance whisper to Pilate that if he meddles with their victim, then he is no friend of Caesar. But despite their intrigue, I have faith that the history of the original Pilate’s hall shall not be re-enacted. Safely and constitutionally we shall meet these problems and, please God, we shall conquer them.”

Unquestionably the pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower had already gone far beyond the precincts of propriety. He had preached the doctrine of honest wages, of the decentralization of wealth, of anti-capitalism, which was soon termed “inflammatory.”

No one had ever castigated a Secretary of the Treasury as had this man, who, in his public broadcast on November 30, 1930, when, speaking in defense of the disparaged American war veteran, he identified Andrew Mellon with the original Judas Iscariot—the same Andrew Mellon who found millions and billions of dollars to pay off the war profiteers and not a penny with which to arrange for the pre-payment of the so-called soldiers’ bonus. These soldiers were languishing in idleness and their children were suffering from the pangs of poverty.

Thus, in eulogizing the veteran, Father Coughlin said:

“Have we forgotten that it was to a soldier, a Roman centurion, to whom it was said: ‘Such faith have I not found, no, not in Israel?’ Have we forgotten that on that lonely hill outside Jerusalem it was the captain of the guard who looked up and said: ‘Indeed this Man was the Son of God’? Have we forgotten that it was Cornelius, the Roman centurion, a soldier in the armies of imperial Rome, who was the instrument used to teach even Peter the truth as to what was clean and unclean?

“It was not a soldier who betrayed the Man of Galilee, but as usual, the Keeper of the Silver. History is repeating itself!”

This last was too much for the billionaire Secretary of the Treasury to stomach. Certainly repercussions must follow such plain speech.

## *The Turning Point*



ON JANUARY 3, 1931, the turning point in Father Coughlin's career was reached under circumstances so peculiar as to warrant the recording of the story for the first time. The author is relying for the following facts not only upon his memory, on which were impressed the following incidents almost immediately as they were translated into action, but also upon the records of the Radio League of the Little Flower which are still extant. The story runneth thus:

Over a considerable length of time, the Honorable Louis McFadden, Congressman from Pennsylvania, had been studying the Treaty of Versailles. The events which led to its being signed, the psychology which motivated the signatories, the racial background which influenced it, the morals of the men who assisted in drawing it up, its purpose and intent, its inevitable results—these were angles of a study which had marked Mr. McFadden as, perhaps, the outstanding authority on the legal, historical and economic characteristics of the Treaty of Versailles.

In a spirit of friendliness and of mutual admiration, the Congressman had revealed his findings to Father Coughlin with clear and uncontrovertible proofs. By the sheer force of logic it was apparent that neither Europe nor America could be extricated from the depression into which they were digging themselves unless this immoral Treaty were revised.

Convinced that a plain exposition of the facts related to the Treaty of Versailles would be of material assistance in unravelling the tangled skein of national and international difficulties; convinced that the mal-practices of industrialism and of financialism could not be rectified before the injustice generated by the Treaty of Versailles was removed, Father Coughlin began to prepare a discourse to be delivered on January 4, 1931, touching intimately upon this subject.

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The priest was in the habit of verifying the statistics supplied him by those who tendered him information. Thus, on January 1, 1931, in a telephone conversation with Mr. McFadden, it is recorded that Father Coughlin arranged an additional telephone appointment for Saturday morning, January 3, for the purpose of making a final check.

In the meantime, his discourse had been prepared for the following Sunday. On the scheduled Saturday morning, just a little before midday, Father's secretary long-distanced Washington at National 3120 where she was accustomed to contact Mr. McFadden.

After an unusual delay, the telephone connections were completed, the number was confirmed and Congressman Louis McFadden was requested to come to the phone.

Then came the question: "Who wishes to speak to Mr. McFadden?" The reply: "Father Coughlin."

After another delay, a voice came over the wire from Washington saying: "This is the White House speaking."

Father's secretary repeated her request to speak to the Congressman. Then a man purporting to be Mr. McFadden identified himself.

The secretary from the Radio League of the Little Flower read certain excerpts from Father's prepared discourse and asked if the figures and facts as read were correct.

The answer from the gentleman, whom the secretary presumed to be Mr. McFadden, was in the affirmative.

Now until that moment, no one but Father Coughlin and his four personal secretaries could have known the content of the Sunday's discourse, which had been prepared in privacy.

Strange events began to happen. That Saturday afternoon Mr. McFadden telephoned to Father Coughlin. In the course of his conversation he simply asked if Father was prepared for the next day. Having been reassured, the Congressman began to speak of matters wholly foreign to the discourse.

At Saturday midnight, while Father was practicing the timing of his discourse in the presence of his assistants at the Shrine, a Mr. Klauber of the Columbia Broadcasting Company long-distanced the Shrine from New York City. This gentleman had a message to deliver. He wished to register with the radio priest the fact

that many complaints had been received by his broadcasting system because of the "inflammatory" remarks that had been made in previous discourses. He then added the request that Father Coughlin, having re-read his proposed broadcast for Sunday, should delete those things which anyone might regard as objectionable.

Quick as a flash, Father Coughlin assured Mr. Klauber that, not preferring to omit any portion of the discourse, he would speak on a topic totally foreign to the discourse which he had prepared.

This midnight telephone conversation was troublesome. Questions began to multiply. Why did an official of the Columbia Broadcasting System, long after office hours, wish to communicate with Royal Oak at midnight?

Why did Mr. McFadden telephone Saturday afternoon?

To satisfy his curiosity, Father Coughlin immediately contacted Mr. McFadden; questioned him about the Saturday morning telephone conversation with his secretary; discovered that none had taken place—and then remembered that it was possible for someone else in Washington to communicate with the Columbia Broadcasting System even after office hours.

It was certain that someone in Washington other than McFadden had learned of the prepared discourse on "Prosperity." This was through the instrumentality of the tapped wire. What instigated the Columbia Broadcasting System to put pressure upon Father Coughlin late Saturday night when normal communication could be had with Father during business hours?

Who in this nation wanted to silence the truth? Who used the name of the White House in intercepting a telephone call? Who was evidently waiting for a call from Father to Mr. Louis McFadden? The radio pastor stepped before the microphone Sunday afternoon to establish once and for all the freedom of speech over the radio. He spoke to America. He told of his unpreachable discourse. The nation answered. That day was the turning point in the career of the Golden Hour broadcast! From that day on Father was free to speak!

Long years before this incident, the Fathers of our Country established in the Constitution of the United States the Second Amendment providing for freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

In 1825, Judge Parker of Massachusetts, in his decision in the case "Commonwealth versus Blanding," wrote these words concerning the amendment: "It is well understood that it was included to prevent all such previous restraints of publication as had been practiced by other governments, and in early times here, to stifle the efforts of patriots toward enlightening their fellow subjects upon the rights and duties of rulers."

This was the language borrowed by the United States Supreme Court in the case of Patterson versus Colorado. (See Hutchison, "Foundations of the Constitution," pages 289-90.) What greater work could be done for radio than to re-establish the right to speak freely and not to permit one, no matter how high in government, "to stifle the efforts of patriots toward enlightening their fellow citizens."

Thus, on January 4, 1931, before the court of public opinion, more than 1,250,000 Americans made the law of the radio in the greatest single flood of letters ever sent in protest to radio stations. The wire-tapper's plan had not succeeded, nor had the information received through theft brought benefit except to the American public at large.

On the following Sunday at the scheduled hour, the discourse entitled "Prosperity," dealing with the immoral Treaty of Versailles, was pronounced over the radio. On that day Father Coughlin became a central figure on the stage of American political economy.

Throughout this broadcasting year, Father Coughlin continued to excoriate injustice as well as to indicate clearly the reforms which were required. During that same month of January he pointed out that the American people were afflicted with two kinds of radicalism. The first type dealt with distorted truths. The second type refused to admit truth, preferring to keep it muzzled. The former exaggerated. The latter exculpated. Perhaps the reader can almost recollect the earnestness and fervor of that voice which said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, as we listen to the siren song which floats to our ears from the pulpits of capitalism, we begin to wonder whether or not there is a depression. We are lulled into the belief that the evils of mass-production, of stock gambling, of unemployment, of starvation, of discontent are nothing more

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than wicked concoctions devised by diseased minds and propagated by rebellious voices of soap-box orators. Attune your ears long enough, and you will be persuaded that our economic evils have been foisted upon us by the witchery of some preternatural agency over which good government has no control.

“However, this melody has become stale. The forcefulness of its propaganda has become distasteful to the common ear of our great Republic. Today, the overwhelming majority of the American people regard as the real radical the man who is tampering with the truth as he finds it. The thoughtful American is convinced that the most dangerous communist is the wolf in the sheep’s clothing of conservatism who is bent upon preserving the policies of greed, of oppression and of Christlessness.

“No Catholic pulpit is opposed to the capitalist nor to capitalism any more than it is hostile to the multitude of people upon whom Christ long since has had compassion. Yet on the other hand, no Catholic pulpit is afraid to remind those modern descendants of Annas and Caiphas of the hypocrisy which Christ once attached to the Pharisees of old.”

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“I wonder, if the story of Bethlehem, of Nazareth, and of Calvary had been postponed to our present day; I wonder, if in this year of 1931 the Divine Master had just kissed His Blessed Mother farewell and had betaken Himself to the desert before entering upon His public life, what would be His reaction to our conditions? Supposing it were our privilege both to be His companion in the wilderness and to accompany Him as He traveled throughout the Palestine of America, what would be our observations? As the Scriptures tell us, we would discover that He ‘began to do and then to teach.’

“As we watch Him kneeling in prayer, thin, hungry and emaciated after His long fast, we know that His mind is reverently thinking of Bethlehem and of Nazareth and of us. He remembers how He was born in the cradle of the laboring class. He is not forgetful of their struggle for life, their hardships and their temptations.

“Thus we envision Him as a young man setting forth upon His life’s work. We see Him carried by the Tempter to some snow-capped peak of our Rocky Mountains. In panoramic view,

there is unfolded before His eyes the virgin mines of gold and silver, the flowing fields of ripening grain, the bubbling wastes of precious oil. But none of these must deter Him from His mission of peace to a distracted world. Shall He be king of these? Or does His mission call Him elsewhere?

“Of a sudden He is transported to another scene. Picture Him as He gazes from the observation tower of the Chrysler Building. Pile on pile, there are gleaming temples of finance! In the distance the incense of smoke rises, curling to the skies from the chimneys of industry. Beyond the Statue of Liberty great ships melt into the horizon as they carry their cargoes of commerce and wealth across the distant seas. Shall He smile and consent as the Tempter’s hand proffers Him the sceptre of power; as the lying voice bids Him to cast Himself down upon the pavements of Lexington Avenue? Down, down from the ideals which He came into this world to establish!

“O, no! As in a mirage He glances into the windows of the sweat shops of the textile industry where men and girls are laboring forty-eight hours a week for sixteen pitiless dollars. His cheeks grow wet with tears as He beholds the millions of His brothers, some of them working two or three days a week, others of them marshalled into the ever growing army of the unemployed as, sounding their requiem on the sidewalks of our city streets, they march on and on into the valley of despair. The mists gather before Him as the ancient chorus of lamentation rises louder and louder. He is determined, though He be God, not to break the bruised reed of His flock; for they have been sheep without a shepherd. Not for all the wealth and the commerce of this world will He forsake them. It is His mission to be the Good Shepherd!

“Thus He mingles with the throngs of the mighty city, flesh of His flesh! He is determined that the blind shall see; the deaf shall hear; that bread shall be fed to the hungry. His doctrine of brotherhood shall be preached both to prince and to peasant. The poor shall have the gospel preached to them, for sin and injustice must be driven from the face of America.

“I am sure, my friends, that if this were the first year of Christ’s public ministry, you would find Him either in Central Park, New York City, or in Grant Park, Chicago, preaching His doctrines of the immortality of the soul, of the kingdom of heaven. Not one

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teaching which He enunciated nineteen hundred years ago would He omit. Not one promise would He forget. In vibrant, manly voice, knowing full well what it would cost Him, He would repeat the words:

“ ‘Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour the houses of widows, praying long prayers. Woe to you scribes and Pharisees whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but he that shall swear by the precious gold of the temple is a debtor. Ye foolish and blind; for whether is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites who have left the weightier things of the law. You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell? Therefore I send to you prophets and wise men; and some of them you will put to death and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city; that upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth. Amen I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation.’ ”

Here there was no groping. Here the American people found a man who was sure of himself because he was sure of his doctrine. His religion was anchored not to Christ the Corpse, but to Christ the Risen Lord Who dwelt with us, Who lived for us and Whose doctrines will not be silenced.

## [ CHAPTER THIRTEEN ]

### *Prohibition*

**W**HEN the broadcasting season of 1930 and 1931 had been concluded, the voice of Father Coughlin was recognized nationally. The plain, unvarnished, factual statements which he broadcast to a people who had been accustomed to listen to airy platitudes not only won for him the distinction of being the most popular broadcaster on the airways, it won for him a teaching leadership when teaching was most needed.

Modern capitalism had run its course. Its philosophy of exploitation, of production for profit, of concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, of industrial slavery, was on the verge of a collapse. Nevertheless, its devotees wedded to its tenets were imbued with the idea that the collapse could be averted by palliative measures. Such phrases as cyclic depressions were printed in newspapers, and were pronounced by its chief apostles who looked forward to the restoration of the system.

They were men who were ignorant of the trend of history. They had forgotten that the great economic abuses of the past had consecutively met their Waterloos. They were blind to the fact that physical slavery had passed with the revolution of Christianity; that agricultural slavery departed with feudalism; that political slavery vanished with the French Revolution. That industrial and financial slavery were destined to meet the same ending was beyond the scope of their warped minds.

To achieve their purpose in perpetuating the abuses of this modern capitalism it was determined to divert the attention of the American people from the real issues of the day by engaging their attention in matters irrelevant. The great smoke screen which they employed was prohibition. Behind it the real issues of the day were hidden. Pulpit, press and public rostrum debated on beer instead of bread. It was of little significance to the rubber stamp "yes men" of Washington whether or not there were

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10,000 or 10,000,000 bootleggers bent upon pillage as they plied their trade of murder and ruthless racketeering in every city and hamlet of America. No price was too great so long as the minds of the citizens were dulled by the insane propaganda and dime-novel deviltry connected with prohibition.

It was Father Coughlin who first termed prohibition a smoke screen. It was this priest, who, risking his reputation with many churchmen and religious adherents, set forth to remove the smoke screen so that his audience could then better ascertain the true outline of the twins of industry and finance whose feet were trampling out the fruits of civilization. Thus, on October 25, on November 8, and November 13, 1931, he spoke at length on the immorality of a policy which, like communism, endeavored to cure abuses by destroying in substance the ship to which these abuses clung like barnacles. I believe he once remarked that both the communist and the prohibitionist, if logical, would attempt to cure a headache by decapitating that member from the body.

In his first lecture the priest was careful to distinguish the word "prohibition" from the kindred words "abstinence" and "temperance."

"The word 'abstinence'," said he, "means the total abstaining from alcoholic beverages through the free will of the individual. The word 'temperance' signifies the moderate use of alcoholic beverages at the discretion of the individual. While the word 'prohibition' signifies the total abstinence from alcoholic beverages through the force of an outside party and not through the free will of an individual."

He was diplomatic enough to use the Scriptures—even the King James version—to fortify his arguments as proof that wine drinking was no form of immorality.

Said he: "I invite both Protestant and even Catholic to turn to the King James version by which the proponents of prohibition clumsily bolster up their religious arguments. Open the Bible at the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to St. Matthew, chapter eleven, verses seventeen, eighteen and nineteen. There we read that 'John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say he hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say: Behold a Man gluttonous and a wine bibber.'

"Or again turn in the same Bible to the Gospel of Christ ac-

cording to St. Luke, chapter seven, verses thirty-three and thirty-four, and you have practically the identical words quoted above. Jesus Christ is accused of drinking wine. He is accused of being a wine-bibber. This is what the Good Soldier, Jesus Christ, Himself says about the accusations made about Him by the Clarence True Wilsons of nineteen hundred years ago, simply because He drank wine temperately.

“As a matter of truth, Jesus Christ was a wine drinker. As a matter of truth, at Cana of Galilee He changed water into wine. This was the first of His miracles; a miracle performed only after the men had well imbibed of all the wine at the banquet. In fact the steward of the feast, as your Bible tells you, went on to remark: ‘Every man at first setteth forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse. But thou has kept the good wine until now.’

“In other words the steward could have said: ‘The best wine is served to men at the outset of a banquet. But after they are somewhat joyous and in their cups because of the effects of the good wine, then there is served an inferior grade.’

“Or turn to the story of the Last Supper. Here we behold Christ taking into His hands a chalice of wine and pronouncing over it the words: ‘This is the blood of the New and Eternal Testament.’ In the face of these facts, who dare impute to Christ the preaching or the practising of total abstinence by necessity of law? Christ stood for temperance.

“True enough, John the Baptist did practice total abstinence through his own free will. But Christ, envisioning the men and women of every age, of every nation, of every walk in life, chose to set an example which all could follow. He chose to drink wine in the house of Nicodemus. He went on record by performing His first miracle to produce wine at Cana of Galilee. At the tragic hour when the nails of the cross over-shadowed Him, it was wine which He chose when He established the highest and the greatest of the sacraments.

“Christ’s example is good enough for me and for every other Christian. He does not force the example followed by John the Baptist on any of us. He is not a prohibitionist. Behold our Christ! If He were living today He would be called by some men a friend of publicans and sinners as you read in Matthew eleven and Luke

seven. The proponents of prohibition would call Him, in modern parlance, a friend of the speak-easies and an associate of the bootleggers!

“The bride’s home at Cana would be termed a blind pig, although in this house and because of this miracle, the Scriptures tell us: ‘His disciples began to believe in Him.’ In other words, the first inklings of Christian faith that came into the world were associated with the wine which Wayne Wheeler and his confederates have condemned.

“If Jesus Christ today should appear at a public marriage and turn water into wine as He did nineteen hundred years ago, what would happen? He would be seized on the one arm by Bishop James Cannon, Jr., now under indictment for violation of the corrupt practices act, and on the other by the voluble and intolerant Clarence True Wilson; thrown into jail with murderers and criminals because of an act of Congress which violates the principles of the Christian religion, scorns the teachings of God and of Jesus Christ, and sneers at the traditions of our Republic.”

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Father Coughlin was fighting for a principle. If it were possible, he was determined to ostracize the very mention of prohibition from the pulpits of the land and thereby lead the ministers of religion into discussing the more pertinent questions of the day. Christ’s philosophy of “Give us this day our daily bread” was disregarded while a tentative paganism was being defended.

Paganism? Read the indictment which must have shocked millions of listeners as they tuned into the discourse of October 25.

“Prohibition is identified with a Persian philosopher by the name of Manes. This dreamer believed that he was appointed by Almighty God to become the moral leader of the world. He regarded all things material as essentially bad. He specifically condemned wine and women. I suppose the poor fellow did not know how to sing and consequently left song out of his litany of condemnation.

“By the way, St. Augustine says of this would-be philosopher, Manes, and his followers that ‘despite the boast of their lips, their hearts were void of truth.’ A criticism that might be applied to those who have followed in his footsteps; to those like him, who applaud themselves as the moral leaders of America.

"However, we are still back in the third century of Christianity. The authorities of the Church meet in solemn council to deal with this man who preached that wine is essentially evil. Their answer to him is to legislate that everybody receiving the Blessed Sacrament, or Holy Communion as many call it, must receive it under the form both of bread and of wine so to disprove the sophistry of this father of prohibition.

"Here, then, is the beginning of the American prohibition question. But the modern followers of Manes are somewhat lax. If they strictly adhered to this anti-Christian of the third century, they would set about unsexing every woman in the land as well as prohibiting wine.

"The next step in the history of prohibition is identified with the year 620 A.D. and with the great prophet, Mohammed. This Mohammed adopted the Manichæian principles. He condemned wine as essentially evil. He legislated that women were nothing more than toys for men. He incorporated these doctrines in his Koran, or Mohammedan bible. Then, abandoning all laws of God, disregarding truth and life, he enforced this unchristian belief regarding the evil of wine and women with a bloody scimitar.

"The above facts are cited to clarify the question: 'Where did prohibitionists derive their doctrine?' The answer is: 'Not from Christ, not from the Bible, but from the man condemned by the authorities of the early Church, Manes, by name, and from his able follower, Mohammed of the bloody sword.'

"Regarding these facts, although I respect your opinion and your convictions, I defy you, if you are lovers of truth and of history, to disprove them. Facts and not vituperation; truth and not bigotry! Let these be our guiding star in this discussion."

To forestall any specious argument that the wine referred to in the Bible or even the wine that was condemned by Mohammed was of the unfermented type, thus he spoke:

"Someone is liable to entertain the unscientific thought that in biblical days there was so such thing as fermented wine. May I remind you that Louis Pasteur had not yet invented his system of preventing fermentation. Mr. Welch, of grape juice fame, had not yet come upon the scene to perfect Pasteur's method. In the Holy Land, baked by the hot sun, refrigeration was practically unknown. Nothing else but fermented wine was used.

"To substantiate that statement may I refer you to an incident in the New Testament.

"It is related that Christ advised against putting new wine in old bottles because, due to fermentation, the new wine would burst the old skins which already had been stretched to their limit. By the way, for bottles they used skins.

"While referring to biblical passages, the thought comes to me that some one will interpose the text quoted by Bethsebe of Old Testament fame. She said: 'Give not wine to princes.' And to be assured that in the Old Testament wine was not prohibited, open your Bibles and read this passage of Bethsebe in full. In this same context she says: 'Give strong drink to those who are sorrowing and wine to those who are sad, that they may forget their troubles and remember their sorrows no more.'

"Oh, I fear that Welch's grape juice could never produce this effect!"

Facts, facts, undeniable facts. At one time Father Coughlin quoted extensively from the Wickersham Committee to defend his thesis. There was the multiplication of saloons in a country that was supposed to be saloonless. There was a deluge of alley-gin submerging the youth of America. He pictured how prisons were filled to overflowing, how crime had increased and how prohibition had succeeded in multiplying drunkards—all with facts assembled from Government sources, the same Government which was endeavoring to uphold prohibition.

Naturally, such pronouncements did not go unchallenged. Not only did he receive a multitude of protesting letters, the radio stations themselves became targets of veiled attacks against Father Coughlin.

Doctor Clarence True Wilson, D.D., LL.D., executive secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals, intimated that Father Coughlin intended to injure Protestant organizations and to arouse prejudice and ill-feeling against them, after the priest had quoted an excerpt from the *Kansas City Journal-Post*, in which the Reverend Doctor had referred to the American ex-soldier as a "perjured scoundrel, who ought not to represent the decency of the flag under which he fought."

Doctor Wilson denied categorically ever having made such a

statement in these words: "The statements attributed are false in their entirety."

Here, then, Father Coughlin's veracity was called into question. Here there was absolute necessity either of bowing to Doctor Clarence True Wilson and to every defender of prohibition or else prove what he had said.

That he rose to the occasion in the most masterly defense ever briefed by a radio orator in public debate is evidenced by the lecture delivered on December 13, which is reproduced herewith in full.

"In last Sunday's discourse, plain governmental and official facts regarding prohibition were cited from the findings of the so-called Wickersham Committee. This group of eminent Americans was selected by President Hoover to ascertain among other things the merits or demerits of the prohibition enforcement.

"Their findings are officially accurate. Only a person careless of truth and of authority would dare impugn the conclusions of the Wickersham Committee or would be so vain as to set himself up as better informed.

"Because the so-called prohibition question is neither Catholic nor Protestant, because it is purely an American question, every fair minded person resented the attempt to defend the argument in favor of prohibition by stirring up hatred amongst religionists. That the end does not justify the means is readily admitted by everyone. He who attempts to act counter to this principle injures his own cause.

"With such a thought in mind, may I venture further upon this subject. It is a venture in which memories of France become identified with prohibition. A venture put forth to save the sacred name of our heroes from being sacrificed in the flames of a fanaticism which believes that the end of prohibition justifies the defilement of heroes' graves.

"Amid the moans of these bleak November winds—winds which play among the naked branches of trees; blustery winds in whose arms dance the brown leaves as they scurry across the fields, my thoughts go back some thirteen years ago. I envision other fields, bleak and barren. Instead of leaves browned by the killing frost, there rise before my mind the bodies and souls of men. Bodies dressed in brown uniforms as are the leaves; souls fleeting across fields in the fantastic dance of death.

“Thirteen years ago! And I told you that I would talk upon labor while my heart and mind are filled with thoughts and pictures of those to whom as yet we have not paid our debts for the labor which they performed. How ironical become promises in the hands of fate!

“More shameful than that, there are some who have risen in our midst today after thirteen years of peace. In their zeal to propagate the policies of prohibition, they have attempted to steal from our soldier boys the honor which was theirs, the glory which they won, and the loyalty none may attack except at the price of disaster. Still withal, their honor has been attacked, their glory besmirched, and their loyalty questioned by one who would stoop so low as to justify the maintenance of prohibition at this tremendous cost.

“You and I, my friends, both abhor drunkenness. In common we both love temperance. Yet if the leaders of prohibition can defend their policies only at the price of attacking lips which are silent and hearts which are broken, I prefer to cast my lot either with the dead soldier or with his living mother rather than with the sacrilegious cause which defiles them both.

“Already I have presented arguments from history and arguments from governmental facts, not in defense of drunkenness but rather in opposition to pagan prohibition. Today—thirteen years it will be next Wednesday—I have a more sacred argument which springs from the depths of my heart. It is an argument where heroes speak and mothers weep. Instead of governmental figures and cold reports, there are governmental crosses and cold corpses which stretch out row upon row and mile after mile.

“Through the aisles of these crosses this bleak November day there sobs the sad requiem of many hearts. Boys and girls long for a dad to return from a hero’s grave; the unending rosary of a wife’s tears which like pearls have spent themselves for thirteen years is chanted unceasingly; the sad heartache of the gray haired mother is moaning in the winds—she, like the widow of Naim, mourns for a boy gone from her arms.

“These are my arguments—these the quick and the dead; arguments that are centered around the sanctuary of my love for the soldiers both living and dead.

“A few short weeks ago my ears were shocked with a sacri-

legious infamy. These dead soldiers whose lips no longer can themselves defend; their old mothers and broken-hearted wives and little boys and girls whose voices are too inarticulate to shield themselves—these have become the latest target of attack in defense of prohibition.

“‘Perjured scoundrels’ is the epitaph spoken of the dead—‘Perjured scoundrels’ is the cold consolation which the executive secretary of the Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals would sneer into the ears of those children and wives and gray haired mothers when on this Armistice Day they are mindful of their loved ones.

“I watched, hoping against hope that the *Kansas City Journal-Post* and the *Time Magazine* must have made some horrible mistake in the calamitous report of September 25 and October 19 respectively, which they had carried in their columns—news of the ‘perjured scoundrels.’

“I waited—waited in vain for the brother officials of Dr. Clarence True Wilson to contradict him boldly; to demand of him public apology and not weak explanation.

“You and I have watched and waited in vain.

“Of what am I speaking? Need I tell you! Why, just a few weeks ago the Reverend Clarence True Wilson, D.D., LL.D., executive secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals, is reported to have said:

“‘Legion conventions are planned ahead of time as drunken orgies, in defiance of the laws which the men as soldiers had taken an oath of allegiance to support. . . . The ex-soldier who will do that—and practically all of them did it in Detroit—is a perjured scoundrel who ought not to represent the decency of the flag under which he fought.’

“This is a portion of the interview which Dr. Clarence True Wilson gave to the *Kansas City Journal-Post*, and which he has not denied nor caused to be retracted in these same columns. Of it, silence were almost golden in the face of such a blasphemous onslaught.

“Quoting from Gerald W. Johnson in the *Baltimore Evening Sun* of October 1, may I read the following observation:

“‘Well, every man is entitled to his opinion. It will seem strange to some though, that the soldiers swore allegiance to the Eighteenth Amend-

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ment, which was not ratified until January 16, 1919, and to the Volstead Act, which was not passed until October, 1919.

“But let that pass. Dr. Wilson would probably say that it is a technicality, and we have already too many technicalities in the discussion of prohibition. Regardless of technicalities, we have the expression of his opinion that every drinking soldier *is a perjured scoundrel who ought not to represent the decency of the flag.* This is interesting, since Dr. Wilson, by reason of his official position, is the mouthpiece of a great church. One naturally realizes that this declaration of his reflects in no way the opinion of Methodists in general. Too many heroic Methodist boys are buried in France. But one would think that any religious leader who does not agree with Dr. Wilson would lose no time in making his disagreement public, for the implications of that statement commit the doctor and those who agree with him to an unpatriotic position that is, to put it mildly, very peculiar.’

“To open one’s mouth in question of the sanity of the prohibition law is called treason. To use the exact words of Dr. Wilson: ‘The conspiracy to drive out prohibition is the work of moral cowards. Those who are supporting them are moral cut-throats of the basest character.’ Well, I am, therefore, a moral coward. And you members of the American Legion are ‘cut-throats of the basest character’—both you and your dead buddies.

“Thus, to vilify the millions of soldiers who risked home, happiness and life is now considered the apex of patriotism, provided that through this vilification the godliness of prohibition can be preserved. The end justifies the means!

“The men who compose the American Legion have taken no new oath since the war. Hence, if drinking makes them perjured scoundrels now, it must have had the same effect at any time since they took that oath; it is certainly no worse to violate an oath thirteen years after taking it than it is to violate it thirteen days or thirteen minutes after taking it.

“I remember, in this connection, an afternoon in late September, 1918. There was a village in a mountain cove into which a battalion of infantry had marched the day before. Never mind the regiment. I do not claim it was the best regiment in the world. It certainly couldn’t drill like the West Point cadet corps. It couldn’t maneuver like the Prussian Guard. I am not certain it could have held the railway bank as well as the Twenty-third Infantry did at the second battle of the Marne. It was just an ordinary regiment, made up of men who had been, until a few months earlier, farm boys, machinists, truck drivers, soda jerkers, plumbers, clerks and what not. Any old-time regular army sergeant would have told

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you, with sulphureous comment, perhaps, that whatever else they were they weren't soldiers and never would be. In fact, several old sergeants had told them that same thing time and again in the training camps back home.

"A very ordinary regiment—and yet, it was this good: when the Germans hit it a few days later the Germans bounced back. No world-beater of a regiment, but good enough for the job, as things turned out.

"On this September afternoon, however, it was a decidedly nervous and uneasy battalion that occupied the tiny, straggling village. The long months of training in the cantonments in the States were over. The trip through cheering crowds to a city by the sea was over. The endless voyage across the Atlantic was over. The three weeks of intensive training behind the lines in France was over. Across the head of the valley in which the village lay, stretched a low mountain ridge; and behind the ridge it thundered all the time, day and night.

"Tomorrow the battalion must cross that bridge, and the men knew it was no electrical storm they would encounter on the other side; for the distant mutter behind the hills was the ceaseless voice of the guns.

"I wonder if Dr. Clarence True Wilson ever watched the sun go down knowing that before it rose again he must march into a literal Valley of the Shadow of Death, there to kill or be killed, although his hands had never yet shed human blood? If he has not, I can assure him that he has missed something interesting, very interesting indeed. In the little valley, as the sun dipped down, was an extraordinary sense of peace and security. To be sure, moonrise would bring the enemy flyers, no doubt, to drill the place with machine-gun fire. The sentinels had been posted, guard had been mounted; the remainder of the battalion was off duty. We knew that it was the last quiet rest for some of us; for when we marched over the ridge some of us would go to stay. Well, that was all right. It was war, and a soldier must take his chances. The point now was, how to spend the last two hours.

"I don't know what Dr. Clarence True Wilson would have advised under the circumstances, but I know what we did. The good wine of France was to be had at three little estaminets. We drank it. We drank it all as it came—plain pinard, burgundy, champagne, bordeaux, anything else. There were a few bottles of cognac and liqueurs, and we finished them off, too. There had been a marriage feast at Cana and they drank wine. This might be a marriage feast with death, death the bride and I the groom. Dozens of us, nervous, tense, wondering if the shell which screamed overhead, or the rocket which crimsoned the inky sky was planning for us a rendezvous with the ghoulis bride called death—we, too, drank at our marriage feast!

## PROHIBITION

“The night wore on. With Sergeant W., Sergeant J., Corporal S. and others I went back to my billet. We had enjoyed ourselves.

“And the war went on. We marched over the hill, and there was no wine on the other side. The regiment didn't win the war single-handed, but neither did it run away. Eleven o'clock on the morning of November 11, 1918, found it painfully and laboriously cutting its way through a belt of German wire. But not all of it. Some were missing.

“Sergeant J., for instance, with whom I had wrestled long before he would go to bed, was not there on November 11. He had literally screamed when the machine-gun burst went through him, and his lieutenant, who had learned to love him, forgot duty and leaped to his side.

““I'm all right, sir,” he gasped through clenched teeth. “I'm all right. Look after the platoon.”

“And he died!

“Come to think of it, he was perjured. Why, that boy had lied about his age to get into the army. He was only seventeen—that perjured scoundrel.

“It was a machine-gun that got Sergeant W., too. He was a product of the Chicago stockyards district, and about the hardest-boiled man my eyes have looked upon. To connect anything remotely resembling an ideal with Sergeant W. was unthinkable. But when another sergeant came along and found W. lying on the ground with his legs hanging by some shreds of flesh, and stopped to ask if he could do anything, W. said:

““Nothing but this, Beck. If you happen to get out of this alive, maybe some time you'll get up to Crystal Falls, Michigan. If you do, look up my girl and tell her I didn't throw my life away for nothin'. Tell her I did it for somethin' worth while. Aw, heck, you know what to tell her.”

“And he died!

“Maybe he ought not to represent the decency of the flag, but I wish I could have that much faith in my country. I wish I, too, could be a perjured scoundrel of his caliber.

“Jolly Corporal S. came down from the mountains of North Carolina, laughing. As a rookie he laughed at his first fumbling efforts to learn the manual of arms, he grinned as he peeled potatoes and scrubbed floors, he accepted blithely all the rigors and hardships of cantonment, camp and field. He was a smart soldier, as even an old regular would admit, and his was a smart squad, although he ruled it with chuckles, rather than curses. Even that night in the valley he was hilarious, not mean, and he had us all laughing as we walked with him to his billet. The whole company loved him, for he kept its spirits up.

“A fortnight later, during a momentary halt in an advance, he sat down and rested his back against a wall. Then the shell came, and after-

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ward they found him there with a four-inch hole blown right through his chest. His merry heart had been literally destroyed, but he still sat against the wall, looking toward the east, toward Germany!

“And on his dead face a smile.

“A perjured scoundrel who ought not to represent the decency of the flag under which he fought.

“A harsh epitaph, that, for a corporal who meant no harm, and who thought that all his country required of him was to do his duty cheerily and go smilingly through the gates of death! A harsh epitaph, Dr. Clarence True Wilson, indeed! I am glad I did not write it; and I am glad I am not one of the thousands who support the man who did write it. I'd rather be a corpse.”

So closed the quotation from Gerald Johnson. Father Coughlin continued:

“And so, buddies, thirteen years have passed! And here I am talking about you as I wander with mistress memory up and down the aisles of white crosses.

“But somehow or other, old Sergeant W., Corporal S., somehow as I kneel down here beside your graves, I know that death has lost both its sting and its victory. I know that no fanaticism can ever defame your names.

“Perhaps you are not a martyr in the strict meaning of the word. You never claimed to be one. But you and every other buddy whose cold corpse rests beneath these miles of white crosses—you were heroes and no ‘perjured scoundrels.’

“Perhaps, old smiling Corporal S., your clean, pure soul is still smiling down at me and upon the hills of North Carolina, smiling from the parapets of heaven as I kneel here beside your grave and kiss the cross and murmur my Pater Noster as a token of eternal friendship for your kindly soul. After all, I know you are in heaven; because I learned at my mother's knee that any brave man who has consciously given his life in defense of his country's honor, in vindication of violated justice—oh, buddy, I long since learned that God made heaven for the likes of you. Isn't that what the good padre preached to us when he told us the story of the Great Soldier Who gave His life on Calvary: ‘Greater love than this hath no man that he lay down his life for his friend?’

“Thirteen years! And that is where my memory took me, back to France.

“Thirteen years! And we in America have lived to see the day

when the gray haired mothers who bore those sons into life, now in their death, are told that they are 'perjured scoundrels.'

"God forbid the fanaticism that gave birth to such thought!

"If my voice is carried to the hills of North Carolina or to the stockyards of Chicago, I hope and trust to God that it will dry a mother's tears—the mothers of those boys of whom I have been speaking.

"Mother, I want you to open your own Bible at St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Or perhaps, I had better read it for you. Your eyes are too dim. It says: 'If the dead rise not again, neither is Christ risen again. If Christ be not risen again your faith is vain. As in Adam all men die, so also in Christ we shall be made alive.'

"O, come now, let us all dry those tears. Our Blessed Saviour said: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life.' Therefore, the history of Lazarus shall be enacted once again for every sister and woman who learned to love a man. The story of Jairus' daughter shall live ten thousand times in reality for every parent who wept bitter tears upon the flower strewn coffin of a child. The drama enacted on the dusty streets of Naim shall be perpetuated for us and for every mother whose boy's body lies in foreign fields.

"November winds are singing their sad requiem. But to our beloved dead across the chasm of time we will stretch forth our hands and our hearts. Hands full of gifts; hearts full of respect.

"Oh, soldier boys, if your intellects can grasp the meaning of my worldly words, I ask you in the name of those thousands of your fellow legionnaires who today join with me in memory of your heroism, to count each tear as a precious pearl which we lay at the throne of Almighty God—pearls that will form a rosary of kind thoughts, sweet prayers and tender memories.

"If you are still biding time midway between earth and heaven, it is our earnest prayer that flights of angels will sing you to your rest. Heroes, saints of God! Never, never shall we who revere your memory or those of us who have shared your friendship join thoughts or words with those who call you 'perjured scoundrels' to justify their un-Christian and un-American opinions.

"Centuries ago there was One also Who gave His life for His friends, and in the very giving of it was called a blasphemer by the holier-than-thou hypocrites who made clean the outside of the

cup; who appeared before men as whited sepulchres but whose insides were strewn with bones.

“Centuries ago this so-called blasphemer was done to death and willingly gave His life for His friends. The cross whereon He died has since become a badge of honor. The revilings which He suffered have become His crown of glory.

“Your cross, and the vile epitaph that has been written upon it by the modern pharisees, shall be honored as long as America is America. A so-called blasphemer was and is the Son of God. A so-called ‘perjured scoundrel’ and ‘moral cut-throat’ is and will be the hero of our nation.”

If ever public opinion had been moulded; and if it is permissible to reflect that the laws of a democracy follow the trend of public opinion, here was the death-knell sounding for prohibition. Here was the destruction of the smoke screen behind which had hidden the wicked manipulators of frenzied finance and slavish industrialism. The road was clear. The minds of the people were prepared to listen to a new champion whose weapons were truth, logic, facts and forcefulness.

PART III  
MORAL ECONOMICS OF 1931-32



## [ CHAPTER FOURTEEN ]

### *The Gold Reform*



ON SUNDAY, October 23, 1932, immediately following his broadcast, Father Coughlin sat in conference with two prominent New Yorkers who had come to persuade him that he should launch into an explanation of the gold subject. I refer to Mr. Robert M. Harriss of the New York Cotton Exchange and to Mr. George LeBlanc, perhaps the world's foremost gold trader. These gentlemen, deeply versed in the history and practice of gold transfers, unfolded chapter by chapter the story of the depression and the way out of it through the revaluation of the gold ounce.

LeBlanc had practiced his profession in Canada, in England, in France, in Germany, and in the United States. He had been president of a Wall Street bank. He had been engaged in trading more gold among foreign nations than, perhaps, any other living man. He knew his subject not only from a national and international viewpoint, but was conversant with it from every angle of capitalistic philosophy and of racial psychology.

Harriss was a dynamo who generated hope and encouragement. Possessing vast tracts of cotton land in the South, he was primarily interested in the farmer and in the laborer who fabricated his products in the textile mills throughout the world.

These gentlemen lamented the destruction of the buying power both at home and abroad. Both of them read the handwriting on the wall—a handwriting whose words spelled chaos unless the artificial gold valuation was readjusted to meet the exigencies of the time.

From many other sources Father Coughlin had been assembling information on this topic of gold. However, not until after this conference did he decide to risk bringing to the people a subject which had either been purposely withheld from them or, if mentioned, wilfully misrepresented.

Thus, on Sunday, October 30, 1932, began the most influential series of broadcasts to which the people of this nation had ever listened. Father Coughlin expounded a series of economic remedies which were destined within the following eight months to be adopted in principle by the government of the United States.

From the year 1929 and lasting throughout the course of Mr. Herbert Hoover's presidency the depression had been increasing with devastating results. It was the policy of Mr. Hoover and of his Cabinet to attempt to remedy this evil which long since had become an international affair by resorting to palliatives. The most conspicuous one of all was the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Analyzed in the light of history, this corporation was nothing more than an attempt on the part of a bankrupt government to borrow bankrupt corporations out of unpayable debts.

The more money it poured into the rat-holes of insolvency, the darker became the clouds of distress which gathered over the entire nation. Day by day unemployment increased until 12,000,000 men were regimented into the largest idle army in the world. Day by day banks failed to open until the total failures approximated 6,000. Nearly 1,000,000 farmers with their wives and children were driven from their homes—farmers whom the Reconstruction Finance Corporation had failed to aid. Approximately \$2,500,000,000 worth of small business concerns had been consumed in the fires of failure. The United States Treasury was bankrupt. Industry was maimed. Wages had been depreciated more than forty percent. Exports and imports were melting to the despairing point. Real estate had depreciated almost sixty-three percent.

Meanwhile, taxation was increasing. Meanwhile, a government which preferred the sanctity of financial contracts and financial rights to human contracts and human rights insisted that a prostrate people pay their debts assumed in 1928-29 with a dishonest 1932 dollar which every economist knew contained at least one hundred and sixty-three pennies and was at least twice as hard to obtain in the year 1932 as it was in the year 1928.

Here was something more than a panic, something more than a depression. Millions of people were starving in the midst of

plenty, hundreds of factories were idle as a nation shivered in nakedness and clamored for clothing.

As Father Coughlin most dramatically and accurately explained, "The financial loss sustained by the United States alone during this Great Depression totals approximately \$264,000,000,000;—\$96,000,000,000 more than the cost of the Great War to all the nations." Add to this the outstanding debts, payable in gold throughout our nation, of \$235,000,000,000 and one readily sees how futile it was for an idle nation to borrow itself out of debt with a puny \$2,500,000,000 of Reconstruction Finance money.

Clearly the so-called depression was intimately related with these stupendous debts and losses. Even more clearly it was evident that these debts would never be paid with dishonest dollars which contained more than one hundred pennies nor in gold coin which was predicated upon an outworn and impractical valuation.

They who had encouraged these debts had failed to reckon that a debtor is limited by his capacity to earn and, therefore, by his capacity to pay. The stupid lender who had destroyed the standard of money now expected the impoverished borrowers to make payment in gold when they had none and could reasonably expect none.

There were very few men in this nation who had delved deeply to find the cause of the world depression. Surface thinkers attributed our misery to a buyers' strike, unmindful of the fact that dollars were more difficult to find because of their comparative non-existence. Certain shallow minds laid our troubles to the fact that credit was being withheld, although they failed to recognize that the borrowing power of our nation and of its citizens had gone far beyond the limit of reason.

Certainly, the so-called depression was related to money in that men had lost the true concept of money. Instead of regarding it simply as the medium of exchange, it had come to be looked upon as wealth itself. Instead of being used in society as the servant of man, it was now his master.

This great immorality, which forced men, women and children to starve in the midst of plenty, must not be permitted to continue.

I have touched on these thoughts in the hope of outlining to

my readers the current of ideas which was washing against the soul of Father Coughlin. He appreciated that if this present civilization was to be saved, it was first necessary, from an economic standpoint, to destroy the thought that money is wealth.

Against him he could expect the opposition of Wall Street, whose history from the very beginning had been identified with the sale of slaves. Well did he know that Wall Street through its Morgans controlled both the political parties of this country. The Raskobs, the McAdoos of the Democratic party were obligated to the great private bankers. The Hardings, the Coolidges, the Hoovers were sworn supporters of the bankers.

More than that, at least ninety-five percent of the news journals and magazines of the country were beholden to this same Wall Street, which, like an octopus, had reached out its tentacles of control to grasp every public utility, to throttle every railroad, to strangle the motor industry and the steel industry, and to menace practically every labor activity on the continent. These newspapers and magazines depended for their advertising, and, therefore, for their livelihood upon the patronage of a Morgan the Great, and his subservient princes, who, like a giant spider, had spun a web around the homes and souls of men.

Little chance had this priest to overthrow a system of decadent capitalism which was so powerful with money, so herculean with influence as actually to control the Government, to interpret its laws and to make a mockery of democracy by means of a prostituted press.

Perhaps his enemies would choose to ignore him, penalizing him with silence. Perhaps they would encumber him with the epithet of "radical." There was even the likelihood of their lining up against him the consecrated leaders of religion, who, in the name of conservatism and of Christianity, would throw their support, not to the doctrines of Christ or of Leo or of Pius, but to the heresies of Morgan, of Rothschild and of Hoover.

At any rate, this courageous priest had truth on his side. The age-old doctrines of his Church founded upon the teachings of Christ must not be muzzled. He was willing to risk everything to assist in the overthrow of the domination of Wall Street. Through the medium of the radio, Father Coughlin became the first man of public importance to raise his voice efficiently against

the great modern heresy that money is the medium of control and not the medium of trade.

Associated with this heresy was the kindred error that gold had a fixed value. In fact, this was one of the dogmas of capitalism, which regarded wheat and cotton, homes and farms, labor and wages as mere pawns on the checkerboard of life—pawns to be moved here and there, to be crowned as kings or to be swept overboard in the great game of gold-getting.

At the outset of 1932–1933, Father Coughlin had a difficult program in mind. His ultimate object was to reevaluate the gold ounce, upon which all our financial business was transacted, in order to put more currency money in circulation and, at the same time, reduce our taxation and our public and private debts.

In order to accomplish this, he must advocate the confiscation of all commercial gold in the country, in a just and equitable manner. This gold controlled by private bankers must be relinquished to the Government. He was determined to teach the people that modern banking as practiced by Wall Street was founded upon the assumption that banking was profitable primarily through the medium of issuing interest-bearing bonds against unproductive debts. That these bonds should be recalled and liquidated through the issuance of Federal currency was first publicly advocated by Father Coughlin.

Following these various steps in his program, it was his purpose to expose, if necessary, the money-changers who had defiled the temple of this nation as they made of it a den of thieves.

He held himself aloof from the wordy war of politicians which sounded on the battlefronts from Maine to California just previous to the Presidential election of 1932, yet there originated from the microphone in the Shrine of the Little Flower a most famous series of broadcasts. The principles advocated in these discourses were destined within the next year to become part and parcel of the "new deal."

As a matter of record, I shall touch but briefly upon the lectures which Father Coughlin delivered relative to the gold standard and to money. To know the Priest of the Radio necessitates knowing his teachings—teachings that were not original with himself, but with the Founder and the Fathers of the Church whom he loved.

Following are the theses contained in the discourse entitled "GOLD—MASTER OR SERVANT?" delivered Sunday, October 30, 1932:

A. (1) The gold standard does not consist in the fact that gold is valued at \$20.67 an ounce. This is the gold valuation which was legalized in the year 1873 in the Demonetization Act and again by the Currency Law in the year 1900.

(2) The United States of America, together with a few European nations and Canada, recognized gold as their legal basic money. This recognition was written on our statute books first in 1783 and again in 1900.

However, four-fifths of the world's population at this time recognize silver as their basic money. These nations are automatically cut off from us because they possess practically no gold at all with which to trade.

(3) Valued at \$20.67 an ounce, there are approximately \$11,000,000,000 of gold in the world. It is most unevenly divided. The United States possesses 42 percent; France 19 percent; England, 6.8 percent; Russia, 2.3 percent; Germany 2.9 percent. 73.7 percent is divided among one-fifth of the world's population. 26.3 percent is divided among four-fifths of the world's population.

B. (1) Under the system of capitalism there are three kinds of money, namely, basic money, currency money and credit or debt money.

(2) According to the Federal Reserve Act of 1913, the United States may print or coin  $2\frac{1}{2}$  paper or silver dollars for every gold dollar resident within the nation.

(3) Experience has taught us from time immemorial that we may not issue more than twelve debt dollars (such as bonds, notes, checks, drafts, etc.) for every gold dollar which we possess.

(4) Neither currency nor debt money is of any value unless it is backed by basic money.

(5) The standard of money, therefore, means the maintenance of the formula of 1 basic unit to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  currency units to 12 debt units.

C. (1) In the United States there are 235,000,000,000 debt dollars payable in gold. We possess approximately \$4,500,000,000 of real commercial gold.

(2) On \$4,500,000,000 of real commercial gold we are capable of carrying no more than \$54,000,000,000 of debt money. Consequently, the standard of money has been upset. Before prosperity can return it will be necessary to restore the standard of 1 to 2½ to 12. Otherwise, repudiation, which is the policy of the Bolshevik, will be forced upon us.

Continuing the subject of money, Father Coughlin preached his discourse entitled "REVALUATION" on Sunday, November 6, 1932. Its theses follow in direct quotation and then in paraphrase. In this discourse, Father Coughlin emphasized the point that money is not wealth. It is merely the medium of trade.

A. (1) "As I said last Sunday, since money is twice as hard to obtain today as it was when these debts were contracted, and this due especially to the hoarding policy that has been forced upon both bankers and citizens, it follows that our 235,000,000,000 credit dollars really amount to \$470,000,000,000. The ratio between twelve credit dollars to one gold dollar has, I repeat, jumped to 117 to 1.

"In other words, we have inflated our credit dollars beyond all bounds of reason. Instead of having 54,000,000,000 credit dollars outstanding against our gold deposit, we have gone on pyramiding our obligations until the greatest prosperity debt in the history of civilization is confronting us. The only two ways out are revaluation of our gold ounce or repudiation of our debts. One way is Christianity. The other way is Bolshevism.

"I repeat that the practical workings of our gold standard have been stupidly and almost criminally destroyed.

"Thus, they who have boasted of having retained the gold ounce in its practical operation of 1914 throughout the years, when this abnormal prosperity debt was accumulated, have really flaunted in the face of the American people the fact that to their policy can be attributed the looting of our banks, the stagnation of industry, the multiplication of unemployed, the myriad worries, the tears of the distressed and starving who have been offered up as victims upon the altar of indecision, inactivity and cowardice. Well may certain politicians ridicule the manufacture of rubber currency money! But they carefully hid from our attention how they themselves engineered the unreasonable circulation of rubber credit money.

“Despite the lessons of universal experience that one gold dollar cannot sustain more than twelve credit dollars, we behold the American nation today struggling under an insuperable handicap against hopeless odds. We are like a little boy who has been sentenced to carry the Empire State Building from Manhattan Island to Boston Common when we are asked to make one gold dollar sustain the impossible load of 117 credit dollars.

“While the American people today are warned to beware of the inflation of the dollar, they are asked to applaud the policy that we retain sound money. The apostles of this propaganda, who both belittle and condemn those of us who are not afraid to face facts and who demand a revaluation of the gold ounce to prevent further upheavals,—what shall we liken them unto? They have been captain and crew of the ship of State on which we, the passengers of this nation, have sailed as it was steered upon the reefs of destruction;—unsound credit inflation. It was they who inflated the credit dollar or the debt dollar beyond all bounds of reason. While the ship of State is being pounded to pieces by the storm-waves of discontent and lashed by the furious winds of destructive debts, they are content to stand idly by while they preach the mumbled gospel of fear to those of us who seek safety.”

B. (1) It is possible for the United States Government to revalue the gold ounce. At no time has our gold ounce been fixed permanently by law.

(2) On the contrary, the Constitution of the United States emphasized that “Congress has the power to coin money and regulate the value thereof.” This word “regulate” is opposed to the word “fix.”

(3) By doubling the value of an ounce of gold and making it \$41.34 an ounce we automatically can double the issuance of paper dollars or of currency, thereby destroying the famine of money.

(4) By the same token we automatically cut our debts in half.

C. (1) The great European nations have already adopted this policy of revaluating the gold ounce, with the result, according to official statistics, that their unemployment has been tremendously cut down.

(2) Those who are opposed to the revaluation of the gold

ounce are those “. . . who refuse to accept gold as the medium of trade but persist in making it the medium of control. They are those who have coöperated to inflate the credit dollar until it has burst upon us and is no longer existent. They are those who since the year 1913 raised our Government debt from less than \$1,000,000,000 to more than \$19,000,000,000 and elevated our State and Municipal debts from \$4,000,000,000 to \$18,000,000,000. They are those who are standing idly by while the trade of the world is being diverted to the markets of England, Italy and France where the shilling, the lira and the franc have been revalued while our dollar remains at its same impractical price, preventing foreigners from buying from us. They are those who prefer to honor financial rights at the expense of human rights. In a word, they are those short-sighted Shylocks who demand their pound of flesh even though it will cost them their own lives as well as the lives of their victims.”

This subject, “REVALUATION,” was immediately followed by the discourse entitled, “GOLD, THE MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE,” delivered Sunday, November, 13, 1932. In advocating the immediate revaluation of the gold ounce, Father Coughlin said:

A. (1) “Why is it that home owners are relinquishing their contracts? Why is it that farms by the thousands are being confiscated because of the farmer’s inability to meet his mortgage? Why is it that within a few months every bank in this nation of ours will be so over-burdened with homes and farms and with bankrupt industries . . .? I had better not finish that sentence. . . . Unless there is a revaluation of our gold dollar we are but inviting a financial upheaval which will be associated with the repudiation of municipal and of private bonds, of land contracts and of private loans due to banks.”

With clear vision he foresaw what actually did happen five months later when every bank in this nation was closed.

Then, on November 27 and on December 11, 1932, he delivered discourses entitled “USE AND NOT ABUSE” and “RUBBER CREDIT MONEY.” These two discourses really treat of the one subject. The first of the abuses is identified with mass-productionism; the second of the abuses is associated with international banking.

A. (1) It will be futile for us to revalue the gold ounce and restore to the American people their capacity to pay unless we

harness the machinery which automatically is displacing the laborer.

(2) Speaking of the unbridled machine, Father Coughlin said:

"It is the hope of this new age that these improvident laws shall give place to a spirit of legislation which is more in harmony with justice and Christian charity. What were the characteristics which were associated with industry and mass-productionism as it existed in the era which has just passed?

"In 1919 there were within the United States 274,402 manufacturing establishments. Despite our increase in population; despite the increase in our exports, by the year 1927 these had been reduced to 191,866, a decrease of thirty percent. Thus, first of all, in this last period of mass-productionism there was a tendency towards monopolization.

"In 1919, these manufacturing establishments employed 9,039,171 wage earners. In 1927, this wage earning group had been reduced to 8,349,755. The greater the increase in our population the fewer are the laborers. According to official figures, our factories in the past ten years produced forty-two percent more merchandise with 500,000 fewer factory workers than they did in the ten previous years.

"In the great year of prosperity, 1929, industries upon which forty percent of our wage earners depended for a living employed 900,000 fewer wage earners than they did in the year 1919, although their production was practically fifty percent greater. Our railroads, for instance, increased their business seven percent with 250,000 fewer employees. Our coal mines surrendered twenty-three percent more coal with approximately 100,000 fewer miners.

"Or, to express these astounding facts in another way, in 1914 the value of the products manufactured in our industrial establishments was approximately \$24,000,000,000. In 1921, it increased to \$44,000,000,000. In 1923, it skyrocketed to \$60,000,000,000. While in 1929, it had almost reached the stupendous figure of \$69,000,000,000.

"Not only was power concentrated in the hands of fewer industrialists; not only did our population increase by more than 25,000,000 persons; not only did the wealth produced by these industrialists increase by almost 300 percent:—the astounding

and frightful figure associated with all of it is that there was a steady, devastating decrease in employment and in wages. This was the second characteristic.

“In 1923, when the so-called period of prosperity began to develop, the total volume of wages paid to workmen in the manufacturing industries was \$11,007,000,000. In 1929, when the annual value of our manufactured products had increased \$9,000,000,000 over 1923, the total volume of wages in the manufacturing industries was still approximately \$11,000,000,000. Do you catch the relationship in these figures?

“To quote Mr. John P. Frey, in a speech which he delivered at Columbus, Ohio, September 15, 1931:

“It is not surprising that the present depression is so severe when we study the statistical and economic facts. Our captains of industry, commerce and finance, through their failure to pay economically sound wages, were definitely destroying the market upon which their welfare depended during the seven years preceding 1929.

“The statistics indicate that in 1928, the peak year of industrial and agricultural production, the total volume of wages paid to all employees in all occupations in this nation was \$649,000,000 less than in 1927. . . .

“The wealth being produced by agriculture and industry was being siphoned off and retained by a comparative few.’

“Although the true function of the machine is to spread leisure and opportunity for mental and spiritual development, its use has been increasingly perverted. Not only has there been a steady arithmetical increase in unemployment, but it has been accompanied by a steady increase of wealth in the hands of the few. The wealth created by the machines has been directed, in appalling disproportion, to the owners of the machines. Little has gone to labor.

“In 1922 the total dividends paid by all corporations in the United States was \$930,648,000. In 1929 the dividends paid were \$3,478,000,000, an increase of 273 percent.

“Here, then, we have the third characteristic which is best expressed by the phrase: ‘Concentration of wealth in the hands of a few.’ The development of mass production is being accompanied by the destruction of mass consumption and mass purchasing power.

"It is hoped that the inefficient laws of yesterday which permitted this unjust concentration of wealth and this unreasonable share of profits to fall into the hands of a few shall not be permitted to exist beyond the life of the next presidential term.

"Just as we have been taught to look with disdain and contempt upon physical slavery, so future generations shall revert to the period which has just passed with similar feelings,—an age of industrial and financial slavery, which is apparent when we consider that the annual income, for all people in the United States, increased from \$65,949,000,000 in the year 1919 to \$89,419,000,000 in 1928—an increase of approximately \$23,500,000,000, despite the fact that the total volume of wages paid was \$649,000,000 less than in 1927. The greater the wealth of this nation the less were its wages for the workingman and the farmer.

"These are figures taken from the official Federal reports and from the report on 'National Income and Its Purchasing Power' as prepared by the National Bureau of Economic Research. They are not subject to contradiction."

B. (1) "In speaking of the use and in pointing out the possible abuse of mass production machinery, may I couple it with the use and abuse of money. Let me emphasize that money is not wealth. It is merely the medium by which the real wealth—food, shelter, clothing, education and so forth—is distributed.

"Let me stress once more that the gold standard or any money standard is predicated upon the basis that one basic unit of gold money is equivalent to two and one-half units of spending money or to twelve units of borrowing money. In other words, one gold dollar can sustain only two and one-half currency or paper dollars and twelve credit dollars.

"It is upon that theory that the gold standard was erected. It is upon that theory that real wealth can be morally and scientifically distributed."

(2) Next were outlined the abuses associated with money lenders. Almost prophetically, Father Coughlin anticipated the revelation made manifest in the last week of May, 1933.

"Mr. Lamont, the Vice-President of the J. P. Morgan Company, said in the year 1927:

"I have recently heard of American bankers and firms com-

peting on almost a violent scale for the purpose of obtaining loans in various foreign money markets overseas. Naturally it is a tempting thing for certain of the European governments to find a horde of American bankers sitting on their doorsteps offering them money. . . . That sort of competition tends to insecurity and unsound practice.'

"Thus, your money, Mr. American Investor and Bank Depositor, went begging in Europe. Loans were made for the construction of workingmen's dwellings in Germany, for every conceivable kind of private enterprise, for the erection of bathing facilities, parks, playgrounds and even apartment houses. Germany must have no slums. Germany must have no poverty. The American International Bankers would see to that at the expense of the American depositors' money.

"These same International Bankers, who talk of rugged individualism here at home and who demand tariffs for the presumed protection of the laboring class, literally implored European governments and industrialists to accept their money (pardon me, your money) to build up factories for foreign competition which could have no other result but close the doors of American industry and send the American workmen tramping through the streets of our nation.

"And what happened to these loans? Did the International Bankers retain these bonds which had been traded for your good American money? They did not.

"First of all, these bonds oftentimes were acquired from foreigners by the Morgan Company and other bankers at ninety cents on the dollar. In turn these international financiers sold them to banks in Cleveland, Philadelphia, Detroit, Los Angeles and elsewhere at ninety-two or ninety-three cents on the dollar. And these bankers in turn peddled these bonds to the unsophisticated American public at one hundred cents on the dollar. The banker was safe. He had real money in his pocket. But the investor held the bag filled with shrinking bonds.

"American holdings of European Government issues, representing sixteen countries, show that our citizens actually invested the sum of \$1,600,000,000, which today had depreciated to \$742,000,000—a loss of 53 percent. And that loss will steadily increase. That loss comes out of your former savings.

"These loans were extended to Germany and to other European countries in spite of the fact that every economist knew that Europe was already bankrupt, because its future prosperity has been predicated upon the impossible demands of the Treaty of Versailles which Germany never had any honest intention of honoring.

"It is a fact that, from 1926 on, the American International Banker was warned that he was treading on dangerous ground; was conscious that he was acting, to put it mildly, indiscreetly. More than that, the honesty of the American International Banker in selling these bonds to the American public is seriously questioned.

"Mr. Kellogg, who was then Secretary of State, and S. Parker Gilbert, agent-general for reparation payments, both refer to a letter from Sir William Leese, who says that the literature published by the American bankers in reference to the European bonds was substantially untrue and misleading.

"At a later date, a foreign Government solemnly warned us how unsound these European investments were, but our own Government at Washington remained apathetic and silent. It refused to warn the American public. Oh, how characteristic that was of the Mellon regime!

"But why did such things occur? Why did the great House of Morgan and Kuhn-Loeb and their associates dupe the American public into buying questionable bonds? The answer is simple. Profits! Greed! Exploitation! The banker made his profit in the same manner as the trick magazine salesman makes his. Mr. John Public holds the bond. Mr. Banker has cashed in on his gullibility.

"Thus, from 1914 to 1930, nearly \$7,000,000,000 of European securities, governmental and corporate, were offered and sold to the citizens of the United States.

"And then comes the South American melodrama, which for intrigue, dishonesty and debauchery surpasses in heinousness any page in the loathsome history of modern racketeering. Ali Baba and his Forty Thieves have been shamed by the modern International Banker.

"In one loan to Brazil, secured by Dillon, Read & Company, (we are going to mention names this afternoon), 8,000,000 of

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American depositors' dollars were obtained presumably to be used for the electrification of a railroad operated by the Brazilian Government. This conservative Banking House of Dillon, Read & Company evidently advocated public ownership in South America but damns it in North America. The prospectus which Dillon, Read & Company put in the hands of thousands of American investors was dated June 1, 1922. It was for bonds due in thirty years, bearing 7 percent interest, for the electrification of a railroad which has never been and likely never will be electrified!

"A Bolivian loan of 1922 was made to bolster up a tottering regime which had lost the confidence of the citizens. A Peruvian loan was completed despite the fact that a great Peruvian advised us not to make it. In all, \$1,600,000,000 of American depositors' money was traded for South American bonds which today have depreciated by \$1,175,000,000.

"Luis O. Abellie, the Bolivian ambassador at Washington in the year 1932, makes public a letter which he addressed to Senator Hiram Johnson. In this most astounding document the ambassador says:

" 'When the 1922 loan was contracted with Bolivia, there were hundreds of people deported and jailed and the press was absolutely muzzled during the negotiations. When the 1928 loan was agreed upon, even senators were persecuted and confined when they attempted to combat this borrowing. It was in this way that American bankers helped such governments to remain in power and ruin their countries financially. The life of many a dictatorial and corrupt government has been prolonged or rescued by American bankers, and the money, supposed to have been borrowed for the construction of public utilities, has been squandered upon mercenary supporters and spies.'

"The citizens of the Republic of Peru have a similar story to tell which is disclosed by Felipe Barreda, the Peruvian ambassador to the Argentine Republic. In a letter which he made public on January 12, 1932, he startles us with the following statement:

" 'The *New York Journal of Commerce*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune* have published during the last eleven years many articles in which I exhibited the danger of the uncontrolled debauchery of the former Peruvian government, which was supported by a series of unjustified and onerous loans.

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“ In the year 1926, and as a warning to the bankers who were trying to float the \$30,000,000 loan of that year, I sent to the Guaranty Trust Company of New York, to the National City Bank, to Seligman and Company, to Grace Company and to many other American concerns interested in Peruvian finance, a very clear memorandum showing conditions in Peru and anticipating the future insolvency in which the country had to be thrown if such a loan should be floated. My advice was ignored. . . .’

“These references are placed on record to demonstrate that there can be no defense of ignorance on the part of the International Bankers for selling gold bricks to the American public; for inviting the farmers and laborers and the investors of this nation to pour their money into sewers for the single, solitary purpose of permitting these same bankers to grow fat on the commissions, while in conspiracy they joined to destroy the American credit dollar.

“Sworn evidence has been laid upon the investigation table of the Senate Committee how, in the instance of the Peruvian loan, the son of the President of Peru was given a bribe of \$500,000 by an international banking operator, in order that the latter would have the privilege of marketing the securities which since have been proven to be no more secure than quicksand.

“On another occasion we find our own State Department intervening and meddling in the affairs of the Republic of Colombia in behalf of American interests whose oil concessions in Colombia were at stake.

“This is the story: A loan of \$20,000,000 had been arranged by the National City Bank of New York; \$16,000,000 had been forwarded; \$4,000,000 were being withheld. Telegrams passed between President Olaya of Colombia and the National City Bank petitioning for the immediate extension of the remaining portion of the loan. But not until Colombia signed, sealed and delivered the Barco oil concession; not until the oil concession bill was modified and ratified to suit the Gulf Oil Company or the Mellon interests was payment of that \$4,000,000 made.

“Does this not smell of bribery? But perhaps our Texas and Oklahoma and mid-western oil farmers think it smells of hellish injustice, because at this identical moment their own oil wells

were closed while foreign oil products from Lake Maracaibo, which were produced with almost slave labor, were being dumped into the United States duty free, thereby creating an unjust competition.

“While this dastardly case was being perpetrated, you would think that something would be done by our Government about it. But we find, according to Senator Johnson, our own controlled State Department submitting information about the Barco oil concession to the National City Bank, and refusing to give the same information to the Senate Investigation Committee.

“We find such names as the Chase National Bank; Dillon, Read & Company; the National City Bank of New York; the Bankers Trust Company; Kuhn, Loeb & Co.; Halsey, Stuart & Company; White, Weld & Company; E. H. Rollins & Sons; Lee, Higginson & Company; Ladenburg, Thalmann & Company; the Bank of America; and the First National Corporation of Boston. These are the twelve apostles of international banking, associated with these loans of which Senator Hiram Johnson has said that ‘the very method used in obtaining them and in granting them would put the merest tyro upon inquiry.’

“‘It is utterly inconceivable,’ continues the Senator, ‘that international bankers did not know what the best informed public opinion of Latin America was fully cognizant of. The bankers simply did not heed the facts. They gave no thought to the impoverishment of American citizens who trusted them. They acted, apparently, only for profits. They were perfectly willing by their loans to maintain dictators in power and to be party to the suppression of every natural right of citizens of South American republics. Indeed, they contributed the money in some instances for the destruction of liberty itself, and heavy upon them is the responsibility not only for the financial ruin of a vast number of American citizens but for the destruction of personal and political rights in Latin American States.’

“This is not rhetoric. This is the true story of the most sordid epoch which, please God, shall ever be enacted in the annals of American history.

“In this Senatorial inquiry and investigation, documentary proof of the above statements is filed in our Federal archives. Moreover, the statement that these loans were made to go hand

in hand with concessions like the Barco oil concession, out of which princely profits could be realized; that sometimes they were made upon the desire of the bankers merely to lend; that sometimes they were made simply to obtain securities of unproven value to foist upon the American public—all this testimony has been given under oath.

“Thus the Morgan Company listed gross profits of \$10,883,626. Other International Bankers made smaller profits. While the International Bankers were profiteering, the loss accrued to our own overconfident countrymen is now estimated at over \$2,000,000,000. A high price for bond buying!

“If our credit, and therefore our money, was being dissipated on questionable foreign bonds, another similar tragedy was being enacted at home.

“According to Frank A. Vanderlip, former President of the National City Bank of New York, approximately \$74,000,000,000 have been lost by the American public in local stock investments. He adds that ‘the laborious savings of an uncounted number of lifetimes have been swept away.’

“Of course this inflation of the local stock market had to be engineered, if the International Banker wished to succeed in milking the American cow.

“These are only a few facts, my friends, to show you what has happened to much of your credit money.

“In all, we have accumulated about \$200,000,000,000 of private debts, many of them represented in bonds and in stocks, some of which will never be paid and not one of which in your lifetime or mine will ever reach the price you paid for them.

“If there is question today of recognizing the fact that our debts must be controlled or else they will control and destroy us, from whom should we seek advice?

“From the International Banker who can buy his way into the financial pages of our daily press? The International Banker who has been consistently wrong for the last fourteen years; the International Banker whose sole objective seems to be in making a profit out of the misery of the American people; the International Banker who maliciously and unjustly inflated the credit dollar of our country and now squirms and prates about the inflation of the currency dollar? He foresees that through the revalua-

tion of the gold ounce a definite loss will accrue to him although he has been instrumental in many ways in providing substantial losses to the American investing public. All investors must suffer save the International Banker who alone must profit. That is his philosophy. Therefore, he advocates letting nature take its course until the relation of twelve credit dollars against one gold dollar is reestablished. In other words, like a spider in the web he is waiting for your farms to depreciate in value even more; waiting for the wages of the laboring class to be reduced and scaled down; waiting for your homes and contracts to be confiscated; waiting until the \$200,000,000,000 are melted at least in half before he devours the whole for himself.

“The American public will never wait for this raw, untamed, unmerciful nature to take such a course. We have had enough of confiscations. We have struggled long enough with starvation wages.

“We are expecting a readjustment of debt to be made under our new regime. We are expecting it in a logical Christian method in order to save what we have; in order that the wheels of industry may once more turn in prosperity; in order that the fields may produce their golden grain at a reasonable profit. We will either reevaluate our gold and thereby cut our debts in half in order to let business revive and prosperity reappear or else we will be forced into a policy of repudiation. But for one thing we will no longer continue to follow the advice of the International Bankers of whom I told you only a farthing’s worth.

“The time for juggling words has ceased. The time for saving American homes and American investments has arrived. Human rights must take precedence over the barbarous financial rights which have been in vogue in this country for the last fourteen or more years.

“The time has come for cleaning the Augean stables of international banking houses and for guaranteeing bank deposits without which no confidence can ever be restored in a system that has operated on the principle, ‘Heads we win—Tails you lose.’ ”

In view of the fact that the leaders in both Republican and Democratic parties have been beneficiaries of J. P. Morgan, these words, spoken by Father Coughlin months before the authentic

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disclosures were made, are proof to the American public of his earnestness, fearlessness and righteousness in castigating those men who obstructed the revaluation of the gold ounce—men who preferred financial rights to human rights.

The several discourses which followed in this series were designed to bring much discomfiture to the venal politicians and the greedy banking fraternity who by this time were openly opposing Father Coughlin in many quarters.

His audience was now estimated at more than 30,000,000 listeners each Sunday. Hundreds of bags of mail came to his office giving him encouragement to carry on. It was the first time in the history of finance that a single individual found it possible to arouse a nation against the entrenched forces of wealth. J. Pierpont Morgan and his satellites were no longer impregnable. The contest was destined to proceed. The giant Goliath was destined to fall wounded by the verbal onslaught waged by this young David.

## PART IV

### DRIVING OUT THE MONEY-CHANGERS

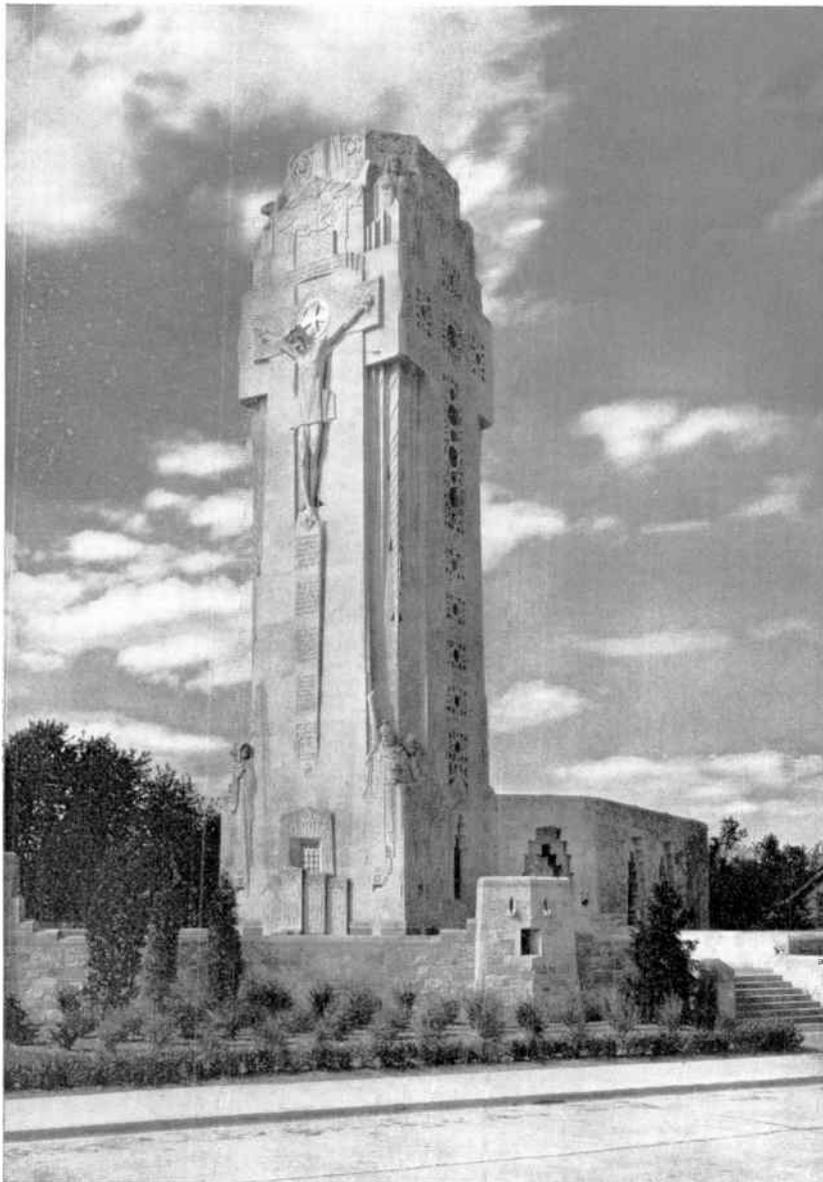
**I**N any biographical sketch, both the deeds and the method of its subject are important.

Through his power of diction, his rhetoric, his forceful elocution and his personal magnetism, Father Coughlin succeeded in teaching the American public moral principles which had been advanced by the head of his Church. His method, as I previously remarked, was that of the Fathers of this same Church, who spared neither name nor public deed when they found themselves in contest with public figures.

The rich mellowness of Father Coughlin's voice cannot be translated to these pages. But it is fitting, in order to bare both the mind and the method of this priest, to give the exact words which he employed as he assisted in driving the money-changers out of the temple and in establishing the moral-economic principles of true Americanism and solid Christianity.

In the four chapters which follow may be found four of the chief discourses broadcast in the early part of 1933. From them the reader will be able to gauge the mentality, the power and the doctrine of Father Coughlin.





CRUCIFIXION TOWER—*Shrine of the Little Flower*



## [ CHAPTER FIFTEEN ]

### *Bonds or Charity?*

*Broadcast January 22, 1933*



It appears that religion has lost much of its charm and forcefulness in the scheme of our modern civilization. This is so true that more than sixty percent of our fellow citizens profess no allegiance whatsoever to any organized church. They regard dogmas as unscientific presumptions. They look upon morals as unreasonable impositions.

While the Bible is regarded as a book to be revered, it is oftentimes considered archaic to maintain that its contents are revealed truths. This is most unfortunate, especially when we are confronted with the momentous problems of the present day.

Unguided by faith or by biblical principles, what solution has science offered to liquidate the imponderable debts accumulated by the Great War or to stem the ever increasing tide of losses which threaten to engulf us?

With all the gifted intelligence resident in the minds of the economists, which one of them, divorced from religion, has approached the problem of unemployment with such clarity of thought as is manifest in the legislation of the Mosaic Law or in the verses of St. Paul's inspired letter to the Corinthians, chapter the thirteenth?

Not one of them! These problems which are deep-rooted in man's social relations, one to another, have baffled a Pericles and an Aristotle of old, and will continue to defy lesser minds today unless the dim, fluttering candle of reason gives way to the lustrous shining of the Light of the World! God's standard has been bartered for an impossible gold standard. Debts and financial rights have been deemed more precious than love and human rights.

First, let us consider the stupendous debts which are devastating our farms, confiscating our homes, divorcing our life's savings, destroying our industries and throwing into inevitable bankruptcy our once prosperous country.

As you are already appraised of the fact, our national and private debts have reached approximately \$235,000,000,000. Definitely related to these debts is a conservative loss of \$246,000,000,000 sustained by our citizens

during the past three years. This total of nearly \$500,000,000,000 is so staggering that our capacity to pay has long since become an impossibility.

Now, what solution do the sacred Scriptures supply us when we are confronted by such a perplexing situation?

Read with me the twenty-fifth chapter of the Book of Leviticus. There you find inscribed the following words: "Thou shalt sanctify the fiftieth year, and shalt proclaim remission to all the inhabitants of thy land; for it is the year of jubilee. Every man shall return to his possession, and everyone shall go back to his former family. In the year of jubilee all shall return to their possessions. When thou shalt sell anything to thy neighbor or shalt buy of him thou shalt buy of him according to the number of years from the jubilee. . . . Do not afflict your countrymen."

Here, then, both a principle and a practice are expressed.

The principle is plainly this, namely, that debts have a limitation and an ending. They must not afflict your fellow countrymen, nor, in any event, may they endure in perpetuity. It is a principle which plainly infers that financial rights have a termination and that human rights are eternal. It is a principle which was not abrogated under the Christian dispensation; for Christ came to perfect and not to destroy. It is a divinely inspired principle which seemingly has not filtered through the minds of those into whose hands the destiny of our nation has been placed.

"Do not afflict your countrymen!" What care they for this economic inspiration that was born in heaven?

If it conflicts with the philosophy of creditors, let it perish! Let poverty reign, let stark starvation run rampant through our countryside; let evictions multiply! In a word, crush out human rights! Pillory them in every public place to teach a broken-hearted people that financial rights are supreme!

How inconsistent we so-called Christians are! Invokers of the Name of God in our political speeches! Builders of churches with our ill-gotten gains! Mumblers of prayers in public places! And hypocrites when actions would be more eloquent than words!

Take up and read—not only those of you who still cling to the outstretched hand of religion, but also those of you who, oppressed by debt, have forsaken her guidance to wander aimlessly down life's treacherous pathway—take up and read this twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus in its entirety.

And what else shall you find?

At least one more principle that is applicable in our present day when the budget is unbalanced, when taxes are being multiplied, when unemployment has reached a national crisis, and when the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few rides ruthlessly on under the whip and spurs of bonds and interest.

## BONDS OR CHARITY

Let me read for you the passage at hand:

"If thy brother be impoverished and thou receive him as a stranger and sojourner, and he live with thee, take not usury from him nor more than thou gavest. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor exact of him any increase of fruits. If thy brother, constrained by poverty, sell himself to thee, thou shalt not oppress him with the service of bond servants."

Usury! Interest! Bonds! Taxation!

Were we religious minded, it would not be difficult to apply this principle today.

On the contrary, we have adopted a policy which is out of tune with the basic harmony of the scripture which I have quoted.

It is a long, sordid story, my friends, in the telling of which I shall try to be brief.

Many of our social and economic sorrows are traceable to the lust for power, and to the greed for gold which dictated the policies which culminated in the Great War. No one seriously denies that this wholesale carnage was an inevitable sequence to the commercial and financial greed which characterized the Age of Reason. This is a serious statement to make. It is one which should not go unchallenged unless substantiated by facts.

For a moment, let us disregard the European nations and focus our attention upon America.

If you recollect, we entered the Great War on Good Friday in the year 1917. On the eve of that eventful day our Senate was assembled. Long into the hours of Holy Thursday night, serious-minded men debated both on grounds of patriotism and of righteousness whether or not we should take up arms against the Central Powers.

The night, when nearly 1900 years before, the Master supped with His Apostles and said to them: "This is the chalice of the new and eternal Testament which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins!" The night when Judas betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver! The night of Gethsemane, with its horrors, with its infuriated mob. The night when were spoken the words, "Put up thy sword into its scabbard. Know ye not that they who use the sword shall perish by it?" The short-lived night when Annas and Caiphas gloried in their passing triumph!

The clock in the Senate Chamber moved towards midnight. Frenzied words passed to and fro! Voices were filled with emotion! Was there ever such nervous tension before in the history of that august body? Never! Never!

The hands of the clock ticked off the seconds, the minutes! It was ten minutes to twelve—and yet no decision had been made. From his seat rose a white-plumed, fearless, honest man. It was Senator James Reed of Missouri.

“If you must declare war,” said he “for God’s sake, do it now before it becomes Good Friday.”

And then the bells of midnight began to toll the yearly requiem for the Prince of Peace. The Senate had waited too, too long! Waited for the anniversary of His death-day to declare the most iniquitous war that was ever waged!

It was the Good Friday of that memorable year of 1917. It was the doomsday of thousands of America’s youths who, like the innocent Victim of old, were herded to their Calvary of sacrifice to be crucified between the two thieves of gold and greed.

On that eventful day the President of the Bank Board of the United States was Mr. E. P. C. Harding. If the Senators knew not why they declared war, at least Mr. Harding was not ignorant. On March the 22nd previous to the Declaration, mind you, he knew that eventually we would commit ourselves against the Central Powers. He knew it and knew why, as is evident from these historic words—words that shall go down to blot with shame the pages of American history. Mr. Harding said:

“As a banker and creditor, the United States would have a place at the Peace Conference table, and be in a much better position to resist any proposed repudiation of debts, for it might as well be remembered that we will be forced to take up the cudgels for any of our citizens owning bonds that might be repudiated.”

What a confession, my friends! What a paradox to Christian teaching! What a burlesque on human rights! To think of it: We must take up the cudgels; we must rush headlong into a sea of blood; we must sacrifice our boys; we must crush the hearts of their mothers; we must multiply barbarously the orphans in our fair land; we must crucify again the Prince of Peace; we must consign to hell the doctrines of charity—all for the sake of bloody bonds owned by private citizens and bought at their personal risk. Bonds which today sleep in vaults where wealth lies buried, but which tomorrow shall rise like ghosts from graves in hell to haunt and to torment both us and our children!

Some future historian, my friends, will have both the courage and the honesty to analyze that statement of the president of the Bank Board of the United States and to tell fearlessly to the generations to come that our entrance into the Great War was motivated not to make the world safe for democracy, but to make the bonds and the debts collectable by our private lenders.

Christ was betrayed again for thirty dirty pieces of silver. And once again they who thus used the sword shall perish by it!

What had happened to evoke such a heinous, sinful statement from the official mind of the president of the Bank Board of the United States?

## BONDS OR CHARITY

Briefly, this is the outline of the facts. We are discussing the year 1917. For three years previous to this date, American corporations had been waxing fat on the war materials which they were shipping chiefly to England and to France. Already billions of dollars worth of wheat, of cotton, of arms and munitions had been poured into the lap of the Allies. Hardly a penny in actual money had been extended to them.

Now in 1917, it seemed certain that Germany would be victorious. If so, it seemed equally certain that England and France and the Allies would repudiate their debts. Thus, it appeared that the private contracts entered into directly by American munition manufacturers with the Allied governments of Europe would be disavowed. So we went to war to save our thirty pieces of silver; to guarantee that the Allies whom our wealthy citizens had staked for three years would win and therefore pay.

Now the United States as a nation, after 1917, was officially participating in the conflict. Now the complexion of the loans to the Allies was undergoing a change. Their payment was being made secure by the bodies and souls of innocent men. More than ever in 1917 arms, munitions, coal and foodstuffs were required by the Allies as well as by our army and navy. But from this year on our Federal Government, which means the American taxpayer, undertook to carry the burden.

Roughly estimated, \$14,000,000,000 of war material was loaned to the Allies by the broad-shouldered American taxpayer, until eventually came the Armistice, and with it a second chapter of bond history was written.

For behold! The \$14,000,000,000 worth of material—of wheat and of cotton, of meat and coal and munitions which we shipped abroad to England, to France, to Italy, to the Allies—was summarily cancelled. Their war debts were officially wiped out!

Meanwhile Government interest-bearing bonds had been sold to our banks and to our citizens to raise these dollars. Those who were crucified to the cross of poverty must offer up sacrifice to those, their fellow citizens, who sat upon the thrones of the Herods of wealth.

Do you understand? The taxpayers of the United States assimilated the debts cancelled so generously to the European nations. We assimilated the debts, and the taxpayers, through the medium of bonds, began to pay back the manufacturers of munitions and bullets used to kill and to destroy.

Oh, indeed, if the debts had been canceled in favor of the foreigners, the bonds representing them and piled upon the backs of the American public had not been canceled! They still remained. Our citizens were still pledged to redeem these bonds which our Government had issued to pay the great corporations of America for their profitable contribution in having made a shambles of the civilized world.

We who thought that the flower of our youth had been sacrificed to

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make the world safe for democracy now agreed with President Wilson when he disillusioned us with the statement: "This was a commercial war."

Thus, once more I stress the point that as a result of the Great War, the citizens of this nation are, in one sense, debtors to the war profiteers of this country. Their profits ran into billions of dollars. And as a result of it all, there sprang up in our midst, in a period little over one year and a half, 16,500 more millionaires than we had before we entered the conflict.

Let me give you a few examples from the official records in our Federal archives.

First comes the Bethlehem Steel Company. The profits of this corporation for the years 1911, 1912 and 1913 averaged \$3,075,108 per year. But in 1915 the profits jumped to \$17,762,813. In 1916 they totalled \$43,503,968. And in 1918 they pyramided to \$57,188,769.

Second: Twenty-nine leading copper producing companies from 1915 to 1918 had a surplus of \$330,798,593 compared with the surplus of \$96,711,392 on the same day of 1914.

Third: The United States Steel Corporation, with a capital stock of approximately \$750,000,000, made a profit in 1916 and 1917 alone of \$888,931,511.

Fourth: In Senate document 259 of the Sixty-fifth Congress, there is made manifest the profits gained by American business during the year 1917. This document contains 388 pages of almost unbelievable facts.

In the meat-packing business alone, half of the concerns made a profit of more than 50 percent, and a sixth of them admit they made a profit of over 100 percent.

Of the 340 coal producers in the Appalachian field, 79 of them reported profits between 50 and 100 percent; 135 of them testified that they profited to the extent of 100 to 500 percent; 21 reported profits of from 500 to 1000 percent; and 14 testified that they made profits of more than 1000 percent.

Of course, my fellow citizens, immediately following the Great War, \$14,000,000,000, which Europe owed us at that moment in 1918, were summarily canceled. But that does not signify that the United States Government Bonds, which floated these debts and which eventually are payable by your tax money and by mine, it does not signify that these were canceled. For generations to come, the American people will be paying out taxes to the dollar-a-year profiteer who already had grown fat upon the misery of a stricken people.

Perhaps the truthful historian, to whom I referred a few moments ago, will regard the Great War as the death knell to a system of irrational capitalism which greedily profited upon misery, and to a system of financial control which waxed fat upon the bonded debts of a patient people.

## BONDS OR CHARITY

And so today, my friends, the American people are demanding the normalization of the American dollar, a dollar that was abnormalized and rendered dishonest by the issuance of War Bonds, by the inflation of domestic credit at home, by the break-down of foreign commerce and trade and by the subsequent flight of currency money from the channels of circulation.

Today, as in the year 1862, we are being terrorized and tyrannized by the philosophy which then was spoken by the House of Rothschild to the American bankers.

In a letter, known as the "Hazard Circular," received by every bank in the State of New York and in New England on that date, we find the following statement:

"The great debt that capitalists will see to it is made out of the war must be used as a means to control the volume of money. To accomplish this, the bonds must be used as a banking basis."

Thus, everyone is aware that money is controlled both by the debts and the profits arising from the war and by the multiplicity of bonds, bloody bonds, which bind us to the past and prevent us striving for the better things of the future.

No wonder that today, following the Great War, it is just as true as in the days following the Civil War that bankers are adverse to the issuance of currency money to replace the existence of interest-bearing bond money that is sucking the life blood from our nation.

In 1872 a mighty group of New York bankers sent the following circular to every bank in the United States. It reads as follows:

"Dear Sir: It is advisable to do all in your power to sustain such prominent daily and weekly newspapers, especially the agricultural and religious press, as will oppose the issuance of greenback paper money, and that you also withhold patronage or favors from all applicants who are not willing to oppose the Government issue of money. . . . To repeal the law creating National Bank notes, or to restore to circulation the Government issue of money, will be to provide the people with money, and will therefore seriously affect your individual profit as bankers and lenders."

Thus, the question of issuing non-interest-bearing Government money to replace the interest-bearing bond money has become a national issue. The principle of Scripture supports Government non-interest-bearing money. The principle of bankers stands firmly behind the bond money.

"If thy brother be impoverished," says the Scripture—and God knows as a nation we are not only impoverished, but we are on the verge of bankruptcy—"if thy brother be impoverished and weak of hand, take not usury from him nor more than thou gavest."

By which principle do the people of this nation wish to stand? By the

principle revealed by Almighty God to His chosen people or by the policy advocated in the financial documents which I quoted?

Billions of dollars of War Bonds bearing interest and multiplying wealth at the expense of our misery! Or the equivalent of these bonds handed to their present possessors in new currency, at which they will scoff and say: "Fiat money," as if it were not backed by gold; as if it were not cleaner and holier than the blood money of War Bonds to which they cling!

It would be billions of sterile currency dollars which the present bondholders would perforce invest in industry or in other tax bearing bonds. It would help substantially to end the famine of money from which we are suffering.

Religion! Faith! Revelation! These things, so taught the proud rationalist of the previous century, were relics of the uncultured past. Let us replace them with the clay god of reason. Let us substitute for God's word the word of erring man.

If in ancient days it was taught that thou shalt not oppress thy brother, we of this new age shall shout from the house-tops and preach in the press that this absurdity must terminate once and for all.

If bonds and interest were forbidden even in the dim past of Mosaic days, we of this age of reason shall teach a new doctrine that there can be no progress, no concentration of wealth in the hands of a few unless these instruments of tyranny are revived. If there needs be such an illusion as religion, says the rationalist, bind it and cabin it up within the narrow precincts of a Sabbath Day; for it has no place in the bank, no place in the stock exchange, no place in the secular life of a world's prosperity.

Oh, my fellowmen, what price have we paid for this philosophy, for our cleverness, for our rationalism; what sacrificial victim have we offered up at the feet of this dirty god of clay! With tears in our eyes; with hearts filled with repentance, we have sadly staggered under the weight of this cross; we became its victims until we were crucified between the thieves of greed and gold. But today I trust that we are glimpsing the first rays of a new sunrise, of a revived faith, of a happy Easter morn of resurrection from the dead past.

Once more we shall take up and read the Scriptures. Once more we shall turn to that beautiful letter which Paul inscribed to the Corinthians, and read therein God's philosophy of man's relation to his fellowman, as we put aside once and for all the rugged individualism, the pagan selfishness and the cursed exploitation which have temporarily replaced it in the days just passed.

"If I speak with the tongues of man and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy and should know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I should

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have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

“Charity is patient, is kind: charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

“Charity never falleth away: whether prophecies shall be made void or tongues shall cease or knowledge shall be destroyed. For we know in part: and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.

“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But, when I became a man, I put away the things of a child.

“We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face. Now I know in part: but then I shall know even as I am known.

“And now there remain faith, hope and charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity.”

And that, my friends, is the beautiful philosophy which God reveals to us, the doctrine of charity which is counter to the doctrine of rugged individualism. Charity, which looks into the soul of your fellowman and sees there not only the facial expressions of another human being but the borrowed splendor of the God Who created him!

Charity bids us love our fellowmen not for what they are in themselves but because God dwelleth in the temple of their hearts.

Charity, greater than all things, greater than all power, all wealth, teaches us to love the Lord our God with our whole heart, with our whole soul, with our whole mind, and our neighbor as ourselves. Charity teaches us that whatsoever we do unto the least of God's little ones we do unto Him!

Without charity you cannot even pretend to Christianity.

Thus, shall we go down the highway of time perpetuating the hypocrisy of the past? Shall we endeavor to work hardship and exploitation upon our fellowman, knowing that whatever we do unto him we are doing unto Christ?

Oh, rob, steal, profiteer and exploit, bend low and break your fellow citizens! Every time you lift a lash of oppression; every time you raise a scourge of exploitation, you are lashing Christ again at the pillar in Pilate's hall, you are driving home once more the thorns of worry into His brow; you are crucifying Him upon the cross of Calvary!

Whatsoever you do to the least of His little ones you do unto Him!

## [ CHAPTER SIXTEEN ]

### *The March of the Workers*

*Broadcast January 29, 1933*

wo weeks ago this afternoon I had occasion to address this audience on the nineteenth article of the proposed Glass Bill. This bill was intended to legalize branch banking throughout the entirety of the United States. It aimed eventually to assimilate all the small independent banks throughout any given State into one or two mighty central banks resident in the State's financial capital. It proposed to make possible the centralization of all banking eventually within the confines of lower Manhattan, New York City.

In a word, this short-sighted bill aimed at cornering all the credit of the nation in the hands of a few. More will be heard about that in the present Senate investigation.

I pointed out how the head of the Catholic Church lamented this concentration of wealth and of credit in the hands of a few, and regarded it as one of the major economic evils of our day. I reminded this audience that the Glass proposal originated in the minds of those who for generations have grown fat upon the exploitation of the American public, and was being advocated by a certain banking house whose ancestor multiplied his millions in the days of the Civil War by selling guns to the Federal Government; guns that did not shoot and could not shoot, thereby prolonging the sufferings of that lurid conflict, thereby proving his patriotism to posterity in being partly responsible for the needless sacrifice of thousands of men.

If I may digress at the outset of this afternoon's lecture, let me express a few words relative to war. They come to my mind as associated with this mention of the Civil War. Already you are apprised of the fact that there are existent in this nation almost \$12,000,000,000 of Government Bonds whose origin is traceable to the commercial war which was fought between the years 1914 and 1918. They are bonds upon which you citizens of this nation are paying approximately three and one-half percent interest both to the banks and to the individuals who hold them against you. Your yearly tribute is almost \$400,000,000 in taxes to those who have invested in the debts which we have piled up to make the world safe not for democracy but for chaos, not for prosperity but for depression, not for liberty but

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for species of economic slavery where money, the medium of exchange, has been transformed into a scourge of control.

Meanwhile, the civilized nations of the world are at present spending approximately \$4,000,000,000 each year in preparation for the next war—for the next commercial war that appears to be inevitable because we do not know how to trade in justice and in equity with each other; because the nations persist in upholding a policy of exploitation, of narrow nationalism both abroad and at home.

You are a patient people. But there are times when patience, ceasing to remain a virtue, degenerates into a vice.

You are a childish people, who grow enthusiastic over empty victories. You become emotional with tears over needless slaughter. You will permit again, I presume, your husbands and your sons to be conscripted body and soul, but you lack sufficient courage, leadership and intelligence to demand legislation that if ever another such war shall break upon the tranquillity of our nation, not only men shall be conscripted, but money and gold must likewise be conscripted to defend our shores. Wake up!

Does it not seem most incongruous that both ex-service men, and widows and sons of the slain victims be burdened with war debts, when already they have sacrificed the best years of their existence and their most precious possessions before the altars of international, commercial greed? Does it not appear equitable that if precious lives shall be conscripted, we shall not fail to conscript precious dollars? Let us cease inflicting with starvation and confiscation a docile people who have borne the burdens of war and now are prostrate upon life's Calvary Hill—prostrate and exhausted from carrying the Cross of Depression!

That is why the prophet Nehemias said, when he beheld the misery of a stricken people—a misery that had been increased by burdensome debts:

“And I was exceedingly angry when I heard their cry according to these words. And my heart thought with myself; and I rebuked the nobles and magistrates, and said to them: *Do not every one exact usury of your brethren?* And I gathered together a great assembly against them. . . . And I said to them: *The thing you do is not good. . . . Both I and my brethren, and my servants, have lent money and corn to many. Let us all agree not to call for it again: let us forgive the debt that is owing to us. Restore ye to them this day their fields, and their vineyards, and their oliveyards, and their houses. And the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, which you were wont to exact of them, give it rather for them.*”

So spoke the prophet of old according to the Scriptures of God, when the Jewish nation emerged from a war. And we do contrary in modern times according to the philosophy and devisals of godless man.

My friends, the time has come when like Nehemias we shall gather to-

gether a great assembly against the nobles of wealth and the magistrates who serve them!

But let us return to the Glass Bill, which supports the theory of the concentration of credit in the hands of a few. After twenty-one precious days of what most news journals called filibustering, this bill passed the Senate in a modified form. It has not yet even got into the halls of the Lower House. Its viciousness was well advertised throughout the nation. Only nine States in the Union which hitherto permitted branch banking will be permitted to continue this practice. So passed the bill in the Senate.

Twenty-one days spent in hatching an empty egg! Twenty-one days "destroying" the fundamental causes of our national misery! Twenty-one days in refusing to admit that we are suffering from a famine of money! Twenty-one priceless days which were crowned by the same Senator Glass, who, defeated in the nineteenth article of his bill, introduced a motion on the floor of the Senate to table all inflationary proposals, everyone of which was designed to rid this country of the famine of money. He even refuses to discuss this thing further!

Oftentimes, my friends, I have drawn to your attention the universally known fact that if there is hunger in our midst it is not due to a lack of foodstuffs; if there are idle factories it is not due to an absence of desire on our part to use their products; if there were more than 1,000,000 farms confiscated during the past few months, this may not be attributed either to laziness or to inactivity. The American agricultural class is too industrious to suffer this charge.

It is all due to a stupid, vicious and radical philosophy on the part of certain nobles of wealth that money must be used as a medium of control.

Any proposal to destroy this famine of money is called radical and unsound. Any attempt to restore the purchasing power of the dollar to what it was when these damnable war bonds were launched upon a defenseless people is considered inflationary. By force of logic it is therefore unsound for men to work; it is unsound for a farmer to earn enough from his produce to save his home. It is unsound to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to keep open our schools. It is unsound to earn enough money whereby the products of our factories can be purchased. It is doubly unsound and heretical to cease worshipping at the altar of the man-made god of gold.

By the way, did your local newspaper comment upon the fact that any attempt—not at inflation, which is a hypocritical word as used in this instance, but at normalization of the American dollar—did your newspapers carry an account that the United States Senate by a vote of fifty-six to eighteen has refused to consider any proposal to increase our currency? If not, this is what was carried in the columns of the *Detroit News* on

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Thursday, January 26. Mr. Jay Hayden, its representative in Washington, writes as follows:

"The Democratic and Republican leaders on Capitol Hill, all opposed to any sort of direct tampering with the currency, now are agreed that there will be no further serious threat of legislation to debase the gold standard, at least until the beginning of the first regular session of the new Congress in January, 1934."

Well, my friends, there is optimism for you—an optimism that tells you to tighten up your belt—an optimism that bids you smile and smile and be a devil as you look forward to the prospect of another year of idleness, of another year of profitless crops, of another year of confiscation, another year of closed factories, another year of loss to our industrialists.

Three years ago, in the face of incontestable facts, you were a radical if you even whispered aloud the word "depression." Today you are worse than a red Bolshevik if you even permit yourself to think that there is such a thing as a famine of money which can be corrected.

Is there a famine of money in this country or are we deceived by a heinous misunderstanding?

Before answering this question, let me once more remind you that money is divided into three parts. First, there is your basic coin which you do not use directly: this is called gold. Secondly, there is your pocket money represented by silver coins and by paper bills: this is called currency. And, lastly, there is your check money, or your bonds, or your mortgages called credit or debt money.

Now all political economists agree that for every unit of basic money, or gold, which we possess, we may have in circulation  $2\frac{1}{2}$  units of currency money and not more than 12 units of debt money. This formula of 1 to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 12 is the formula of sound money just the same as  $H_2O$  in chemistry is the formula for pure water.

Now in our nation we have approximately \$4,500,000,000 of gold. Work out your formula. This permits us to have approximately \$11,000,000,000 of currency and \$54,000,000,000 of credit or debt money.

Well, what are the facts existing regarding the present money in this country? Instead of having approximately \$11,000,000,000 of currency, we have in circulation nominally \$5,000,000,000 of currency. But if you subtract the money that has gone into hiding, the money that has been destroyed, we have no more than \$3,000,000,000 in real currency.

On the other hand, we have the stupendous sum of approximately \$235,000,000,000 of debt money, instead of \$54,000,000,000 actually supported by our \$4,500,000,000 of gold.

The sound and scientific formula has been thrown aside by the modern manipulators of finance. Against all precedent and experience they attempt

to tell us that sound money exists in the ratio of 1 to  $1\frac{1}{3}$  to 117—just as sensible to say that the formula of water is  $C_6H_5OH$ , which, by the way, is the chemist's terminology for carbolic acid. Try to drink that for water and see what happens. And try to use our present formula of money and watch the "march of the workers."

Now there is actually more than \$7,000,000,000 of a famine of currency money in this nation. There is approximately an overweight of \$180,000,000,000 of credit or debt money in circulation. More than we can conservatively carry.

The Senators in Washington know this far better than do you in this audience recognize it. And yet they have the effrontery to tell you through the columns of the press that those who desire inflation, as they term it incorrectly, are seeking to establish an unsound currency, as if it could be more unsound than that which exists today.

The truth of it is that the system which they are endeavoring to uphold is so unsound that to it, more than to anything else, you can attribute the starvation, the idleness and the discontent which are so universal in this nation.

My friends, that is why for several Sundays I have been proposing the recall of the billions of dollars of war bonds. That is why I have been advocating the issuance of currency money in place of these bonds. This would not create an inflation but would only normalize the sub-normal currency from which we are suffering. Call that radical if you will. But if you do, likewise call the Word of God radical after what you have heard as written by the Prophet Nehemias.

And still, by a vote of fifty-six to eighteen, the omniscient Senate of the United States refuses, under the leadership of Carter Glass, to entertain any consideration aimed at removing this menace!

Of course, he and his supporters are ably seconded by many financial institutions in our midst. For this, they have their personal reasons—devastating and disconcerting reasons which you have not thought of: First, by accepting currency in payment of the bonds, the bankers and the bondholders would be compelled to invest in American property and industry. Secondly, these financiers who are opposing such a measure are playing hand in glove with the foreign debtor nations, hoping *first* to have our government make a readjustment or partial cancellation of these foreign debts; and *then* in 1934, or late in 1933, to permit a revaluation or normalization of debt cut. This, so they think, is the only way possible to collect the private debts owned by foreign governments and individuals to these bankers. In the meantime, let American people suffer while the bankers play financial politics at the price of our misery!

Do you realize, my friends, that in the banks of this nation the American

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people have on deposit approximately \$45,000,000,000? Do you realize that these banks altogether have not more than \$800,000,000 of actual currency in their vaults? In other words, they have only one-sixtieth of the money on hand which you deposited with them. This is the information made known to us in the pages of the *Congressional Record* for January 24, 1933.

Of course, they have Government Bonds at par value, and municipal, railroad and insurance bonds, not at par value. Of course, their vaults are filled with first mortgages and with notes payable, all of which have depreciated. But from whom could these bankers expect to redeem in actual currency their bonds, their stocks and their notes to pay the American people who have deposited \$45,000,000,000 with them?

If the patient people of this nation have lost confidence in a Government whose Congress, according to the Constitution, has the right to coin and to regulate the value of money, and if the right, therefore the duty—a duty that they have tabled, side-tracked and refused to perform—if the people have lost confidence, it is because this Congress has not only not exercised its duty, but now has gone on record with a resolution to discuss nevermore the normalization of the American dollar.

That is a most serious situation. It means that hardly a single bank in this country dares to lend a sizable sum of money over a period of more than a few days. It means that business is stagnant. It means that profits are a thing of the past. It means that debts must increase. It means that foreclosures and confiscations must continue. It means that our great industrial plants with their huge investments are seriously crippled.

How long can the banks of this nation survive if this famine of currency money continues?

There are approximately 19,000 banking institutions within the boundaries of our country. In the year ending June 30th, deposits to the amount of \$11,500,000,000 were withdrawn from them. One more such critical year and it would require twenty Reconstruction Finance Corporations to keep open the doors even of the forty-two banks of this country which hold thirty-two percent of all its deposits, or of the one hundred and ninety-five banks which hold forty-seven percent of the nation's deposits.

I quote these astounding figures as a basis of argument against the mighty financial institutions of this nation who maintain so vigorously that we require no normalization of our currency, and yet who should be the first to recommend it if they desire salvation.

The people are learning quickly.

The farmers of this nation realize that once before in our history we have had normalization of our currency. They realize that the Federal Reserve policy put into effect in 1920 deflated agriculture \$32,000,000,000;—

\$18,000,000,000 of it in land values and the balance of it on the crops of 1920 and 1921.

Nineteen hundred and twenty was the year when we had the largest volume of money in circulation. It was the year when the dollar reached its lowest buying power. In fact at that date a dollar was worth only 64 cents.

Here is the story: Those were the days when the owners of Government Bonds were dissatisfied with the purchasing power of the dollar. Beginning with 1921, the bondholders and the financial powers of this country took out of circulation more than \$100,000,000 every month for seventeen months, with the result that the buying power of the dollar increased. By the year 1926 the dollar became worth 100 cents.

Had their program of deflation been concluded in the year 1926 there would have been no complaint. It would have succeeded only in normalizing the dollar. But by 1929 the dollar became worth \$1.05. In 1930 it increased to \$1.15. And in 1932 it reached the price of \$1.54. Today your dollar is conservatively worth \$1.60. Today, therefore, we are suffering from a dishonest dollar!

As far as the farmer is concerned, the United States Department of Labor informs us that the dollar is worth approximately \$2.03 in farm commodities. In other words, due to inflation, the farmers of this nation are paying \$203.00 for every \$100.00 worth of taxes they owe, for every \$100.00 on the mortgage which they owe. It also means that their five percent interest has doubled to ten percent.

There, my friends, is a real demonstration of what deflation means;—now, to reduce the 203 cent dollar to a 100 cent dollar by the issuance of the currency money which has been taken out of circulation and sunk in bonds is what we mean by the normalization of the dollar.

But we are told that we must not tamper with the fictitious value of gold.

Now, when the dollar was equivalent to sixty cents or thereabouts, I remember the bondholders and the influential public utilities, who had contracts to sell light and power for so much per kilowatt, to carry passengers on street railways and on steam railways for so much either per ride or per mile; when these contracts were working to the disadvantage of the owners of street railways and public utilities, what happened?

Bondholders and bankers approached the Supreme Court to have these contracts nullified on the grounds, to put it in plain English, that if the said contracts were maintained, no profit would accrue either to the bondholders or to the public utilities themselves.

What did the Supreme Court decide when this case was presented to them? It said that the contracts made between the general public and the public utilities were not binding. They decreed that the power to regulate can never be bartered away nor traded away.

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Now, when the shoe is on the other foot, when the dollar is worth anywhere from 156 cents to 203 cents, these same gentlemen oppose its normalization through the regulation and revaluation of our currency. It was a blessed thing to regulate the value of money in 1920. But to tamper with it in 1933 becomes a financial mortal sin.

Let us not become stampeded by catch words or by obsolete phrases unscientifically spoken. Let not the worshippers of the dishonest dollar deceive us by singing the battle hymn of sound money at one moment and then by practicing the policies of brigands at the next.

Sound money, as far as an American is concerned, means 100 cents in one dollar, not 160, not 203, but 100 cents. Unsound money is that which exists today and which cannot be ousted from our midst until the formula of the ages is readopted—1 to 2½ to 12. Otherwise your money is as car-bolic acid is to water. Today it is 1 to 1⅓ to 117.

Just yesterday, Sir Reginald McKenna, perhaps the greatest living economist and banker in Great Britain, went on record as stating: "Controlled inflation, far from being a remedy of fools or knaves, has become widely regarded as the best solution of our troubles, since it is realized that a substantial rise in wholesale prices need have no more than a slight effect upon the cost of living."

It is the only sensible way and logical way to reevaluate our gold ounce. And without revaluation there is only one thing left—at least three months ago there was only one thing left—and that was repudiation.

Are you not appraised of what is happening in Iowa, in Illinois, in Ohio, in Minnesota, in Michigan, and in the Middle West generally? These men have rebelled against the dishonest dollar and those who attempt to use it.

Which one of you will condemn these hard-thinking, hard-working sons of toil from protecting their homes; from rising in revolution, if you like, against the iniquities of a law and man-made contracts that under present circumstances have proven themselves immoral, unsound, unchristian and un-American?

More power to these farmers! They still retain that spirit of independence, that love of liberty, and that determination for fair play and justice which characterized the patriots of 1776 who for a lesser reason rose up in mighty indignation against a system of taxation that was not half so iniquitous as this system of exploitation which stamps the financial structure of our present life.

The precedent of the Supreme Court of the United States is on the side of the farmers. The fundamentals of the moral law of God support them.

We have had enough of evictions. We have been surfeited with confiscations. We have been scourged long enough at the pillar of obsolete contracts and mortgages. And the law of self-preservation, the first law that

God gave to man, and which antedates any man-made law, comes rushing with its support to the farmers in their righteous struggle.

A month ago or more we were satisfied with announcing the slogan of "revaluation or repudiation." Within a few months from today, that slogan will be changed to "revaluation or revolution," simply because the American people refuse to pay their debts with dishonest dollars.

Let me read you an editorial which appeared in the New York *World-Telegram* dated Thursday, January 26. It, too, is entitled "Workers on the March." It reads as follows:

"When President Green of the conservative American Federation of Labor declares that his legion of 2,500,000 unionists *soon will be on the march for perhaps such a battle as no labor movement has fought before*, the government and business leaders of the country must listen.

"When President Edward O'Neil, of the even more conservative American Farm Bureau Federation, says: *Unless something is done for the American farmer we will have revolution in the countryside in less than twelve months*, the government and business leaders of the country cannot ignore the warning.

"Yesterday both of these spokesmen of the toilers of the city and the farm unfurled their battle flags.

"When, last fall, Mr. Green on the Federation's convention platform in Cincinnati threatened the use of *forceful methods* in achieving the thirty-hour week and higher wages, his words had an ominous sound. Criticism broke forth. Censure did not drive him to cover, for in an interview in *Nation's Business*, organ of the United States Chamber of Commerce, he repeats that he meant what he said and more.

"*We shall, he said, fight with every legitimate weapon at our command to restore the kind of America in which a man can have a chance in his own right. There has been a fear that we are in earnest. Let me use this opportunity to double rivet the assurance that we are in earnest.*

"American labor, he explains, has not gone wild; it simply has come to what it is *determined shall be the end of the road of suffering.*

"The significance of this defiant note is not that there is a new Mr. Green speaking. It is that a new union labor is speaking. Mr. Green never has marched ahead of his rank and file. That he now speaks militantly, desperately, shows that he has been forced by his members to do so.

"The same is true of Mr. O'Neal and his farmers.

"These warnings are not bluff. Behind them is the explosive desperation of a vast majority of American citizens."

If that is not enough to disturb the smug complacency of individuals who think that man-made laws and man-made contracts take precedence over God's laws and God's contracts, we have come into desperate days.

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You dare not impose more taxes upon a people whose backs already have been bowed to mother earth. You dare not permit to continue the starvation and the suffering, the unemployment and the distress which is so universal in a country that is teeming with the real wealth of the soil, the real wealth of industry and the real wealth of manhood.

Cease prating of what happened to Germany when that nation had recourse to the printing press to flood its country with worthless marks. Germany and the United States are poles apart. Germany had no gold upon which to predicate the printing of its worthless paper money. America has more gold than all Europe put together; possesses so much gold that her currency money today is at least one and one-half times short of what it should be according to the Federal Reserve Act passed in 1913.

Who is unconstitutional? Who is illegal? Those who seek redress through revaluation or normalization, or those who, to build up their arguments to perpetuate oppression, twist truth and deform facts to suit their purpose?

My fellow Americans, you are being victimized by misinformation which flows like poison into your arteries from the hearts of those who blindly cling to the presumed inviolability of bonds and contracts and deified gold. Once more human life and human rights are being conscripted on the battle front of depression to become food and fodder for the protection of a financial formula that is unscientific, unchristian and inhuman.

All that the prophet Nehemias said of old can be assigned to the scrap heap or to the gutter. All that Christ said, too, can be given to the gods of war as useless and poetic because man's way has become more superior and more expedient than God's.

Perhaps the United States Senate can table any resolution that aims at inflation, as they call it, but it cannot eradicate the determination from the minds of the American public who today are aroused to demand justice instead of impudence from their duly elected representatives.

In bestowing life upon the creature man, Almighty God likewise bestowed upon him the right to sustain his life by the sweat of his brow. The omniscient Creator conferred upon no man or upon no group of men the license to exploit, to starve or to curtail unjustly the efforts of an individual, much less the activities of the agricultural and laboring class of a nation, for selfish purposes.

The laborer is worthy of his hire. And the people of this country have a right to the products of this country. That right cannot be taken away from them by the obstruction of a man-made law of antiquated gold. It is the first duty of this or any other Government to erect laws and statutes which will render possible and feasible the employment of every individual citizen who is honest enough to work. That is the business of every state.

That is Catholic doctrine,—not socialism, not radicalism.

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That is a doctrine that was born in the crib of Bethlehem and was sealed with the ruddy drops of Christ's blood upon the cross of Calvary long before Karl Marx and his atheism ever attempted to taint the leadership of an injured people, and long before any act of Congress decided once and for all that gold is wealth, that gold has a certain value, while men and things that sustain their lives are valueless.

## *The Suicide of Capitalism*

*Broadcast February 5, 1933*

**N**AST Sunday I had occasion to quote a passage from the Old Testament relative to the existence of war bonds and usury. To refresh your memories, the Scripture was taken from the second Book of Esdras. The prophet Nehemias is addressing himself to the nobles and magistrates of Israel. In no mild terms he rebukes them vigorously because they persisted in profiteering upon the misery of their countrymen who had just emerged from a war. He said:

“And I was exceedingly angry when I heard their cries,” (meaning the cries of the people). “And my heart thought with myself; and I rebuked the nobles and magistrates and said to them: ‘Do you every one exact usury of your brethren?’ And I gathered together a great assembly against them. And I said to them: ‘The thing you do is not good. . . .’”

Now, it is generally upheld in modern America that it is sound and legitimate for our Federal Government to issue Liberty Bonds and similar war bonds to those who can afford to buy them. They are tax free. They are interest bearing. Thus they are lucrative to those who can afford to buy them. But in their analysis it means that the laboring and the farming class of America are bound to pay interest to their wealthier fellow citizens for the privilege of having fought and bled in the last destructive commercial war. In its logical analysis it further means that the wealthy class of our country, or rather those able to purchase such war bonds, have invested in the destructive debts incurred by their fellow citizens.

At the outset, may I draw to your attention the point which I have been stressing so insistently, namely, that we are engaged in dealing with each other in dishonest dollars, which our Federal Bureau of Statistics admits are equivalent anywhere from 163 to 203 cents in every dollar.

I have been pointing out to this audience that we are suffering from a famine of currency money; that our real currency has gone into hiding; has been traded for bonds; and has brought about a condition of affairs where we are starving in the midst of plenty.

Here is proof, then, that the fundamental law of supply and demand upon which economists are eternally harping has been sunk beneath the

quicksands of indecision and unintelligence. Starving in the midst of plenty!

The problem, therefore, which immediately confronts us is to restore currency money to our fellow citizens—not directly, not through any Bolshevik method, but through the channels of trade and commerce, of industry and of agriculture—to restore it so that supply and demand can operate. This is the natural channel of restoration. Unnatural means, such as trying to borrow ourselves out of debt, are unsound and fraught with disaster.

To solve this problem, I advocated recalling these interest-bearing war bonds; to pay off their present holders in non-interest-bearing currency, which would soon find its way into circulation, and also save us approximately \$400,000,000 per year in taxation.

To this proposal, considerable opposition was aroused, because it was said my argument was based upon an obsolete doctrine of religion.

I was not so much surprised as one might suspect to discover this attitude among a group of men who conscientiously believe that the practices of religion should find on place outside the walls of a church except perhaps beside the hearth of a home. For we have long grown accustomed to the modern financial policies which have divorced themselves from Christian charity and, therefore, from the less important teachings of the Master.

But I was greatly surprised when the conclusion was forced upon me that many of our modern bankers and economists failed to understand and to comprehend both the essence and the nature of usury and interest even from an intellectual and rational standpoint. I fear too many men have succeeded in getting themselves appointed to the chairs of bank presidents and to the boards of financial directors who were better equipped to manage affairs where less learning, less education and less thoughtfulness are required.

This conclusion has been forced upon us in the last two years. And because of this, the American public has lost confidence in a leadership which is well characterized by the biblical expression of "the blind leading the blind."

Before confidence can be restored—and our whole financial structure is built upon that one word of confidence—those engaged in the banking profession had better revise the personnel of their staffs and establish at least a primary school of economics within the halls where directors meet to manage the financial affairs of a nation.

If you will bear with me, I shall try to advance an argument from reason to advocate the recalling of interest-bearing war bonds. It is an argument based upon the nature of capitalism and upon the principles underlying in-

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terest. Abstract and dry as it may appear, I am of the opinion that every citizen should acquaint himself with it.

But, before endeavoring to explain the principle which underlies the practice of renting out money for gain, let me rehearse briefly the attitude of the ancient world towards interest. I shall do this only with the hope of elucidating the major cause of our present chaotic condition; only with the hope of pointing out specifically what immediate and scientific procedure must be taken if we seriously entertain any thought of removing the dire economic effects which we are experiencing, and which, if allowed to continue, will shortly destroy our system of capitalism.

It is true that throughout the Bible the word "usury" is synonymous with the word "interest." This identification of the two terms resulted from the fact that in ancient times money was not regarded as being something fruitful, as something which could generate profits in the same way that a grain of wheat buried in the bosom of the earth could generate and multiply other grains of wheat.

Despite this ancient concept of money, we discover, however, that about the year 2000 B. C., the practice of charging usury became common among the Babylonians. The interest charged by these people sometimes attained the rate of  $33\frac{1}{3}$  percent.

To the credit of the Babylonians, their great lawmaker, Hammurabi, outlawed this piratical practice.

In Egypt, the custom of charging interest became prevalent about the year 718 B. C., and remained one of its pampered theories of civilization until eventually that nation was subjugated by the Romans.

Remembering that the Jewish people had been led captive into Egypt, it is easy to comprehend how the progeny of Father Abraham readily acquired the evil habit of dealing in usury. But if you open your Old Testament you will read in the Book of Exodus, the twenty-second chapter, in the Book of Leviticus, the twenty-fifth chapter, and in Deuteronomy, the twenty-third chapter,—you will read that the practice of charging interest was regarded as immoral and unsound. In fact, you will find that this economic principle, namely, that money in itself was not fruitful and therefore interest charged on money must not be tolerated,—you will find that this economic principle was upheld by the prophets and the kings of Israel and Judea who were very open in their condemnation of usury whenever it appeared.

Thus, in this brief review of the early history of usury and interest it is sufficient to remind this audience that the exaction of money as the hire of money was a pagan custom. Wherever religion flourished, we find that its leaders always took up afresh the campaign against usury. This was true for at least twenty-five uninterrupted centuries of Jewish and Christian history.

While the Greek and Roman philosophers theoretically condemned usury or interest, while in the year 412 B. C. it was abolished by a plebiscite in Rome, yet we find its practice flourishing in the days of the Caesars. No wonder the great historian of Rome has exclaimed that the system of slavery wedded to the practice of usury planted the seeds of decay which ruined the ancient world.

Up to this moment I have been speaking of what took place in the ancient world in order to give us a clearer background to the question of modern interest. Bear in mind that usury and interest for the ancients were identical terms, for the simple, single reason that money was considered as something non-productive.

In modern times money is no longer considered non-productive. In modern times there is an essential distinction between usury and interest. This distinction arises, if I may bore you with repetitions, from the capitalistic consideration that money is now productive. Please remember that word. Money is productive!

Of course, everyone who is interested in the history of banking or in the history of economics well understands that the Catholic Church for twenty uninterrupted centuries has fought relentlessly against usury. The Church adopted this attitude, not only because it was fortified by the many texts of Scripture to which I have just alluded, but because reason itself dictated that no gain may be morally had from a non-productive thing.

Today the Church has not ceased its opposition to this unscientific and destructive usury any more than it has withdrawn its opposition to adultery or to murder.

But, with the birth of capitalism, scarcely more than one hundred and twenty-five years ago, theologians, philosophers, economists and scientists began to distinguish between the two words "usury" and "interest." The distinction was not one of conventionality. It was one based upon fact, founded upon the nature of things. Money began to assume a new role in the affairs of life. While it was still regarded only as a medium of exchange, while it was never looked upon as a medium of control, nevertheless, it appeared evident from the nature of the new structure called capitalism that money began to be fruitful, to be productive.

In the past, expenses of government had been raised through the medium of taxation. Portions of wheat, of oil, of wine were exacted by the feudal lords from their tenants. Taxation was levied on the *actual possessions* of the citizens. Wars were fought, universities were built, cathedrals were erected, roads were maintained, all at the expense of the *present* wealth of the country. Seldom was its *future* wealth ever thought of much less employed. Perhaps this "pay as you go" method was accountable for the relatively slow progress achieved by our ancestors.

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However, the system of capitalism under which we live today was partly predicated upon the theory that now it is possible for the present generation to expand, to build highways and railroads, to cultivate limitless acres of land, to erect churches and shrines of learning, to accomplish a multitude of things in the name of progress mostly at the expense of future generations. Do you get the difference? Formerly it was present money, actual money. Today it is future money, rented money.

Money, therefore, becomes not only the medium of exchange. It also becomes the ambassador of future wealth. It represents the labor to be expended by the future generation borrowed by the present generation. It presupposes that we of today can use the unborn things of tomorrow,—the wheat that is to be grown next year in our fields, the dwelling house which we are unable to pay for today but which we would be able to pay for ten years hence. Now, instead of waiting for next year's crop to grow, instead of suffering from inconvenience within the walls of a cabin until such labor could have been expended to erect a modern dwelling, capitalism devised a system of progress, of credit and of prosperity by which the present generation can enjoy at least part of the benefits of the future; by which a young man need not wait necessarily for old age before he can establish himself in comfort.

Capitalism was a new scientific advance. The nature of money underwent a change. Without capitalism and its power to borrow upon the future, where would be such tremendous blessings as the Panama Canal, as our mighty railroads, as our paved highways, as our sanitary cities, as our modern dwellings, as those myriad things which we have called into being through our system of credit, through our confidence in the future, both of which are identified with this thing called capitalism?

If we borrow the labor from the future, and if the laborer is worthy of his hire, then interest money becomes the wage which we owe the future. The "pay as you go" policy in ages gone by has been superseded by the "pay as they come due" policy in the age of the present. In a word, the principal article of the faith of the capitalist is predicated upon the theory of debt, lending and borrowing against the future for productive purposes. I hope I have made that plain.

In this theory there is nothing immoral, nothing unsound. Very likely it is the best theory that has been advanced for financial purposes. The Christian Church was quick to realize what had happened. She was just as quick to distinguish between usury and interest,—usury which is identified with sterility and non-productivity, and interest which is associated with fecundity and progress. I know this is frightfully abstract. But, it is tremendously important to the citizens of this country to comprehend the principles which I am about to lay down.

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My friends, the vulgar notion identified with usury is only a half-truth. Most men, and perhaps not a few bankers as well as statesmen in this as in other nations, are of the improper opinion that usury merely means an overcharge of interest. I restate that such a notion is only a half-truth, because usury is substantially related to the lending of money for gain on some project which is non-productive. Of old, money could not breed money because it was merely the medium of exchange.

Today money can breed money because it is not only the medium of exchange, it is also the ambassador of future wealth, of future crops, of future labor, which we of the present pledge to repay; use and promise not to destroy.

I feel that I am risking much in dealing with this dry-as-dust discussion. But it is a risk well taken, for I fear that unless we understand the true nature of capitalism, which during the last few years has gone on a financial spree, we are liable to fall into the error that to cure the headache which has followed on the morning-after, we had better employ the services of a surgeon to cut it off and replace it with the block-head of communism. Then the Scriptural text which tells us that "the last state of this man will be worse than the first" will be quoted with much fervor.

My only aim is to invite capitalism and those who control its destiny to use the structure which our forefathers have builded for us; to *cease abusing* it, lest the same philosophy which predominated in the minds of well-intentioned prohibitionists regarding the use and abuse of wine and spirituous liquors shall once more crop up in our midst with dire results.

Let us return to our subject.

Now that money is fruitful, it becomes evident that it is just and ethical for the lender of money to be repaid for his services, as it was of old for the farmer who loaned his neighbor a bushel of seed to be repaid not only with the seed with which he accommodated his neighbor but also with a small measure of the fruitful crop which sprang from it.

In other words, interest is associated with loaning money for some productive enterprise;—for building a factory designed to produce either the necessities or luxuries of life, for constructing railroads, for making possible tremendous public improvements, for accomplishing all the magnificent things which have marked the progress of this last one hundred and twenty-five years. Usury, however, is identified with exploitation, with injustice, with the rental of money for non-productive enterprises.

May I emphasize that word "productivity." It is essentially associated with the morality of lending money at interest. It is essentially related to the principle expressed by the prophet of old in his condemnation of usury, to the teachings of the Christian Church for twenty centuries, and to the sound principles of capitalism and political economy which should ~~exist~~ today.

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I trust that I have made the principle plain. It is the same today as in the beginning. It must be the same tomorrow if our system hopes to endure. Whatever is productive can continue gaining for its owner even though absent from its owner's hands. Such is money which is now considered not only as the medium of exchange but as the ambassador of future wealth.

These propositions are valid independent of the particular order which exists, be it the Mosaic Law, be it early Christian law, be it the law of feudalism, or be it the law of capitalism. These principles were valid when the Church laid its veto on usury. But what has happened to capitalism during these last one hundred and twenty-five years or so? Why have I entitled this discourse "The Suicide of Capitalism"?

The answer is brief. From the days of the Napoleonic Wars until our own day, we have persistently and legally abused interest. We have been guilty of loaning money for non-productive enterprises.

It is a notorious fact that the Rothschilds, clinging to the Egyptian heresy, disparaging the teachings of their forebears, despising the precepts of their great leader, Moses, mocking the doctrines of the Talmud and the precepts of the Old Testament, these Rothschilds re-established in modern capitalistic life the pagan principle of charging interest on non-productive, or destructive debts. Under the flag of their leadership, there assembled the international bankers of the world, who first forsook the principle of gaining interest through productive loans and adopted the heresy of loaning money at interest for destructive purposes. The horrible, hated word spelled W-A-R was the secret of their success.

Practically every war since the birth of capitalism has been a destructive war. The wealth of a nation has either been sunk in ships at sea or buried in bullets in the soil of battlefields. Farms destroyed, cities razed, churches despoiled, industry diverted into false channels of activity, lives sacrificed. This has been the gruesome record of most wars since the birthday of capitalism.

The Napoleonic Wars, for the most part, as well as the Great War, all absolutely non-productive and destructive, were fought on the basis of bonds and of reparations payable in gold for interest.

Are you not aware that the destructive war which bears the ignominious name of "Great" was organized and fought on gold interest-bearing bonds? Need I rehearse for you again that due to that Great War we have issued among our own people approximately \$12,000,000,000 of debt money payable in gold to heal its economic wounds?

That, my friends, is the greatest modern abuse to which interest has ever been put. That has been the greatest mistake capitalism has ever made. That is usury. In the words of the prophet Nehemias, "That is not good." In the mind of every sound economist that is a disastrous thing.

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Here we have billions and billions of dollars represented by bonds—interest-bearing bonds—which are held by the banks and the wealthy individuals of our nation. For these bonds bearing interest, we, the people—the farmers, the laborers and the unemployed—must pay tribute to our fellow citizens for a purpose that was non-productive; for the privilege of having speeded up our factories, drained our fields, sacrificed our young men on an altar of destruction.

Having entered so foolhardily into this spree of spending, of wasting, of destroying, we have accumulated tremendous debts which are rendered more immoral because to these debts there is attached interest; because on these debts we have squandered the productive labors of the future. We have stolen from the future rather than borrowed from it—the future with its wealth that may only be used for productive purposes.

I trust that you are patient with this abstract discussion. It is necessary, my fellow citizens, that you spur your intellects to that point of comprehending where you can grasp and understand what it is my privilege to tell you. It was not taught to you in your school days and it will not be printed in your newspapers.

Whether you dwell in an humble farm house; whether you are a renter or a home owner in a city; whether you sit at ease in your club or in your hotel, you cannot afford to be ignorant of these philosophic facts. The future salvation of our nation and the continuance of the existence of the system of capitalism depend upon how well we shall grasp this principle and put it into practice.

To quote from a book entitled "The Twelfth Hour of Capitalism," written by the learned Kuno Renatus, we find expressed the ideas which I have been stressing for the last few Sundays. He says: "Relatively young as capitalism still is, it has already entirely forgotten the conditional nature of the law of productivity on which its whole system rests. *Thou shalt only incur debts for productive purposes.*"

Capitalism has been false to itself. We have the international bankers of the world learned by rote the heresy which was re-established by the Rothschilds in the early nineteenth century. While they have succeeded in concentrating wealth in the hands of a few, this concentration of wealth was an immoral effect produced by an immoral cause. And the cause was the issuing of bonds and the charging of interest on non-productive debts.

Once more I am constrained to quote for you the proof to substantiate this statement. It is "The Hazard Circular" which originated from the Rothschilds of London in the year 1862 while we were engaged in the Civil War. It reads as follows:

"Slavery is likely to be abolished by the war-power, and the chattel slavery destroyed. This, I and my European friends are in favor of, for

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slavery is but the owning of labor and carries with it the care for the laborer, while the European plan, led on by England, is for capital to control labor by controlling the wages. This can be done by controlling the money. The great debt that capitalists will see to it is made out of the war, must be used as a basis to control the volume of money. To accomplish this, bonds must be used as a banking basis. It will not do to allow the greenback, as it is called, to circulate as money any length of time, as we cannot control that."

There you have it, my friends! Bonds, debts and interest charged on unproductive enterprises! You have it in their own confession. Unproductive debts!

It was the same policy pursued by the international bankers who just a few years ago like sirens played their treacherous symphony of pretended patriotism upon the organ of American hearts while they sold us interest-bearing bonds for destructive purposes. We in America went mad to buy Liberty Bonds. God bless the word! They should have been called "slavery bonds!"

Today, the seemingly erudite bankers of our country have forgotten the very essence and substance which surrounds the nature of interest. They have misconstrued the very fundamentals of their own system of capitalism to such a degree that they erroneously think that whenever money is loaned it must bear interest. They have failed to distinguish between a productive loan and a destructive loan.

If this principle were thoroughly understood by the nations of the world, it would accomplish more in wiping the curse of war from the face of the earth than all their peace conferences and haphazard Leagues of Nations combined.

No wonder that financiers find themselves, in the words of Montague Norman: "To have reached such a pass in the condition of human affairs that we know not where to turn."

This condition has eventuated because unlearned men, into whose hands had fallen the guidance of the system of capitalism, misunderstood and mismanaged the child of their own devisals, preferring to follow the mandates of a group of international bandits who, careless of the peace and tranquillity of the world in which they live, preferred to amass personal gain at the expense of universal suffering.

Now that the world, and especially America, is beginning to reap the furor of the whirlwind, we seem incapable of stemming the cause of our misery. Especially for the last four years we have listened to leaders whose only suggestions were centered around increasing taxation, lowering wages, instituting moratoria, beating down prices. These are the childish suggestions which rush to their minds when, forgetful of the law of compensa-

tion and unmindful of the repercussions of injured justice, they refuse to admit the obvious thing, and blind themselves to the unfathomable canyon of unproductive debts into which they are hastening unto their own destruction.

Professor James Mavor, the eminent economist at Toronto University some years ago, once remarked that every war since the days of Napoleon tends to destroy capitalism. The background for this remark, of course, is identified with the destructivity, the waste, the ruin, the unproductiveness which result from war. Where are the monarchies which existed in 1914? Spain is regulated by a Socialist Government and so is Portugal. There is a Socialist premier of France; a Socialist premier of England. Italy has its Mussolini with his Fascism. Hitler sits in the saddle of German authority. Stalin has driven Russia to the extreme of Bolshevism. Our neighbor, Mexico, has gone communist. Almost two-thirds of the white race have divorced themselves from capitalism.

Are we not conscious of the trend of the times when before our very eyes the political complexion of Europe has been changed over night? Has the sagacity of our financial world been so obtuse that it cannot comprehend the cause of this upheaval? Is it not attributable more to the immorality, to the unscientific policy of piling debt upon debt with interest-bearing bonds for purposes of destruction? Oh, that the financiers and economists of this nation would interest themselves in the analysis of this entire situation by reading the 1931 edition of "The Twelfth Hour of Capitalism" by Kuno Renatus, who is attempting to defend this system against its own suicidal proclivities!

Ladies and gentlemen, we are somewhat fearful of the radical communists who prate their doctrines of atheism from the pulpit of their soap boxes. We should be more fearful of those radicals who sit in the seats of the mighty; radicals who, despising the fundamental science of their own system, have waxed fat under capitalism and are now bent upon killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

I repeat, we should be fearful of them who, perhaps, in their ignorance as well as in their arrogance, clothe with purple and fine linen a body of festered philosophy which ultimately is destined to self-destruction. And by purple and fine linen I mean the paid propaganda of dressed up ignorance which spreads itself upon the pages of too many magazines and newspapers.

I am speaking as no prophet, but as one who, at least, is schooled in the fundamental science of political economy and in the history of usury and interest; I am speaking as one who is sufficiently conversant with the facts existing about us to warn this nation that if it persists in maintaining the immorality of its blood bonds and unsound national war debts, there is

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only one inevitable outcome. It is the suicide of capitalism, the birth of socialism or worse.

Capitalism is on the straight road to ruin, not due to the socialists, not due to the communists, but due to itself. It has turned the routine of production into destruction. As to that there is no doubt. The croakings of communists who would like to begin digging its grave are by no means premature in their rejoicings. Like a monk in the Trappist Monastery, capitalism is daily digging its own grave.

The clock points to five minutes to twelve. Only a rapid decision can now save capitalism from itself. Already capitalism, beginning to find no further opportunity for investment that offers security against loss, can think of nothing better to do with its income than to invest it in the destructiveness of war debts. As Disraeli said years ago in England, "A country that invests in its war debts is a country decayed."

May I take this opportunity to applaud publicly those industrialists of our nation who have invested their fortunes in factories and in mills rather than in blood bonds? Of them be it said that they have risked their all in the future of our country. Of the others be it noted they have risked nothing, but like leeches have invested in the blood money of its misery.

Of old I remember that Cato, that noble Roman Senator, was accustomed every time he ascended the rostrum to conclude his speeches with "Carthago delenda est—Carthage must be destroyed." Today we shall keep incessantly repeating that war bonds must be eliminated. To them do we attribute the famine of currency money. By them have been attracted the billions of dollars of this country's capital from the fortunes of men who have lost faith in our prosperity. They have invested in loss rather than in gain. They have dined with death rather than with life.

Oh, there is patriotism for you—patriotism that sells our country short, patriotism that waxes fat upon poverty and destructive debt, patriotism, I suppose, that presumes that its bonds will be honored by a people who have been awakened to the perilous situation in which we find ourselves, and to the diabolical machinations of a group of international bankers whose object is to build up immense fortunes by controlling the wealth of a country at the expense of its war bond issues. So true is this today that our Federal Government is actually borrowing money from the banks which hold \$6,000,000,000 of war bonds—borrowing money from the banks to pay them back the interest it owes them on the bonds.

Call this Christianity if you will, or despise it as the utterance of an agitated mind. History will inevitably repeat itself. What has happened to Europe but yesterday cannot be escaped by America tomorrow.

It is apposite for every American, despite his creed or his political allegiance, to stand foursquare back of our courageous President-elect, who,

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knowing the secret of capitalism, and fully cognizant that it can only exist if predicated upon productive debts, is willing to spend billions of dollars, if necessary, upon the development of Muscle Shoals, where a new empire shall have its birth, a new land shall be reclaimed, a new liberty established.

Once more let us rid ourselves of this cursed famine of currency money which blights our progress and which multiplies starvation. Call it not inflation, for that is a lie. Term it not cheap money, for that is a falsity. Belittle it not, for if you care to argue, argue with the truth. Unless currency money can be re-circulated, and unless we can bring back one hundred cents in every dollar, there is little hope for the continued existence of the financial institutions or for our own prosperity.

In conclusion, I appeal to the financial leaders of this nation to study the structure upon which their capitalism has been built; to operate it according to the laws of reason and of justice; and to desist from an activity which preceded the downfall of Egypt, of Babylon, of Rome, and which has been condemned by all the intelligence of the ages.

It is not that I would harm your banks; it is not that I would harm any of you with such a public statement. My friends, I would save you from yourselves—from the suicide of capitalism.

## *Banks and Gold!*

*Broadcast February 26, 1933*



THIS afternoon may I continue the discussion regarding the moral-economic problem of money with which is associated the present world-wide distress. Naturally I shall touch upon the Michigan Bank situation. But specifically, I shall address you on the question whether or not our nation and the nations of the world shall continue to permit the international bankers to control the gold of the world. No financial or economic reform can be sound or remedial unless this problem is solved correctly.

To gain a further understanding of the money problem, which up to this date has defied a logical solution, it will be well for us to scan rapidly the pages of twentieth century history which preceded the Great War.

The student of this history first opens his book to study the facts associated with the Boer War, which was fought in the year 1900. Economically speaking, it was by this war that England gained possession of the diamond and gold mines of South Africa. From that date, and traceable to that event, our modern economic civilization underwent a significant change. From the year 1900, until this present moment, more than half the commercial gold existing in the world was delved from the bowels of the earth. More of this precious metal was mined during the last thirty-three years than had been brought to light during the thirty-three hundred years preceding them!

Thus, the beginning of this century became identified with England's unquestioned and transcendent control of financial power. She became the undisputed creditor of the world. Civilization became her commercial debtor.

Paralleling this stupendous increase in Great Britain's wealth as measured in money, the historian observes Germany's rapid advance in trade and commerce. Here, then, are the beginnings of a drama. The stage of this world was being set for a mighty, titanic contest.

I hold neither brief for Germany nor dislike for England. Nevertheless, it is apposite to remark that some one with a malignant mind originated the epithet "war lord" and persistently applied it to the German Emperor.

As a matter of fact, his sword had remained sheathed from the time of his accession to the outbreak of the Great War. As a matter of fact, they who had coined the word constantly kept their own swords unsheathed in defending the far-flung outposts of their empire.

Trouble was brewing! German thrift and industry were gradually draining the gold from English vaults. Under the leadership of Kaiser Wilhelm, the German Empire began slowly but surely to threaten England's leadership in the commercial world.

Every student of history recognized that war was inevitable. Alliances were established. The drums of the nations were sounding the march of Mars. Armies were training. Battleships were multiplied. Ammunition reserves were piled up while the facile fingers of propaganda were constantly at work spinning the web of destruction.

At last, in the year 1914, the great contest for the commercial supremacy of the civilized world was set into motion. For three years the battles raged across the entire continent of Europe. It became apparent to all that victory was smiling upon the arms of the Fatherland.

Here in America we returned to office a President who had campaigned successfully throughout the nation on the strength of the slogan: "He kept us out of war!" Although the voice of the American people had spoken in terms that seemed to be the equivalent of a mandate, yet forgetful of election pledges, unmindful of mandates, these same American people permitted themselves to be led by the halter of deceit into the very midst of a conflagration whose lurid scars never can be effaced.

Newspaper after newspaper was purchased by foreign gold to sell the wares of partisanship, to stir up hatred founded upon lies, to persuade an easily deceived people to take up arms for the defense of international investments made by American international bankers on foreign soil. Finally, the last American dough-boy sacrificed his life for an ephemeral dream called democracy. Then came the Treaty of Versailles. It was signed, sealed and delivered,—that peace treaty which produced neither peace nor democracy, but from whose adulterous loins was bred the abortion of depression.

Its stipulations were cruel, merciless. Germany is forbidden the rights of trade and commerce with the rest of the civilized world. Every ounce of her gold which she possesses is confiscated. Nevertheless, a fine of 33,000,000,000 gold dollars is imposed upon her, although it is well recognized that there are only \$11,000,000,000 of gold held in the treasuries of the nations who had despoiled her!

That, my friends, was the beginning of our present sorrow.

Misery began to be multiplied. The prosperity of a world which had been predicated upon the worship of gold was suddenly turned into poverty

## BANKS AND GOLD

and distress, despite the blasphemous benedictions which the impotent idol of gold had promised.

Behold the fulfilment of its promises! Count its blessings!

Today the combined debts of Europe and America exceed \$500,000,000,000. Our own national, local and private debts payable in gold approximate \$235,000,000,000.

It is only an idle dreamer who adheres to the opinion that these debts can be or will be paid. The \$11,000,000,000 of commercial gold in the world is not even sufficient to pay the interest on these debts for six months. There is not sufficient currency in America to pay the interest on our local and national debts for even part of a year.

Little wonder that there is scarcely any credit left in this nation! A persistent policy which unintelligently has destroyed the last shred of confidence, a system of government that has scorned aid and dole for the helpless and bestowed millions and billions of dole funds upon the guilty, industrial bankruptcies, a multiplication of bank failures,—this assembly of realities together with the insuperable debts have prostrated the mighty nation of the United States.

We are gravitating into the chaos of national and personal financial ruin. Yesterday we tied our hope to the star of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Today we discover that we had been holding fast to the tail of a meteor which is driving with increasing speed into the chasm of despairing chaos. Reconstruction has devolved into destruction.

Moreover, the faith in our nation's financial institutions is perishing. Only an impractical mind could entertain hope for its revival so long as the fallacies and immoralities associated with both banks and bankers are permitted to survive.

Blush with shame as you read the startling record unfolded but last week!

Mr. Charles E. Mitchell, the trusted and revered chairman of the Board of the National City Bank and its affiliate, the National City Company of New York, the chairman of the board of one of the world's largest banks, has written a crimson page in the history of finance at a most inopportune moment.

Dodging Federal income tax by surreptitiously transferring \$2,800,000 of bank stock to his relatives! Fattening his fortune to the extent of \$3,500,000 over and above his salary by bonuses acquired from the sale of worthless South American bonds and other activities! Associated with loaning \$2,400,000 of depositors' money to bank officers to cover up their loans following the crash of 1929, while at the same time his bank and its officers sold out mercilessly their customers whose collateral did not cover their margins!

## FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

What a shining example of integrity is Mr. Mitchell, the chairman of one of the world's greatest banking institutions!

Turning our attention from bankers to banks, read the record which has been written in Michigan this last few days. It is a record associated with glaring illegalities. A State Governor exercising authority over national banks when it is almost universally admitted that he had no right to exercise that authority. National banks disbursing only five percent of depositors' money when it is seriously questioned whether or not they have not gone beyond their rights! It is a record of misinformation that is astounding.

Banking officials hiding behind half-truths which they sent to the public press! Newspapers satisfied to sell this information and daring not to print the truth as they knew it for fear of breaking confidence in secrets which were no secrets at all, but which every depositor had a right to know! In fine, it is a record associated with "smart" money running into hiding, and of the uninformed depositor holding the bag. Now that the worst has happened, it is apparent that the use of the truth would have been more efficacious. No further damage can be done.

What are the facts associated with the failure of at least two large groups of banks in the fourth greatest city of this nation? At least two great groups of banks have failed. That is the only usable word with which to describe the situation.

At the beginning of this year, the First National Bank had deposits totaling approximately \$423,357,897.44. By February 11th, these deposits shrunk to approximately \$360,000,000. Here was a decrease of approximately \$63,358,000 in a few days. Practically fifteen percent of the money, "smart" money, and much of it in large quantities, knew that there was something rotten in the State of Michigan. Therefore it went into hiding, or else the records are falsified.

In the Guardian Group, a parallel case developed. At the first of this year the deposits for this bank approximated \$138,385,000. Forty-two days later, this sum decreased to \$104,000,000, nearly \$34,000,000 being withdrawn.

As in the case of every bank failure, there is always a reason—a very definite and concrete reason. As in the case of every bank failure, there is also a biblical goat selected by the sinners to bear their iniquities. Of the goat and his identity, silence is preferable. Of the real reason why nearly \$100,000,000 was so suddenly scared into hiding from these two banks, we need not search to discover it in the ranks of the common people. Were the small depositors aware of the real reason, bank lines would have been as long as bread lines during these hectic forty-two days.

Turn to another set of figures to discover why the "smart" dollars, as they are called, ran into safety.

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Well, on the 1st of January, the First National Bank had \$108,585,000, approximately, of cash and Government Bonds. Forty-two days later this figure had shrunk to \$45,000,000. Deposits of \$360,000,000 of that same date were now depending upon \$45,000,000.

As far as the Guardian Bank is concerned, it had \$56,731,000, approximately, in cash and Government Bonds. Forty-two days later this amount had melted to nearly \$22,000,000. In this case we find deposits of \$104,000,000 depending upon 22,000,000 actual dollars.

Reason and blame!

Shall we in Michigan or you scattered throughout this nation, now grown accustomed to bank failures, rave and rant at local bankers for having created this perilous predicament?

I appreciate, my friends, that banking business cannot be conducted unless the officers of these organizations invest in mortgages, in reliable real estate, in sound municipal and industrial bonds. I appreciate that if today the only really valuable assets of these banks of Detroit and similar banks are the cash on hand and the Government Bonds, this sad condition of affairs exists because bankers have been victimized as well as have the rest of us, even though they were the most notorious supporters of a treacherous, devastating policy which persisted in breeding idleness, and, therefore, in destroying tax income, mortgages, second class securities and values of every description which are wall paper at this moment.

Both bankers and their depositors are paying the penalty for practicing pagan principles in matters of finance and economics. Nevertheless, it would be interesting, indeed, to discover who in the first forty-two days of this year, in Detroit, made the heavy withdrawals from these two institutions and brought them down to their knees.

The day has arrived for constructive truth. The day has arrived when our Federal Government must establish its own banks throughout the nation for the purpose of safeguarding depositors' money just as securely as does the Federal post office protect the citizens' mail. Why temporize? Why re-establish banks to duplicate ten years hence what is happening today? Why pour our national money down rat-holes through the funnel of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation when it is possible to expend that same money in creating a nationally-owned banking system as sound as our army and as honest as our post office?

A system, it will be, purged of truckling tricksters! The only system of finance in which we dare place in the future a modicum of confidence.

My friends, I only ask you to cast your eyes upon the record which this nation has written during the past three or four years. Despite its most intemperate optimism, its wide-spread propaganda of fallacy and fancy, its fanatical perseverance, the inevitable is happening under your very eyes.

I introduced these remarks, my friends, by recalling to your minds the fact that over half the gold in the commercial world was mined since the year 1900. I associated this thought with the basic cause of the Great War. And finally I emphasized the fact that the so-called depression, with its bank failures, is traceable to the inordinate, impossible debts payable in gold, debts which came into being and were multiplied as a result of the war.

Payable in gold! What a tragedy is associated with that phrase! More truthfully one should say: "Payable in the river of tears which have streamed down the cheeks of countless men and women who have been ruthlessly lashed at the pillar of poverty!"

Payable in gold! Preferably we should say: "Payable in the millions of farmlands which are confiscated in this nation! Payable in heartaches of those 12,000,000 wanderers who like felons have been chained in the dungeon of idleness."

No wonder the prophet Isaias exclaimed in holy anger against those who made gold more precious than men. "For this," said he, "I will trouble the heaven; and the earth shall be moved out of her place: for the indignation of the Lord of Hosts, and for the day of His fierce wrath. A man shall be more precious than gold; yea a man than the finest of gold."

Thus spoke this sainted leader as he prophesied the destruction of Babylon of old. The Babylon which had enslaved the Jewish people! The pagan Babylon which had set up its god of gold in the desert place for all to worship! The doomed Babylon which had been weighed in the balance and found wanting!

God knows, my friends, we have had enough of these Babylonian policies. Formerly we were religious enough to print upon our coins "In God We Trust." If we had not been hypocrites we would have erased these words and substituted for them the phrase "In Gold We Trust." On former occasions logic, science and argument met to discuss temperately this topic. More eloquent than words are the sorrows of an oppressed people.

Long enough we have listened to the vapid mouthings of those who raise aloft the cry of "Give us the Barabbas of gold and crucify the brothers of Christ!"

Long enough have we quaffed of the vinegar of impious propaganda regarding the false sacredness of commercial contracts specified in gold, when the divine contract made between God and man, whom He has given this earth and the fruits thereof to be his sustenance, has been trampled under foot by Babylonian ingenuity.

Long enough we have been the pawns and chattels of the modern pagans who have crucified us upon a cross of gold. Through politeness only have we dignified them with the term of international bankers. In fairness, my friends, I am not referring here to our local bankers.

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International bankers and their gold standard! The gold standard—as if it were more important, more sanctified, more precious than the human standard! The filthy gold standard which from time immemorial has been the breeder of hate, the fashioner of swords, and the destroyer of mankind.

No wonder that Jesus Christ lashed unmercifully the sanctimonious Pharisees who strained out a gnat and swallowed a camel with these stinging words of rebuke: "Which is more sacred, the gold or the temple;" the gold or the living temples of the Holy Ghost, Christ's brothers and His sisters?

Last Sunday afternoon I advocated a reform which is essential for the well being of our economic life; a reform without which it will be impossible for the vast majority of the citizens both of this country and of the entire world, as far as that is concerned, to free themselves from the cross of gold.

Briefly, I am advocating that every ounce, every grain and every coin of gold held by private international bankers shall henceforth belong to the Government and to the Government alone. I am advocating that these few individuals who hold in abject control the millions of so-called free citizens be stripped summarily of their medium of control. I am advocating likewise that no injustice be perpetrated in accomplishing this act. Let injustice remain in their hands—justice in ours!

To these international bankers shall be traded the coin of the realm, the currency dollars, which you and I use in our daily commerce and trade.

We take the gold!

The Government already has set the precedent by confiscating the gold in the earth. Every raw ounce that is mined must be turned over to the Federal Treasurer in payment for which \$20.67 is returned to the miner. What holds good for the nation in the miner's case should hold good for the nation in the banker's case.

My friends, are you aware that all the currency and debts or credit of our nation are builded upon gold? Need I instruct you that they who control the gold, therefore, can likewise control either the expansion or contraction of currency; either the rise or the fall of the stock market; either that wheat be \$2.00 a bushel or 20 cents a bushel; either that a dollar shall contain 100 pennies or 170 pennies; either that you are able or unable to pay your debts; either that local banks remain open or are compelled to close; either that you starve and shiver and fold your little children to empty breasts, or that you can live, smile and partake of the bountiful earth and the fruits thereof which a beneficent God has bestowed upon us?

Once and for all banish from your minds the erroneous superstition that our Government controls the gold resident in this nation. It does not. The gold upon which our commerce, our industry, our homes, our securi-

ties, our food, our peace, our very lives depend is controlled by a handful of grasping, greedy international bankers.

How much gold do the Central Banks in the United States hold or control in their possession? That is a fair question.

The answer: According to the latest figures, published in December, 1932, the Central Banks of the United States control \$4,038,000,000 of gold. The English Central Banks, according to the figures published by their Government in November, 1932, control \$583,000,000 of gold. The French Central Banks, according to the official report published December, 1932, control \$3,254,000,000 of gold.

So the lurid figures tell the unbelievable story of high finance which has been and is being enacted in every nation of the world where gold controls and where the whip is held in the grasp of those who lash you at the pillar of poverty. There is scarcely need for my pausing to define for you that money is the medium of trade. Through the agency of money, wheat and corn, beef and dairy products are brought from the fields to your tables.

In our complicated social life, it was money that quarried the stones, sawed the timber, fabricated the glass, manufactured the hardware and every other material which erected your home and your factory. Money moved the shuttles of the loom which spun your clothing. Money printed the books and compounded the drugs which your physician employs to save your life. Money has become the hand-maid of learning without which neither schools nor churches can function in our complicated civilization. Money is a universal and a national necessity of far more importance than are our highways, our waterways, our railroads, our public utilities. Money is more essential than all of them taken together.

And what has happened to this money?

First of all, through trickery and subterfuge, as I have pointed out in the previous lectures with facts that cannot be denied, all our currency and all our credit money was built upon the foundation of gold. Silver was outlawed. By acts of Parliament and decrees of Congress, they who selfishly had aimed to gain control of civilization had set a fictitious price upon gold over which they hoped to gain complete control because of its scarcity.

All values were predicated upon it. All human activities became anchored to it. Birth and life and death itself became dependent on it. In their innocence, confidence and childish simplicity, our forefathers were unconscious of the scheming and successful efforts of a few international bankers, who ultimately did gain control of practically every ounce of commercial gold in this world and, therefore, control of the world itself. Thus, in their hands they hold our destiny. At their whim and nod the products of our labor rise or fall upon the Babylonian market.

A President can boast that he kept us out of war. A conference of inter-

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national bankers with the aid of their puppets of propaganda can lead us to the slaughter. The flow of their gold opens or closes factories, cuts wages, breeds poverty, destroys values and crucifies Christ once more upon the cross between two thieves! For one hundred and fifty years we have borne the persecution of this damnable control.

How long, O Lord! How long must it endure?

What, then, shall I advocate to this audience? Is it something revolutionary?

Call it so if you will. It will be more justified than the revolutionary thoughts that were nursed in the minds of Washington and his compatriots.

I prefer to call it Christianity. I prefer to describe it as the doctrine of "live and let live." I absolutely prefer to regard men as more precious than the "finest gold," as said the prophet Isaias,—gold that has been used as the instrument of greed, as the whip of torture in the hands of the Pontius Pilates who persist in perpetuating the passion of Jesus Christ upon His helpless brethren.

What would be your judgment if the army, the navy and air force upon which depend our protection from foreign invasion were handed over in their entirety to the control and manipulation of the United States Steel Corporation?

How loud would be your protest if the United States post-office department, along with those of England and France and the rest of the world, became the private property of an international bureau of advertisers?

Army, navy, air force and post-office systems by their very nature are of such public importance and are designed for such public use that it were the suicide of civilization to permit them to become the pawns of private profiteers.

Although you add all their importance together, yet they are of less importance than is this greater public necessity, the gold upon which the commerce of the world is based, the gold upon which the values of our nation have been predicated, the gold without which, in our modern civilization, we can neither eat nor sleep nor live!

One hundred and fifty years ago men first began to suffer from this the greatest social injustice that was ever inflicted upon organized society. The extreme socialist has advocated the nationalization of all industry. To this radicalism the Christian Church could never agree because without the right to private ownership the moral law of God eventually would become an idle gesture. But the Christian Church from its earliest days has advocated, if I may quote exactly the words of Pius XI, that:

"It is rightly contended that certain forms of property must be reserved to the State, since they carry with them an opportunity of domination too great to be left to private individuals without injury to the community at large."

Fortified with this single utterance, I have dared not only to suggest to you but to implore you to organize legally and peacefully against the

Morgans, the Kuhn-Loebs, the Rothschilds, the Dillon-Reads, the Federal Reserve banksters, the Mitchells, and the rest of that undeserving group who, without either the blood of patriotism or of Christianity flowing in their veins, have shackled the lives of men and of nations with the ponderous links of their golden chain.

We have had enough of their leadership. Too deeply have they pressed down the thorns of servitude upon the fevered brow of a worried world. Too patiently have we writhed upon the cross transfixed by the nails of slavish control.

Now, as the clouds of depression gather overhead, while in the distance there rumble the thunders of discontent, they who have crucified us walk before their victims to deride them with the challenge, "If Thou be the Son of God come down from the cross!"

My friends, the sunset of this gruesome day of challenge is sinking into a grave from which it shall never rise. We who suffer—we will come down from the cross, cost what it may! Soon, soon, shall the dawnlight of a new morning break upon us,—a new morning of resurrection, when we shall rise glorious to triumph with the Prince of Peace. This is the hope of the new day and the "new deal."

There will be ringing in the ears of President Roosevelt and his associates the whining of these high priests of international finance who are opposed to this. They will object by repeating the heresy of the ages "If thou release this man thou art not Cæsar's friend!" As if they cared for Cæsar! They who have prostituted their citizenship, betrayed their leadership and made out of the temple of the Most High God a common market place filled with the dung of animals, crowded with the slaves of gold!

Cæsar or no Cæsar, we are through with it all! Friends we will be, but friends of the Christ Who drove from the temple those who made of it a den of thieves.

The trumpets are sounding from India to England! Trumpets not calling to war, but silver-tongued trumpets proclaiming anew the second birth of the Prince of Peace.

Let us trade our gold for our God! Bloody wars for blessed peace! Cunning greed for Christian love! God, peace and love! These three are one! One, though they slumber at the breast of the Madonna of Bethlehem! One, though they sleep on the cross of Calvary!

To commemorate this day on which I dared attack the godless error of gold control in order that the sweet benedictions of peaceful prosperity may descend upon an oppressed world, may it be my privilege to send to each one of you a bronze pocket crucifix, the symbol of suffering, the promise of resurrection and the pledge of prosperity.

It is yours for the asking, be you Catholic or not.



ALTAR—*Shrine of the Little Flower*



PART V—THE DETROIT FREE PRESS  
AND FATHER COUGHLIN



## [INTRODUCTION]

THE fifth part of this volume is given over to the story of the Detroit *Free Press* and Father Coughlin. There are very definite reasons for incorporating the story.

The Detroit *Free Press* has rendered a remarkable service, that of a "devil's advocate."

It dedicated the nine best days of its life to the vilification of a Catholic priest. It spent money sorely needed these days in a thorough research of the life, the sayings, and the habits of Reverend Charles E. Coughlin. It drew from all strata of society, from a Cardinal Prince down to the lowest form of servile hack-writer, the speeches, the comments, the opinions, the judgments, and the slanders that might destroy an ordinary reputation.

It emblazoned every criticism, justified or slanderous, that was ever made against Father Coughlin, in full eight column heads on the first page. For nine straight days it kept up the abuse. Lacking any consequential fact that might filch from Father Coughlin his good name, it resorted to cheap innuendo, low billingsgate, vile insinuation and bare-faced falsehood to destroy a reputation.

It hid behind a supposed "service to Old Mother Church" in attempting to justify its calumnies.

On the issues raised by Father Coughlin in exposing the Detroit Bankers Company, whose President was Mr. E. D. Stair, publisher of the Detroit *Free Press*, the journal had little to say. It followed the popular theory that the best defense is an attack. It therefore attacked viciously, unscrupulously, dishonestly, giving to its readers the best case that can be made against Father Coughlin, but seldom a word against his argument.

At times it is necessary to chronicle with boresome detail to do justice to a man.

There follows, then, the chronicle of prosaic things, accurate and detailed, that the record may be perfected and that the foul and loathsome slanders of a once honorable newspaper may be answered when the evidence is fresh in the minds of witnesses

to the facts, lest by some accident of fate the lie uncontradicted and repeated assumes the dignity of truth.

Father Coughlin spoke over the air. The *Free Press* wrote its columns in yellow journalism. Let us read all the one had to say and all the other had to say and judge the merits of a most interesting clash of minds.

Here, then, is represented a crusading priest, battling wickedness in the high places, and a banker-publisher, defending his holding company, his bank, his newspaper and himself by the one method he knew best, the vilification of a priest.

## [ CHAPTER NINETEEN ]

### *Sunday*



ON Sunday, March 26, 1933, Father Coughlin turned his attention to the city of Detroit, home of the two greatest banks in Michigan, the First National and the Guardian National Bank of Commerce. The condition of these banks had caused the Governor of Michigan to close all banks in the State on February 11, 1933. For six weeks the people had been without definite information concerning the true condition of their banking world. Plan after plan had been submitted—promise after promise given to the people—and Egyptian darkness surrounded the entire situation.

Father Coughlin had disclosed some of the facts in a previous discourse. He waited patiently for the authorities to reveal some definite information to the people. Day after day the banks sought for scapegoats, and day after day new plans to rehabilitate the old banks were proposed.

In the meantime, the Government of the United States was planning a bank for Detroit. The bankers fought this plan for a governmental bank. The *Detroit Free Press* led their fight. The people were misinformed, not only as to the true condition of the old banks, but also as to the reason for their insolvency.

Paid propaganda had established the fiction in the minds of the people that the *strong bank of Michigan was the First National*. This statement was published in the financial reviews, as, for example, *Standard Statistics* of February 20, 1933, from which the following excerpt is taken:

The incident shows how the troubles of *one institution*, due mainly to its holdings of real estate mortgages, have involved all the banks in the lower peninsula of the State. . . .

One of the most significant angles of the Detroit affair has come to light at Washington, in the failure of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to step into the breach with sufficient funds to meet the immediate needs of the *Union Guardian Trust Company*.

The First National was in the hands of a holding company, namely, the Detroit Bankers Company.

In his discourse of March 26, 1933, Father Coughlin exposed the holding company, and established the fact that in Detroit a struggle was on between "the regimented forces of bankers and stockholders entrenched behind the walls of holding companies" and "the determined host of mulcted depositors."

"Certain names and places have acquired more than a local interest," Father Coughlin continued.

"Bethlehem, the least of all villages, forever will be a name universally recognized because of the immortal Christ Who was cradled there. The name of Lexington has traveled with the shot that was 'heard round the world.' So with Gettysburg, whose mere pronouncement is universally associated with the death of slavery and the rebirth of a new liberty. Therefore, I do not hesitate today to speak to this national audience of the City of Detroit.

"Formerly its history was identified only with a garrison and trading post founded by Cadillac. In later years its development from a peaceful river port into a throbbing beehive of automotive industry was linked with the names of giant industrialists—the Fords, the Fishers and their contemporaries.

"But tomorrow, children shall be taught to tell upon the rosary of time the new history that is ours today.

"Detroit has become the birthplace of a financial dream. It has taken a place in the pages of history alongside Lexington and Gettysburg. In brief, my friends, the hopes and aspirations of all honest citizens have been achieved. The first battle against the money changers has been won!

"Our Republic is young. For one hundred years or more while it was developing in thew and sinew; while it was transforming forests into cities, pasturelands into golden fields and deserts into gardens, there grew up within it as elsewhere a group of men whose god was gold and whose creed was greed.

"They were devotees of the neo-paganism, acolytes in the sanctuary of materialism, and prophets of narrow individualism—individualism which was devoid of responsibilities; individualism which was totally divorced from both social justice and Christian charity.

“By no means do I include within their unhallowed ranks the honest banker, the pioneer banker, who fought shoulder to shoulder with his townsmen in their struggles against adversity. Rather do I point only to the lineal descendants of Judas Iscariot, who, year after year, contented themselves with selling their fellow citizens for the equivalent of thirty pieces of silver.

“ ‘The first battle has been won,’ said I? But the war has not ended. It has but begun.

“In all likelihood, before the flag of peace finally will be unfurled, Cleveland and Pittsburgh, Chicago and Kansas City, Los Angeles and Boston, New York and New Orleans—these will be names emblazoned upon the escutcheon of time. These, too, will be battlegrounds consecrated with the blood of victory—the courageous blood, shed, if necessary, in driving the money changers from the temple of this land of ours!

“My friends resident throughout this nation, let me report to you what occurred at Detroit so that you may profit both by our wounds and learn from our struggle in the contest which most certainly shall be yours tomorrow.

“As you well understand, the financial structure of the United States of America became so weakened and undermined that on the day after President Roosevelt’s inauguration he found it necessary to suspend all banking operations. It was a structure which reminded one of a building whose foundations had crumbled; whose supports had rotted. Fearing its immediate crash the Government roped it off, stationed guards before its entrances and nailed the danger sign over its doorways.

“The Morgans, the Kuhn-Loebs, the gamblers of Wall Street had been well assisted by the Mitchells, the Harrimans and their lieutenants in crime throughout the nation. All semblance of honesty and of justice had been abandoned by this group—a group which had dedicated itself to the manipulation of the industrialist’s factory, to the confiscation of the farmer’s home and to the degradation of the toiler’s lot.

“Modern banking had degenerated into a crap game where the dice, too often, were loaded; a crap game played by the unscrupulous expert with other people’s money. Other people’s money!

“Sleek-haired bandits, attired as slick as an undertaker and wearing a white carnation in their lapels, were officiating at your

financial funeral as they ushered you to the wicket for the deposit of your hard earned wages. Wages to be piled into substantial savings only to be looted by the oily-tongued bond salesman!

"Had you been gifted with prevision when this salesman had bowed his way from your presence—your money in his wallet and his Wall Street paper in yours, commonly known as wall paper—you might have seen the crepe of destruction hanging on your door; you might have heard the winds of wailing poverty whistling through it as your requiem was sounded.

"Did the Government of the United States come to your rescue with a warning? Not at all!

"Where was the flaunted freedom of the press, which in bold type and with sickening repetition gave its support through the financial columns of purchased propaganda, while America and its citizens were being ravaged by this plague of ghouls—sepulchral ghouls who cared little for God's justice and less for man's happiness?

"Like the criminals of the Middle Ages who claimed sanctuary and immunity in the Church of God, the banker, the professional looter, found safety and defense in the silence of the modern newspaper.

"Neither by an act of God, neither by plague or famine, neither by tornado nor by hurricane, was man deprived of his share of a bounteous nature. If unemployment has been multiplied, if poverty has increased, if the heart of the world has been pierced by the sword of suffering, whom do we blame for the catastrophe which has overfallen us?

"Men, wicked men! Men who cast aside the mantle of virtue.

" 'Away with Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance!' cried they. 'Welcome the seven deadly sins! Come Pride, Covetousness and Lust! Come Anger, Gluttony and Revenge! Welcome Sloth, the vice which cares naught for one's eternal salvation! Welcome again the sins that cry to heaven for vengeance—defrauding the laborer of his wages and robbing the widow and the orphan!

"Oh, men, you dreamed you dwelt in marble halls. You forgot, however, that the wages of sin is death. One by one your marble halls of finance which had been built upon the quicksands of sin began first to topple and then to fall. All the prostituted propaganda of public pronouncements was unable to save them.

## SUNDAY

“ ‘The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof,’ the rain of your man-made poverty, the flood of bitter, human tears and the wind of passion and of discontent. Such was the prelude to the collapse of our financial structure. So were the words of the prophetic Christ once more realized by a patient, suffering people.

“Then came days of meditation, of investigation and of analysis.

“What was the chagrin of the people, my friends, as they discovered, beneath the ruins of the house, the pagan philosophy which had recently been engendered from the unmoral minds of those banker men? Had we not been taught that if and when a bank failed, the stockholders in such an institution were legally obligated to pay a double liability assessment for the protection of those who had placed both faith in them and money in their vaults!

“Was it not generally understood that wherever a bank failure occurred the owners of a bank must first suffer before a depositor shall lose a penny? That was the law of the land. But contrary to the spirit of that law, thousands of banking institutions preferred to practice the sin of injustice by forcing the people, the depositors—the scrubwoman, the laborer, the farmer and the policeman—to suffer first, thereby protecting the grafting, grasping, greedy banker.

“In no sense am I criticizing the honest stockholder, the brave stockholder who is willing to bear his burden and share his responsibility. This criticism is meant for the welcher, the coward, the lily-livered self-seeker who always plays to win, who never dares to lose, cost what it may!

“Was not that the thought originally behind the operations of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, as the public Federal money of the United States, raised by taxation of the people at large, was poured into those rat-holes of banks to keep alive the exploitation; to save the cringing stockholder?

“ ‘Let the depositor suffer! Hands off the sacrosanct stockholder!’

“What though our statute books clearly and specifically state that whosoever buys bank stock does so with the understanding

of accepting the responsibility of bank failure? The law has been perverted. All liabilities of wealthy, inside stockholders, all responsibilities and all justice to the innocent depositors have been hopelessly confused, entangled and enmeshed by the unmoral creation of so-called holding companies, which made it possible to cheat the widow, to rob the orphan and to depress the poor, while they enabled the artful dodgers of high finance to escape the law. For the preservation of the sanctified white carnation the American people had been tricked.

“In this struggle, therefore, to gain our financial freedom and to re-establish the liberty of our laws, is it not plain, my friends, that on one side stand the regimented forces of bankers and stockholders entrenched behind the walls of holding companies? On the other, the determined hosts of mulcted depositors?

“Keep that point in mind as I describe for you the battle of the bankers waged at Detroit, Michigan, a battle fought on the one side with the weapons of the highwayman, with the logic of lies, under the captaincy of a commissioner of police supported by an unseen general who sat in the sanctum of an editorial room while the puppets of his press played upon the gullibility of an unsuspecting public.

“And on the other side were the industrialists who had made Detroit, the vast majority of its soul-free merchants, its hundreds of thousands of small depositors, men and women of every class who anxiously awaited some definite word from the columns of their newspaper; men and women who asked only for the bread of truth, but to whom was handed the buncombe and stone of falsehoods.

“And now for the story of Detroit in particular.

“Here we had two presumably great group-banking institutions known commonly as the First National Bank and as the Guardian Group.

“Approximately six weeks ago, these banks, along with every other bank in the State of Michigan, were closed by our Governor’s proclamation. This was the beginning of the so-called national bank holiday. Governor Comstock took this step because it was said that one unit of the Guardian Group was in a weakened condition. The citizens were assured that the First National Bank was perfectly solvent, securely sound.

“Sound banks! So subtly was this lie established throughout the City of Detroit that according to testimony, certain branch bank managers of this institution ran to the telephone on the morning of February 14, called up clients who had more or less large deposits, and assured them that the First National Bank could pay at that moment eighty cents on the dollar, adding that it would require only a few days to pay the remaining twenty cents.

“Affidavits for this statement from duped depositors are in my possession. But what were the real facts at the moment while this lying telephone propaganda was being practiced?

“On December 31, 1932, the cash and Government securities of the First National Bank amounted to approximately \$108,000,000. This means that it could have paid only 25½ cents on the dollar.

“On February 11, 1933, the cash and Government Bonds of this same bank amounted to but \$45,000,000. This means that it was 12½ percent liquid when depositors were being told that it was 80 percent liquid.

“In thirty-five banking days previous to the bank holiday, approximately \$63,000,000 of ‘inside information money’ had leaked out of this bank either through the front door or the back door. If this withdrawal figure is not correct it is because of protected and deceitful bookkeeping.

“If the naked truth were known, these two banks were not only rotten; they had already decayed beyond repair.

“Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. William Woodin, confirms this statement in a public utterance made March 25, when he says:

“‘Candor compels me to say that losses in both of these banks extend far beyond their capital structures, and neither of them can be permitted to carry on as sound banks.’

“To emphasize this point, let me go on record in stating that even in November, 1932, the banking situation in Detroit had become so decadent and obnoxious, according to national bank examiners, that the great First National Bank of this City, in order to escape having its charter recalled, began to peddle out their bad paper, their bad accounts to their affiliates and trust company, which became nothing more than dumping pots and ash piles for the refuse created by mismanagement.

"You plain people of America wonder what wrecked the banks.

"Well, let me tell you in brief its sordid story.

"First, the Government officials, who have seized the books of these banks, can detail for you a long litany of loans made by the banking officials to their affiliates. Loans oftentimes which had little or no security to back them up. Loans made to men who dodged their responsibility to the depositors by hiding behind the legal but unmoral holding company similar to the one of which E. D. Stair is president.

"These loans, as we know, were beyond all proportion. The officers who procured these loans were taking the small depositors' money to pay for their comfortable homes, their motor cars, their gambling upon the stock market, their living in ease and in luxury on other people's money. They contented themselves by saying: 'My stock in the bank is hidden in the holding company. I can escape paying the double liability. Why should I not profit by the dumb-bell money although my security does not warrant this borrowing?'

"Secondly, false financial statements helped to wreck the banks—false in the sense that the statements, despite the ravages of the depression, still counted real estate and dead loans not at the present, adjusted values but at 1929 values.

"Thirdly, branch banking and real estate mortgage loans wrecked the banks. On February 25, 1927, under the Mellon regime, the Government then permitted banks to invest your money and my money in real estate mortgages. Mortgages which permitted the dishonest builder and the rabid speculator in apartment houses and in real estate subdivisions to squander the depositor's money, while he drives by in his motor car and watches the cows march home to be milked on the pavement twenty miles from civilization.

"So the crap game of frenzied finance went its unholy way here and there and everywhere, pampering the speculator, skyrocketing prices, and caring little for the inevitable day of reckoning.

"Thus, on the records of the First National Bank are manifested loans procured from outside. They had to run out and borrow to save it from failing months ago. But despite the necessity of borrowing money, despite the findings of the bank exam-

iners, despite the inevitable finger of failure which was already stretching out to indict them, this bank still kept milking the money from the people and practicing its deception by showing upon the public statements profits of \$310,000 for two months' operations, the worst two months in the history of the organization, as it was proceeding on its joy ride from the mad house of speculation to the morgue of failure. But in the meantime the old rule still obtained that the banker and the stockholder must win at any price. The depositor must pay!

"That is why the holding company was established. An honest banker needs no holding company. Its very existence is an indication of hidden practices.

"Then came the collapse.

"Followed six hectic weeks of conference, of debate, of conniving. Six weeks devoted to chiseling the public. Six weeks which ended, not only with a zero for accomplishment, but with hundreds of millions of dollars of commercial, of industrial and of laboring loss to the City of Detroit.

"Then the Reconstruction Finance Corporation was asked by these bankers for a loan. It was petitioned to step into the morgue and lift from the cold, gray slab a corpse that was already stinking in the nostrils of a nation. It was asked to perform a miracle with your money and my money in order to save the precious hides of those who had dissipated the depositor's money.

"It was time to bury the remains. The best informed people in the City knew it. The bank examiners knew it, and the Government knew it. Therefore, it was decided by the United States Government to establish a new bank in Detroit and, if necessary, to let the law take its course as far as the stockholders, the mis-managers and the officers of the old banks were concerned.

"Here was news of a most important character. The United States Government decided not to make a loan to this new bank but to purchase every penny of its preferred stock—\$12,500,000 worth of it—to purchase it, mind you. The General Motors Corporation, the Chrysler Corporation and the Ford Motor Corporation, organizations which had given impetus to the growth of this fair city, were invited to purchase \$12,500,000 worth of the common stock.

"As a result, the General Motors Corporation made the total

investment of the common stock with the understanding—the written, pledged, contracted understanding—that every penny of its stock was for sale to the old depositors of the defunct banks, penny for penny that had been paid for it, not a penny's profit.

“At last the dream of the centuries had been realized. A Government controlled bank had been called into existence. This was glad news to the citizens and sad news to the bankers.

“‘But this governmental program must not be realized,’ said the white carnation bankers. ‘It means our exposure. It means our ruin.’

“Then began a program of vilification. The slogan of ‘Save the old banks!’ was spoken from rostrum, from loud speaker, and emblazoned in captions in the press. ‘Pity the poor depositors!’ was the cry that was also hypocritically raised. As a matter of fact what they meant to say was ‘Save the stockholder and pity the chiselers!’

“To spread their propaganda, there appeared in the columns of the *Detroit Free Press* scurrilous articles indirectly attacking the Government for venturing to establish a new bank in the City of Detroit—this new institution ‘of the people, by the people and for the people.’

“‘The old racket must continue!’ said the exploiters.

“On Monday, March 20, we read on the front page an editorial in the *Detroit Free Press*, which in part is as follows:

“‘Federal Bank Examiners now in charge of these banks at Detroit make no attempt to conceal the fact that banks have opened in the United States that were in worse condition than those of Detroit. They have been assisted by the United States Government. . . .

“‘Detroit, carrying the burden of the depression, was denied assistance at Washington, and despite denials and counter-denials, those best informed still believe that politics played an important part in precipitating the banking holiday in Michigan. This fact remains, that communities which were not nearly as badly hit as was Detroit, were extended the helping hand by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

“‘No other conclusion can be reached by persons who will take the trouble to wade through the reports of the Federal Reserve System and of the Comptroller's office.’

“This is the thought expressed by the *Detroit Free Press*, a rabid, partisan paper. A paper published by the President of the

Detroit Bankers Company; a paper that was wedded to the past with its exploitation; a paper religiously opposed to the 'new deal.'

"This statement is a sample of the vicious misinterpretation that was designed to obstruct the driving out of the money-changers from the temple of this country. It is absolutely untrue, according to the statement of Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Woodin, and his associates, who have the real information at hand, and who report to the nation that 'losses in both of these banks extend far beyond their capital structures!'

"It is in keeping with the misrepresentations made by the Detroit *Free Press* of a telephone interview which a news reporter had with Bishop Gallagher and in which he was misquoted by him.

"What a cheap insinuation had been uttered by this paper here and in many other instances during these six weeks of camouflage and of deceit! At one time trying to outwit the public by their half-baked truths. At another, taking a cheap gutter-born sling at the President of the United States who promised the people of this country a 'new deal.'

"Here was an example of professional obstructionism, of editorial wrench-slinging under the patronage of a gentleman who not only publishes a newspaper but is also the president of the Detroit Bankers Company, the holding company, the hide-out company, to which belong the First National Bank of Detroit, the Detroit Trust Company, the First Detroit Company, the First National Bank Building Company, the Detroit Banker Safe Deposit Company and eight other independent banks of the group scattered in the neighborhood of Detroit, the total resources of which amounted to approximately \$560,000,000. No wonder he had an ax to grind! I repeat it, it was the huge hide-out company behind whose walls it was possible for the buccaneers to divide their loot and to defy apprehension.

"This same gentleman, Mr. E. D. Stair, the publisher of the Detroit *Free Press*, in the columns of which were carried misstatements, purposeful extravagances, vicious insinuations, attempted to prevent the Government-controlled bank from opening its doors and serving the people of Detroit! Mark him well!

"Working hand in hand with him was Commissioner James Watkins, who rules over the destinies of the police department of

Detroit. His specialty was radio addresses. Appearing before the public as seemingly representing the policemen and the small depositors—and representing nobody—he waxed eloquent in his condemnation of the Government Plan and in his pleadings to establish an annex to the morgue where the corpse which he was defending was already decomposed.

“The small depositor who bore allegiance to him did not know that this self-appointed leader owned 165 shares of the First National Bank stock. The small depositor did not know that 1,477 shares were likewise owned in Mr. Watkins’ immediate family, making a total of 1,642 shares of \$32,840 that he and his immediate family as stockholders were obligated by law to pay upon the double assessment for the protection of the small depositor.

“Nor did the small depositor of the City of Detroit realize that this same Commissioner James Watkins has total obligations of \$170,390, to be exact, to the Detroit banks, with only approximately \$1,200 on deposit against it. How easy are the misinformed and deceived public taken into camp by those who have an ax to grind and a hide to save.

“Mr. Watkins, skilled attorney that he is, well knew that in the event of the establishment of this Government-controlled bank he would be forced to pay back some of the other people’s money upon which he had lived, as well as meet the \$32,840 liability towards the small depositor which he was endeavoring to escape.

“Ladies and gentlemen, those who, for the most part, have defended the corpse that is now buried will be found to be seeking the flesh pots of Egypt.

“For twenty years or more the people of this nation have been suffering from the slavery of Mellonism. Its policy was to protect the white carnation. Its program was occupied in gambling with other people’s money, with building up a false confidence that has come crashing down upon them. Its vehicles of propaganda oftentimes were the mouths of Government officials and sometimes the columns of news journals similar to the old lady of Fort Street, the Detroit *Free Press*.

“ ‘Save the stockholders!’

“ ‘Let the depositors pay on the line,’ although sixty thousand families in Detroit are eating the dole bread of poverty at the table of the Lord.

“Meanwhile, ‘Revive the old banks.’ Revive the crookedness, protect the undersecured borrower, pamper the speculator, bequeath to your children the financial sorrows which you have experienced—above all, sustain the holding company, the den of forty thieves, the hide-out, the blind pig financial institution where shady transactions are perpetrated and where are printed the depositors’ passports to doom.

“Thus the battle was waged.

“The defenders of the old system played upon the minds of the small depositors by telling them that if the United States plan of Government-controlled banks were adopted, our finances would fall into the hands of ‘outsiders,’ of Wall Street. The business man was approached with the threat that his industry, his holdings, would be ruthlessly liquidated.

“How false and misleading!

“The Government plan, as established last Friday and which will continue here in Detroit, is no ‘outside’ plan, as I said. Briefly the plan is this: There will be 100 percent stock issued on this new bank. Fifty percent, may I repeat, shall be preferred stock. Every penny of which shall be owned by the Government—\$12,500,000.

“Fifty percent of the total stock shall be common stock. For the time being it will be owned by the General Motors Corporation—\$12,500,000—but with the understanding that you and I and every citizen of Detroit who has been a depositor has the right to buy it and own it. Moreover, a Government representative shall sit on the board of directors of this new people’s bank.

“This is no ‘outside plan,’ no Wall Street plan, no big interest commercial plan.

“To quote from an editorial in yesterday’s *Detroit Times*, we read:

“ ‘And as for fanciful claims that the new bank is sort of a carpet-bagging institution, a stranger in town, as it were, pay roll and tax records of Detroit are the best evidence. General Motors, which is a partner in the bank with the government, pays almost \$2,000,000 in taxes yearly to Detroit and approximately 55 percent of the entire pay roll of the huge organization is disbursed within the State of Michigan.’

“Is that an outside bank? The editorial continues:

“ ‘As for fear that some New York or Chicago or other influence may

buy over the bank stock and with it control of the new institution, Washington officials point out that the Government in the first place does not intend to sell any of its preferred stock until after there is a general recovery, and that when this time comes the stock will be offered first to Detroit.

“So, as far as Washington is concerned, Detroit’s bank emergency is cleared up. A new bank is functioning and Uncle Sam will do his best, over a period of time, to get depositors dollar for dollar out of the defunct institutions. The pity of it is that the big banks were allowed to get into the state that the Government finds them.’

“Thus, my friends, Detroit has won the battle. We had courage to confront the enemy in his stronghold. Despite his wealth, his influence, his newspapers, despite his perversion of truth, his duplicity, his hypocrisy, we have won the honor in our fair City of seeing the birthday of the first Government-controlled bank in our modern history—a bank of the people and for the people, a bank whose stockholders and officers hide behind no blind pig holding company, a bank that has opened its doors with the assurance of guaranteed deposits—guaranteed by the presence of the Government, guaranteed by the coöperation of the depositors.

“Meanwhile, ‘plenty of things are being gossiped about and discussed daily in financial circles to furnish ammunition for an enterprising survey of the wrecked banks to find out all about what happened to them.

“The United States Government should bring out all the facts for the public to see. If bad loans and “unhealthy” deals were made with depositors’ money, the people ought to be told.

“And steps should be taken to see that the same or similar things do not happen again.’

“And now, my friends in Detroit, the latest word is the simple slander that Father Coughlin has been purchased—‘I am now on the side of the big interests!’

“For seven years I have been and now am on the side of the biggest interest in this democracy, the interest of the people. On the side of those sixty thousand families on the welfare while the Watkinses and the Stairs fight the battle for those with unsecured loans, undersecured loans, officers’ loans, wholly out of proportion to any credit they were entitled to. Every penny of this is the people’s money, the small depositor’s money, the small business man’s money, swept away in this banking debacle. \$2,800,000

## SUNDAY

of Reconstruction Finance Corporation money given to Mayor Murphy to feed the poor—that went into the rat-hole with the rest of it.

“Big interest—yes, clearing away the money and banking obstacle that presently controls the life blood of the people.

“My interest is in the big interest—yes, I tried to be a voice, almost alone, crying in an economic wilderness—crying: ‘Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight His path! Every valley shall be filled, every mountain and hill shall be brought low’—every valley of economic injustice, every mountain of corrupted graft.

“Do you know the circumstances which decided the choice of a motto for the City of Detroit?

“It was in the year of 1805. A hot, sultry afternoon in the middle of July had parched the lawns and dried up the fields. A farmer was observed driving a team of huge horses. Behind them was a wagon loaded with hay. The farmer was smoking. Suddenly his load of hay was ablaze! The wind was rising from the northwest. Soon the neighboring frame houses were on fire. Despite the frantic fight of the citizens to extinguish the flames, 2,500 houses—every home in Detroit—had been destroyed.

“As the sun was sinking in a flame of crimson, the villagers were on their knees, pleading with God to give them courage. ‘Let us hope for better days. We shall arise from our ashes,’ spoke an old French père.

“My friends, from the ashes of the financial structure which has been destroyed; from the ashes resulting from the activities of the wicked banker, the banker who set his torch of greed to the edifice of our prosperity, Detroit and America shall both rise again. Better days are to come!”

Father Coughlin realized precisely what he was doing when he gave this discourse. He was simply following his established principles as expressed in the chapter, “The Method.” He never believed that broad platitudes ever brought men to their senses. Names, facts, mathematical exactness dare not be shelved when speaking of the Detroit banking situation.

Seventeen months before, in his introductory discourse of Sunday, October 16, 1932, Father Coughlin had quoted St. Paul in his advice to the Ephesians, “Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and powers, against the

rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places.”

In this discourse, he referred to SS. Peter and Paul and their open contest with the brutal theories of Nero. He pointed, of course, to Christ excoriating the scribes and Pharisees, the publicans and high priests, who were bent on putting unbearable burdens on the backs of the impoverished. He used this language:

“Were He in the flesh today—I am afraid some eminent orator of the school of Annas and Caiphas would dub Him a demagog.

“As a matter of fact Christ was a demagog in the original meaning of the word. Look in your Standard Dictionary and you will find that originally the word meant ‘the leader of the people,’ ‘demos’—the people, ‘agein’—to lead. Read Trenches ‘English Language Past and Present’ and you will discover that the Royalists of France said to the people: ‘If you have no bread, eat cake.’ These Royalists turned and twisted the words to suit their own meaning. They who wish to adopt the bread and cake policy which fathered the French Revolution could be expected to use in no better sense than did their political ancestors the oppressor’s meaning modernly attached to the word ‘demagog.’

“Certainly Christ would preach to the laborer that he is worthy of his hire. Once more He would advise us that if we wish to obtain prosperity, to reduce taxation, to stabilize our banks, to cement friendly commercial relations with foreign nations, to solve our problems of mass production and the necessary and increasing stream of unemployment which accompanies it—once more He would say to us: ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice (not man-made justice) and all these things shall be added unto you.’

“These, my friends, are preliminary remarks which were necessary to substantiate my position and to introduce the series of discourses which, with God’s help, I plan to deliver during the following twenty-six Sundays. *Perhaps I plan to be a demagog in the original sense of the word.*”

The plan to be a “demagog” in the original sense of the word was fulfilled. It remained for the *Detroit Free Press* to answer the direct, definite charges brought against the Detroit Bankers Company and its president, Mr. E. D. Stair, who was also publisher of the *Detroit Free Press*.

*Monday*



IN typical *Free Press* style, the following editorial appeared on Monday, March 27, 1933.

**COUGHLIN, THE DEMAGOG**—The Reverend Father Charles E. Coughlin, the political radio haranguer, went far beyond his usual flamboyant demagoguery in his Sunday afternoon address. This man, who already stands rebuked by a Cardinal of his Church for his political activities, after slandering the directors of the two outstanding banking groups of Detroit, directly charged that these holding companies were organized to “cheat the widow, rob the orphan and to oppress the poor”; that they were created to escape possibility of double liability in case their banks had failed.

As to the men assailed, the list of their names, printed elsewhere, is sufficient testimony as to their characters. They are known to all Detroit. Let the people judge between them and the demagog Coughlin.

Many of them are outstanding members of the Catholic faith; in fact, pillars of the Church from whose teaching Coughlin has wandered so far afield.

They have been the largest contributors to the Church and were carrying its burdens when Coughlin was a boy in Canada.

As for the organization of the holding company to dodge liability, the law itself will answer that slanderous utterance. By no stretch of the imagination could double liability be dodged, nor has there been any such idea on the part of the holders of the Detroit Bankers stock or of that of the Guardian Group.

The attorneys for the United States conservators have made that quite clear. Nobody is confused by it except Coughlin and those he seeks to dupe.

Judge Robert S. Marx, Federal counsel for Conservator C. O. Thomas, of the First National Bank, Detroit, frequently has explained the liability of stockholders in holding companies. He said:

“The procedure in such cases is to obtain a judgment against the holding corporation. That entitles the conservator to dispose of its assets. If, when these assets have been disposed of, there are still insufficient funds to meet depositors’ demands, suits may be instituted against the stockholders of such a holding company. This was the procedure in the case of the Bank of Kentucky, Liquidated by Federal receivers at Louisville.”

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Judge Frank E. Wood, counsel for Conservator B. C. Schram, of the Guardian National Bank of Commerce, has concurred in this opinion. Judge Wood said:

"In the case of the Bank of Kentucky, the holding company's entire interest amounted to about 70 percent interest in the bank. When judgments were obtained against these stockholders, 70 percent of the amount collected was turned over to depositors in the bank. The remaining 30 percent went to subsidiaries of the holding company."

The political animus and the sinister newspaper influences guiding Father Coughlin are shown in his bitter personal assaults upon E. D. Stair, the publisher of the *Detroit Free Press*.

Hiding behind his priestly garb, using the strength of the Church to give him prestige, Coughlin pulls the chestnuts out of the fire for political and newspaper interests the *Free Press* has always combatted and always will.

The truth of Mr. Stair's connection with the Detroit Bankers could have been easily found if Coughlin had been seeking the truth—which he was not.

There have been three presidents of the Detroit Bankers. The first was the late Julius Haass, who conceived it and organized it. The name of Mr. Haass needs no defenders. After his tragically untimely death, the presidency went to John Ballantyne. Upon his resignation, Mr. Stair was induced to take the presidency by the other directors of the company. This was last May.

Mr. Stair took the office with great reluctance and only on the urging that it was a civic duty. He consented to serve only on the condition that there would be no salary attached to the office.

Mr. Haass was paid \$100,000 a year.

Mr. Ballantyne was paid \$50,000.

Mr. Stair refused to accept a cent.

He took the office only on the agreement that the holding company would be little more than an auditing concern to cut down the expenses of the constituent bodies. This was accomplished by slashing millions from the overhead and reducing all executive salaries.

He went in, against his own desire, to save the institution if he could, and the money of the depositors.

The demagog Coughlin, raving over the radio for two years with his attacks on the banks, did much to bring about the present condition. He robbed the people of confidence in these directors and their banks and was one of the chief causes of withdrawals of funds from them during the past two years to a total of over two hundred million dollars.

And it is ironically true that while a priest of the Church did his best to destroy the First National Bank with his radio bombast, the Church he misrepresents was the largest single debtor to that institution.

## MONDAY

One of the main reasons for the bank's troubles was the fact that it tried to carry the load of the Catholic Diocese's debts—along with other churches, fraternal bodies and, above all, the hundreds of thousands of homes and little businesses.

The directors of that institution, with many of the leading Catholic laymen in Detroit on its board, considered the Catholic Church the finest risk that any bank could take.

They still do. Nobody knows that better than Bishop Gallagher, who is supposed to have some degree of control over the Royal Oak firebrand.

Read the names of these directors.

They sat on the board. They elected Mr. Stair against his own desires.

He has been singled out for attack for vicious political purposes.

The Church is being used to sorry ends. If Coughlin spoke as a man and were not a priest, with the prestige of his office to give him prominence, he would not be listened to.

How long will this ecclesiastical Huey Long be allowed to slander decent citizens of this city in the name of God?

This editorial, "Coughlin the Demagog," is not difficult to answer. On the legality of holding companies, the *Free Press* quotes "The Kentucky Case," which is under appeal, and quotes likewise an opinion rendered by Attorney General Wilber M. Brucker, failing to quote a dissenting opinion expressed at the same time.

The Courts alone will determine the liability of stockholders in the Detroit Bankers Company under the statutes, under the articles of incorporation, and under the specific language of "article nine" of the Detroit Bankers Company charter, reprinted on the stock certificates.

With respect to the glorification of Mr. Stair in taking "office only on the agreement that the holding company would be little more than an auditing concern to cut down the expenses of the constituent bodies," this famous auditing concern, the Detroit Bankers Company, took earnings of over \$300,000 in two months while its subsidiaries were insolvent.

The *Free Press* admits much in this editorial. It states, "He [Stair] went in against his own desire to save the institution if he could and the money of the depositor." This is the best tacit admission that the Detroit Bankers needed saving and that the money of the depositor was in danger.

The charge that the demagog Coughlin did much to bring

about the present condition by robbing the people of their confidence in these directors and their banks, and thereby was one of the chief causes of the withdrawal of funds from them during the last two years to a total of over \$200,000,000, is a libelous and unfounded charge.

The chief causes for the withdrawals were unemployment, the legitimate needs of industry, the legitimate needs of commerce, together with a distrust based upon mismanagement throughout the nation, as well as in Detroit, that caused Mr. Hoover to give the figure of two billion dollars in hoarding.

Some withdrawals were undoubtedly made because of Father Coughlin's exposure of international bankers and of banking in general, but the bank that could not be subjected to the truth can never attribute to Father Coughlin the cause of its collapse. Withdrawals never destroyed the Detroit banks. Mismanagement did.

Despite this admission on withdrawals in Detroit, the *Free Press* steadfastly maintained that the old banks were sound and worthy of rehabilitation.

This editorial, "The Demagog," at least admits that the confidence of the people had been stolen.

In the editorial "The Demagog," the *Free Press* is bold to remind the people that the Church Father Coughlin represented is the largest single debtor to the banks, and that one of the main reasons for the bank's trouble was trying to carry the load of the "Catholic diocese debt, along with other churches, fraternal bodies, and above all, the hundreds and thousands of homes and little businesses."

One of the functions of the banks was carrying the debts of a community, including a Catholic debt.

The Catholic Diocese of Detroit incidentally paid to the bank under discussion \$600,000 in interest in a single year, money enough to carry many a respectable banking institution. Against that debt were over \$2,000,000 in deposits, so the bank profited by its interest on the debt and by its unknown earnings on the deposits.

Certainly this risk can be contrasted with those undersecured loans—loans ignored by the *Free Press*.

Before this book is printed, the people of Detroit will see every trick in the political bag pulled to avoid double liability of stockholders.

# [ CHAPTER TWENTY - ONE ]

## Tuesday

### I



ON Tuesday, March 28, the *Free Press* continued its attack on Father Coughlin. The principal article concerned Bishop Gallagher in his defense of the old banks, covered in the chapter, "The Priest and his Bishop." Prominently displayed was the following article, captioned "Cold Facts Refute Every Charge of Radio Coughlin."

Demagogic rhetoric cannot be answered.

But wherever Father Coughlin lighted from the clouds long enough to give his listeners a pretense of factual statement the records show his charges to be utterly false.

Categorically, the *Free Press* refutes each of his allegations in the following analysis of his speech, compared with the available records.

No specific charge of Coughlin's is borne out by the financial statements of the institution as of December 31, 1932, or after the conservator took charge of the institution on March 13.

FALSEHOOD No. 1—Coughlin charged that "smart money" resulted in withdrawals of more than \$60,000,000 between December 31 and February 11 of this year.

The figures show that on December 31 deposits were as follows:

Demand deposits.....	\$147,049,550.72
Time deposits.....	276,308,346.72

Total.....	\$423,357,897.44
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On February 11, the last banking day in Michigan, the deposits were:

Demand deposits.....	\$130,304,012.75
Time deposits.....	267,659,907.76

Total.....	\$398,057,455.60
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These figures, taken Monday from the daily balance sheets of the First National Bank, show a shrinkage of \$25,300,441.84. This is not an exceptional shrinkage for that period of the year. Withdrawals are normally

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heavy in early January to meet Christmas bills, taxes and other obligations that come with the end of the year.

But one large depositor in the First National Bank did withdraw \$6,000,000 during that period. This withdrawal was made to meet seasonal obligations of the motor car industry. This one depositor left several times that amount on deposit in the banks of Detroit.

Accountants, and an auditor of this bank, still in its employ and retained by Conservator C. O. Thomas, sought Monday to "break down" Father Coughlin's figures. The only way that they could approximate the figures he employed was by considering that he took the position that the United States Government has withdrawn its deposit.

The Federal Government's deposit in the First National Bank was on February 11, \$28,596,069. This deposit is listed as follows: Postal Savings \$24,720,035.28; War Loan Account, \$3,038,678.91; Receivers for other banks \$588,347; miscellaneous government accounts \$249,007.81.

The Government, unlike the City of Detroit or the State of Michigan, cannot lose any part of its deposit in the liquidation of the old banks. It alone of all depositors gets one hundred percent. For the United States Government took from the bank \$31,639,703.72 in Government and other bonds to guarantee its deposit.

Postal savings deposits were on December 31, \$24,537,042.06 and on February 11, \$24,720,035.28.

Before continuing with the quotation from the *Free Press*, let us answer "Falsehood No. 1." It needs a specific answer, one which the Detroit *Free Press* has already had from its competitor, the Detroit *Times*, in a serial concerning Detroit banking entitled, "Vanishing Millions."

What happened was this: The Government of the United States had deposited some \$24,000,000 of postal savings funds in the First National. Against this deposit Government and other bonds to the extent of \$31,639,703.72 were pledged to secure this Government money.

The bank quoted in its item, "Cash on hand and Government Securities," both the \$24,000,000 of postal savings deposits and the \$31,000,000 of bonds pledged as security.

Father Coughlin had a very authoritative source for the figures he used.

What the *Free Press* entitles "Falsehood No. 1" is a simple truth. The people had been given finally a financial statement by the *Free Press* but the financial statement was falsified.

Father had used correct figures. The *Free Press* had retorted with incorrect figures.

Similarly, let us quote and answer the remaining "Falsehoods" in the *Free Press* article.

FALSEHOOD No. 2—The inference was left by Father Coughlin that E. D. Stair, president of the Detroit Bankers Company and publisher of the *Detroit Free Press*, had withdrawn funds in this interval. The books now in possession of the conservator show that the accounts of the *Free Press* and other companies controlled by Mr. Stair, were \$17,030.36 higher on February 11 than on the last day of 1932—even after taxes had been paid.

Answer—"FALSEHOOD No. 2": "Falsehood No. 2" is a deliberate attempt to deceive the people. Father Coughlin neither stated nor inferred that Mr. E. D. Stair had withdrawn funds. The *Free Press* simply uses the old trick of setting up straw men to knock down.

FALSEHOOD No. 3—Taking the figures of the First National Bank as of December 31 and as of March 13, a full month after the banking holiday was proclaimed, they disclose that withdrawals amounted to but \$49,056,897 in the entire period. This was after withdrawals had been made on the first and second five percent releases. Father Coughlin listed total withdrawals at more than \$60,000,000 during the period from the end of the year to February 11.

Answer—"FALSEHOOD No. 3": This paragraph was withdrawn by the *Free Press* itself in its succeeding editions, a tacit admission that its "Falsehood" was a fiction concocted in the mind of some brilliant editorial or news writer who attempted to deny a balance of February 11 by quoting a balance of March 13.

FALSEHOOD No. 4—Regarding loans to directors, which Father Coughlin charged had been exceptionally large, Wilson W. Mills, chairman of the board of the First National Bank, said Monday these had been made upon good collateral, had been materially reduced and interest paid. This the records show.

Answer—"FALSEHOOD No. 4": It should be noted on re-examination of Father's discourse that in no word or line did he ever suggest that excessive loans to *directors* had been made by the First National. He had charged excessive loans to *officers*. The *Free Press* simply erected another straw man to knock down. Father was dealing with a psychopathic columnist.

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FALSEHOOD No. 5—Father Coughlin charged that the banks were totally insolvent and, therefore, could never open.

Under the laws which govern the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, loans cannot be made to an insolvent bank. But John H. McKee, local representative of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, did recommend a loan of \$54,000,000 to the First National Bank, and the board of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation approved that loan. A further loan of \$24,000,000 to the Guardian National Bank of Commerce was also approved.

This was at the time Henry and Edsel Ford proposed to open two new banks.

The banks have never been declared insolvent by any state or federal examiner.

*Answer*—“FALSEHOOD No. 5”: Any statement of the *Free Press* respecting the solvency of the First National Bank and printed under date of Monday, March 27, is simply asinine. The Secretary of the Treasury, two days before, on Saturday, March 25, 1933, had declared both great Detroit banks so insolvent as to impair their capital structure. This was two days before the *Free Press* printed its attack on Father Coughlin.

The *Free Press* knew the fact of insolvency on the word of the Secretary of the Treasury. It hid behind prior examinations and applications for Reconstruction Finance Corporation loans as proofs of solvencies in the face of the direct statement of the Secretary of the Treasury, the highest financial official in the United States, that its bank was insolvent.

FALSEHOOD No. 6—The minutes of the Detroit Bankers Company show that last June, when Arthur Leyburn, chief bank examiner for the Federal Government, made his report, based upon an examination in May, he recommended that approximately \$9,000,000 in bad loans be written off. This was done by taking funds from reserves.

In December, Mr. Leyburn again appeared before the governing committee of the board and recommended that \$6,000,000 of losses be written off. This was the total actual losses shown by his examination. Again reserve funds were used to comply with Leyburn's demands. Leyburn at that time did not declare the bank to be insolvent, these minutes and his report show.

The minute book is supported by a score of directors who attended both sessions.

On February 11, 1933, the cash and government bonds of this same

institution (First National) did not total more than \$45,000,000, Father Coughlin charged.

On March 13, when the conservator took over the bank, the statement shows \$58,460,000 in government bonds and \$5,245,717.86 in cash. This was after the two five percents had been released. On that same day, according to E. J. Eckert, former executive vice-president and the first man hired back by the conservator, this bank had a credit of \$18,364,625.66 with the Federal Reserve and other banks.

*Answer*—"FALSEHOOD No. 6": Again attempts to prove the solvency of the bank by a prior examiner's report in the face of the Secretary of the Treasury's announcement two days before, March 25, 1933, when he said: "Candor compels me to say that losses in both of these banks extend far beyond their capital structure and neither of them can be permitted to carry on as sound banks."

As to the rest of the statement, the *Free Press* boasts of deposits on March 13, when Father Coughlin referred plainly to deposits on February 11. It would be less confusing and as honest for the *Free Press* to declare: "This is an ocean and its name is the Atlantic."

FALSEHOOD No. 7—The Reverend Father condemned the loans that were made upon real estate in Detroit, which are listed as mortgage loans.

As for these assets of the First National Bank, conservators and officers alike agree that the best of these were negotiated during the reign of the late Julius H. Haass, as president of the Peoples Wayne County Bank, which merged with the First National.

Eckert explained that there are 55,000 mortgages for a total of \$157,000,000. That represents an average of less than \$3,000 each. Of these 28,000 call for \$2,000 or less, for an average of \$1,360. The average of the remaining 27,000 mortgages is \$4,440.

Ninety percent of these mortgages are upon single homes or two-family flats. A considerable percentage of them are not serviced, because unemployment made it impossible for owners to meet interest and principal payments. The most conservative of the bankers—the group Haass took with him to the First National Bank,—still maintain these are good investments, and that they represent good investments.

"If this type of loan is not safe, nothing else is," said Mr. Eckert Monday afternoon. "The Bank has been conservative in making loans on mortgages. In fact we have been criticized by borrowers for being so conservative."

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Not only did Leyburn term the bank solvent in December, but in May of last year, he advised directors against discontinuing the dividend upon stock.

*Answer*—"FALSEHOOD No. 7": In referring to real estate loans, Father Coughlin was very specific. He referred to the permission given under the Mellon regime on February 25, 1927, for national banks to invest the depositors' money in real estate mortgages.

He then described the mortgages that in part caused the collapse of the First National, namely, "Mortgages which permitted the dishonest builder and the rabid speculator in apartment houses and in real estate subdivisions to squander the depositors' money."

It was not the mortgage on the small home which caused trouble. That mortgage has always been defended by Father Coughlin. "The financing by dishonest builders of Detroit apartment houses and the financing by rabid speculators of Detroit's great subdivisions," that is what helped in the collapse of the First National.

The *Free Press* in its best Machiavellian style twists the actual words used by Father Coughlin into an attack on the small home. This is a simple distortion of the truth.

The spirit of Don Quixote still wanders through the editorial rooms of the *Free Press*.

FALSEHOOD No. 8—Father Coughlin's crowning falsehood came with the charge that the Detroit Bankers Company was organized to evade the double liability which accrues to owners of bank stocks. This firm was organized with the approval of the present Banking Commissioner, the Secretary of State and the Public Utilities Commission.

Upon the back of each stock certificate is a reproduction of an article of the incorporation papers. It is a warning to all purchasers of stock. Every share of it is By LAW subject to all the liability of any bank. Every stockholder knew it. Mr. Haass insisted on having it stated in the charter. Here is the exact language:

### ARTICLE IX

"(A) The holder of each share of common stock of this corporation shall be individually and severally liable for such stockholder's ratable and proportionate part (determined on the basis of their respective stockholdings of the total issued and outstanding stock of this corporation) for any

statutory liability imposed upon this corporation by reason of its ownership of shares of the capital stock of any bank or trust company, and the stockholders of this company—by the acceptance of their certificates of stock of this company—severally agree that such liability may be enforced in the same manner and to the same extent as statutory liability may now or hereafter be enforceable against stockholders of banks or trust companies under the laws which said banks or trust companies are organized or operate. A list of the stockholders of this company shall be filed with the Banking Commissioner of Michigan or the Comptroller of the Currency, whenever requested by either of these offices." (The above Article IX of the Charter was also used by the *Free Press* under the caption: "This Nails Coughlin's Falsehood.")

*Answer*—"FALSEHOOD No. 8": This is the "crowning falsehood" according to the *Free Press*. The *Free Press* refers to Father Coughlin's charge that the holding company is a hide-out company and that stockholders in the holding company cannot legally be compelled to pay the double liability on their stock.

Father Coughlin also charged that the objective in forming the holding company was in part to dodge double liability.

Insofar as the State of Michigan is concerned, stockholders' liability in the case of the Detroit Bankers Company rests upon the opinion of one Attorney General, Wilber M. Brucker, with a dissenting opinion expressed at the time.

Insofar as the structure of the Detroit Bankers Company is concerned, Father Coughlin in his own answer made use of the astounding criticism offered by Senator Carter Glass:

I learned that one of the most distinguished lawyers at the American bar, at one time president of the American Bar Association, Solicitor General of the United States under President Taft, had given an exhaustive, searching opinion as to the legality of national bank affiliates. I have read the opinion. Although not a lawyer, I venture to pronounce it a legal classic, searching and sweeping. The opinion is, in effect, an unmistakable declaration that national bank affiliates are absolutely illegal, that they contravene the national bank act, that the parent bank contravenes the national charter, and the affiliate in many instances the State statute and the charter of the State from which it derives its existence. Court opinion after court opinion of both inferior courts and the Supreme Court of the United States are cited.

No action was ever taken under this tremendously important opinion of the Solicitor General of the United States. Not only was no action taken, but it is within the confines of fact to say that the opinion was suppressed;

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and few things have ever happened in this country that better illustrate the power and the blandishments of inordinate wealth, because the opinion dealt with institutions and individuals who had accumulated inordinate wealth. Not only did the Attorney General at that time fail to act, but another Attorney General, some years afterwards, elevated to a place of even higher distinction, declined to permit the opinion to be made public.

Lastly, insofar as the practical side of collecting the double liability from stockholders in the Detroit Bankers Company is concerned, the banks of Michigan closed on February 11. They closed because they were hopelessly insolvent. The proof of insolvency comes, not from the old, whitewashed examinations, but from the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Woodin, who stated, as quoted above, that the banks were so insolvent as to impair their capital structure. This statement was made on March 25.

From March 25 until June 5 at least, not one effort has been made to collect a dollar's worth due under the famous Article IX the *Free Press* quotes so convincingly.

In the meantime, stockholders have been given all the leeway in the world to transfer their properties lest the Court hold, despite previously suppressed opinions to the contrary, that the stockholder must be assessed.

## II

The *Free Press* addressed the following telegram to President Franklin D. Roosevelt on Monday and published it in its Tuesday, March 28, 1933 editions:

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT,  
White House,  
Washington, D. C.

*Dear Mr. President:*

A slanderous radio attack has been made against myself and other citizens of this City in connection with the banking situation here by Father Charles E. Coughlin, who presents himself from time to time as the spokesman for your Administration. To clarify the situation and to save our City from such inflammatory attacks, to still all false rumors and to vindicate the dignity and decency of our community, I urgently request that you direct your Department of Justice to begin an immediate and thorough and complete investigation. We stand unafraid and eager to cooperate in every way to save our City from slanderous wreckers.

(Signed) E. D. Stair.

Mr. E. D. Stair, publisher of the Detroit *Free Press*, rushing to the President of the United States with a whining complaint that a slanderous radio attack had been made against him by Father Charles E. Coughlin, and requesting the President to direct his Department of Justice to investigate while E. D. Stair cooperates to save Detroit from slanderous wreckers—this is a picture that should be hung on the wall of every office in Detroit. Alongside of this should go Mr. E. D. Stair's "Good Morning" column of Monday, October 3, 1932, under the caption "Peanut Politics."

## PEANUT POLITICS

20,000 Detroiters see Franklin Roosevelt—(Headline).

40,000 Detroiters visit Zoo to see Jo Mendi, the monkey—(Headline).

Detroit Zoological Gardens—October 3—At midnight Joseph Mendi, the monkey, announced his candidacy for the Presidency of the United States as a sticker candidate.

"Why not?" demanded Jo when seen by your correspondent. "I can draw bigger crowds than any of them can't I? I'll take them hook, lyin' and sticker.

"You can see for yourself," he said with a wistful smile, "I have what you humans call *It*. The people are just crazy about me. I will sweep the country."

"Where do you stand?"—your correspondent interrupted.

"Don't ask me where I stand on anything. If I come out and tell what I think about anything I may lose a few votes. I'm not going to take any chances. My job is to fool the voters. I learned that lesson years ago when I was working in a carnival tent show. My boss then taught me a great lesson. He said, *Never give a sucker a break*. The carnival and political rackets are the same. Take P. T. Barnum, what a President he would have made! He had the right idea. He said a sucker was born every minute.

"I know my politics, claim everything, promise everybody and do nothing. That's the way to win. Talk a lot but never say a thing.

"Jack Garner has the right idea. Promise them a marble post office on every cross-road corner. Tell them to help themselves. T'ell with the taxpayers. And when the taxpayers go down and out, we'll start the printing presses going and print a lot of free money. Make the suckers think they are getting what they want."

"But that would be disastrous!"

"Maybe, I don't know. I'm only a monkey and what do I care what happens to the country as long as I get the job?"

He put on his glasses and stroked his ear.

"The ancients," he said with scholarly mien, "had a saying, *populus vult decipi ergo decipiatur*. That means, *the people love to be deceived, therefore deceive them.*"

"But," said your correspondent, "Abraham Lincoln had a less cynical remark. He said, *you can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.*"

Jo, the monkey, laughed heartily.

"Yeah," he says, "that's right. But I don't plan to fool all of the people all of the time. I just plan to fool enough of them until election day to get into office. After that, I don't care. That's where Hoover makes his big mistake. He should get out and promise the people anything—tell them funny stories and stand on his head to entertain them. He lacks showmanship."

"But," your correspondent insisted, "the people will at least expect you to say where you stand on the bonus."

"Oh ye-ah! I've got as much right to kid the people on that as Roosevelt has. My plan is to fool the soldiers into believing that I am going to give them all the money they need and to tell the taxpayers I am not going to gouge them for it. I'll dodge that issue by heaping abuse on President Hoover. You see I can get away with such tactics. I'm not a man, I'm just a monkey and people will not expect a straightforward, manly statement on any of their problems.

"No, sir, not the sucker public. They will just jam around me by the thousands and say, *ain't he cute!* That's the way to get them. Entertain them with wisecracks and high sounding platitudes. Keep them from thinking. Play them for suckers. As P. T. Barnum said so well, *'They like to be humbugged.'*"

"But before election you will have to take some kind of stand."

"Sure, I will! Some kind of a stand. You said it. I will deliver a terrific cargo of words at Hoover. Then I will say that if he had run the country right there would be enough money in the treasury to pay all the soldiers in America all the money they want. That's the way to duck the issue."

"But Hoover says—"

"Yes, that's the trouble with Hoover. He comes right out and says what's what, and why. He does not dodge. That is why I can beat him. The people do not want the truth. Any circus or carnival man can tell you that."

"But, as a sincere leader—"

"Sincerity has no place in politics. That's statesmanship. The fellow who makes the biggest promises and dodges the issues fastest is the fellow who gets the votes. That is why I am popular.

"You see I never take a stand on anything. I make the people laugh with

my monkey shines. I imitate my ancestors and pretend to be very solemn and serious without having the slightest idea of what it is all about."

"I disagree with you," your correspondent declared. "You got 40,000 out here to see you because they knew you were not going to make a speech."

"Sez you! I chatter away here by the hour." "Yes, but nobody understands what you are saying."

"That is the point I am trying to make," said Jo. "They don't understand what Roosevelt is saying either as I can talk more and be less understood than he can I'm going to win in a walk. My platform will be: *BIGGER AND BETTER PEANUTS*. There are too many little peanuts in our politics."

Thus, the publisher of the paper that ran the greatest insult that Franklin D. Roosevelt ever received from the press of this nation, appeals to President Franklin D. Roosevelt to save him and other citizens from slanderous wreckers.

When Mr. Roosevelt was running, the *Free Press* put a monkey in the field against him. When Mr. Roosevelt was a candidate for the Presidency, the boast of the *Free Press* was that a monkey could draw larger crowds in the City of Detroit.

It wasn't a "radio racket" that the *Free Press* was attacking then. It was the "political racket."

The *Free Press* monkey says, "I've got as much right to kid the people as Roosevelt has."

Jo Mendi's campaign continued through Wednesday and Thursday, Friday and Saturday, including October 8, 1932.

But on Monday, March 27, 1933, when President Roosevelt was twenty-three days in the presidential chair, E. D. Stair was wiring for help to stop "a slanderous radio attack" made against himself.

"We stand unafraid." These are words taken from the last sentence of E. D. Stair's telegram to the President of the United States.

All Mr. Stair wanted was the aid of Franklin D. Roosevelt, whom his paper had maligned. All he wanted was the Department of Justice of the United States Government to protect him against the assaults of Father Coughlin. "We stand unafraid."

Contrast the attitude of E. D. Stair in his telegram to the President of the United States whining for help, while Father

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Coughlin, who did so much to drive the Mellon regime out of power, asked help from no man in his battle against the crooked banker.

Contrast E. D. Stair running out in the midst of the battle to the coral sands of Florida while Father Coughlin stayed in his home until it was bombed; in his office until it was time to venture forth openly for a succeeding broadcast.

“We stand unafraid,” says Stair.

## [ CHAPTER TWENTY - TWO ]

### Wednesday

#### I

**W**EDNESDAY, March 29, 1933, the attacks on Father Coughlin continued in every edition of the *Detroit Free Press*. The edition started with an "extra," emblazoned over the first page of which were the following words: "Coughlin's Stock Gambling With Charity Funds Bared"—"Priest Who Denounces Market Plungers Lost Thousands in Wall Street"—"Funds Sent in Reply to Radio Pleas Used in \$30,000 Transaction; Bank Accounts Shifted." The following is the newspaper story:—

There is gold in the radio racket.

That is proven by the bank balances maintained by the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin.

Each Sunday afternoon he broadcasts over a national hookup.

The contributions which have flooded into his bank account as a result of these talks run into thousands of dollars weekly.

Leo J. Fitzpatrick, General Manager for the local station WJR, admitted Tuesday that the radio stations and telephone companies collect \$8,000 each Sunday from these donations to charity.

These contributions also have permitted Father Coughlin to plunge in the stock market, paying at one time as much as \$30,110.89 for stocks purchased. This sort of gambling has been bitterly denounced by Father Coughlin in his radio addresses.

He lost \$13,955.89 on one venture into Wall Street.

These are the records revealed in a check of the radio priest's account with the Guardian National Bank of Commerce. He controlled three accounts in one branch of that institution.

One of these was a personal account, under the name of C. E. Coughlin, another was known as the account of the League of the Little Flower, and still a third as the account of Ste. Therese's Parish of the Child Jesus.

On February 27, 1929, the account of the priest shows, the bank bought for him five hundred shares of stock in the Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Corpora-

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tion, which was then selling for sixty dollars a share. The stock was quoted this week at twenty cents a share.

On that day Father Coughlin transferred from the League of the Little Flower account \$9,216.28; drew \$4,233.72 from his personal account; cashed a check on another local bank for \$6,000, and borrowed \$10,587.50 on a note from the Guardian National, which was then known as the National Bank of Commerce.

Supplementing this money with a sum from his pocket the priest was able to pay the \$30,110.89 for his five hundred shares of Kelsey-Hayes stock. This figure includes the broker's commission.

This purchase was made by the bank through Paine, Webber & Co. The stock was delivered on March 6, 1929.

There is also on record a sale order for two hundred shares of Kelsey-Hayes stock for \$6,212, including commission, on June 10, 1930. The bank files, as far as could be learned Tuesday, do not list the purchase of this stock.

They reveal another sale order for thirty-eight shares at \$1,147.03 on June 9, 1930, with no record of the purchase. Still another transaction in behalf of Father Coughlin shows that he purchased twenty-five shares on February 27, 1929, at 60% per share and his account was debited \$1,520.01, including commission.

The five hundred shares, together with two hundred shares and thirty-eight shares, were all sold on June 5, 6 and 9 of 1930 for \$23,485.78. The radio priest's personal account was credited on that day with \$23,485.78.

This sale was negotiated through the Nicol-Ford Company, brokers, by the bank. The loss on the five hundred shares was \$13,955.89. As the records are not available to show what was paid for the two hundred shares and the thirty-eight shares, the loss, if any, cannot be determined.

Father Coughlin had at least \$80,048.04 in the Guardian National on March 19, 1931. On that day he withdrew this amount and purchased Government bonds. The bonds were purchased for him by the bank.

On June 5, 1931, Father Coughlin withdrew \$30,000 from the League of the Little Flower Fund.

On December 16, 1931, he again withdrew \$27,000 from the League of the Little Flower Fund.

On December 16, 1931, Father Coughlin transferred \$50,000 from the three funds to meet an indebtedness to the bank. This indebtedness was incurred in the name of Ste. Therese's Parish.

Conservator B. C. Schram, in charge of the Guardian National, and Judge Frank E. Wood, his legal adviser, refused Tuesday to discuss the nature of this indebtedness, or to answer a question as to whether Father Coughlin still owes the bank money.

## W E D N E S D A Y

Father Coughlin arrived frequently at the bank, carrying his money, accompanied by his father, T. J. Coughlin, who acts as his business manager, and who has charge of the store at the Shrine of the Little Flower.

When the heavy withdrawal of \$80,048.04 was made, Father Coughlin, or his Parish, owed money to the bank and officials protested this withdrawal of funds. They purchased the Government bonds, however, and turned them over to the priest.

Father Coughlin's balances, taken from a ledger sheet of the bank, show that his personal account grew from \$10,018.82 on March 4, 1930 to \$55,516.20 on June 10 of that same year.

The balance dropped to \$10,656.25 on December 1, 1930 and jumped again on January 21, 1931 to \$40,656.25. On March 19, 1931, it was down to \$572.21 and on June 1, 1932, the priest's account amounted to \$656.42. On June 6 of last year two balances are recorded, one of \$9.99 and the last entry, zero.

Checks and money orders for Father Coughlin came from all parts of the United States. Such was the influx from Massachusetts that one Boston bank billed the Guardian National for \$150.00 in one month, representing bookkeeping expense involved.

Most of the currency turned in by the priest for exchange came in small bills, which clerks of the banks say frequently amounted to \$20,000 in one-dollar bills at one time.

In view of Father Coughlin's talents in the money market, it is interesting to recall his early days in the priesthood in Canada. He started his religious life as a member of the Basilian Order, which had its roots in France.

Through its Superior General, Father Frank Forster, of Toronto, the Order decided to establish headquarters in the Dominion, and with its regulations in conformity with canon law as observed by such orders in that Country. The Order elected to require of its priestly members the vow of poverty.

The priests were given the alternative of leaving the Order entirely to pursue their work free of obligation. Father Coughlin was one of six priests who accepted the alternative. He did not want a life of poverty.

A careful analysis of this lead article of the *Free Press* fails to disclose one iota of evidence that a penny of "charity funds" was used in stock gambling.

The *Free Press* starts with the dramatic statement, "There is gold in the radio racket." This is an old phrase of the *Free Press*. When Mr. Roosevelt was campaigning for the Presidency the *Free Press* referred to the "political racket."

When Father Coughlin conducts a commercial religious broadcast, the *Free Press* designates it as a "radio racket," but the *Free Press* immediately admits on the testimony of Leo J. Fitzpatrick of WJR, Detroit, that the radio stations and telephone companies collect \$8,000 for each weekly broadcast. The actual expenditure for these items amounted to \$202,856.75 in 1932 and 1933.

Beyond this radio bill, with its initial charge of \$202,000, the discourses of Father Coughlin are printed and mailed out to the hundreds of thousands of individuals who apply for them.

The printing, envelopes, addressing, inserting, mailing, postage, maintenance of the list of applicants, and maintenance of office equipment are essential expenses.

If we assume that 300,000 apply for the average address, and if we assume that there are twenty-seven discourses each year, the total number of mailings is 8,100,000. An average cost of five cents in the mail would mean an expense per year of \$450,000.

Over and above these items is the maintenance of an organization to handle the incoming mail, and over and above this item for personnel is an item of debt service on the Shrine, the Tower and other buildings.

In a single year Father Coughlin reduced his loans at the National Bank of Commerce \$50,000 on a \$150,000 debt. Of course, there were parish loans for Shrine and Tower.

Practically every adult in America knows that Father Coughlin conducts a "commercial" broadcast and is dependent upon the voluntary offerings of his radio audience to maintain the tremendous expense incident thereto. No one questions that all the expenses charged the Radio League of the Little Flower are paid when due, yet all the money comes from the voluntary offerings. There is no endowment.

It is freely admitted that funds accumulate. It can be asserted that Father Coughlin never had any opportunity to budget his income. He is solely dependent, at the expense of repetition, on the voluntary offerings of the people.

As funds accumulate they must be cared for; they must be invested or held in safe places.

Father Coughlin in 1929 invested surplus funds under his care in productive Detroit industry by purchasing stock in Kelsey-Hayes and the Packard Motor Car Company. He likewise in-

vested surplus funds another time in United States Government bonds.

The total of all these investments criticized by the *Free Press*, namely the \$80,000 in Government bonds and the \$30,000 in stocks is \$110,000. The loss was \$13,000.

A like amount placed on deposit in the First National Bank of Detroit, a subsidiary of the Detroit Bankers Company, the holding company of which Mr. E. D. Stair was President, and if held there through the bank's insolvency, would have lost to the Radio League of the Little Flower, or to any other trusts which Father Coughlin controlled, the same percentage that it lost for all depositors caught in the bank's failure.

Specifically, on the \$110,000 the *Free Press* so glibly criticizes as stock gambling and investment in Government bonds, the loss in Mr. Stair's bank would prove today to be not \$13,000, the loss in the market, but \$66,000 up till now. Despite the fact that Government money was poured into the First National for the benefit of depositors, the First National of Detroit is able to pay so far but 40 percent on the dollar deposited.

The charge carried by the *Free Press*, "Coughlin's stock gambling with charity funds bared" is a deliberate and libelous statement. No charity funds were deposited in any bank in Detroit by Father Coughlin. All charity funds received are immediately handed over to "God's Poor Society." A description of the operations of this society is found in another chapter.

People who support by their voluntary contributions the work of Father Coughlin know that they are sending in their money for the general expenses of his broadcast and to supply him with needed funds.

Out of these monies he feels free to give certain contributions direct to "God's Poor Society," "The Southern Oakland County Milk Fund," and such published charities as his gift to the Bonus Expeditionary Forces, when veterans of the World War were starving and thirsty on the Plains of Anacostia.

Concerning the charge that Father Coughlin switched monies from various accounts to buy stocks in which he gambled, the *Free Press* is wholly devoid of any understanding of the nature of the three accounts it so misrepresents.

There is a *commercial* account carried under the name of the

*Radio League of the Little Flower.* There is a parish account (*commercial*) carried under the name of *Ste. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish*, and there is a third account, a *savings account*, not a commercial account and *not a personal account*, carried under the name of C. E. Coughlin.

*Not one of these accounts has anything to do with the personal funds of Father Coughlin, nor is his personal account carried in the same bank as the others, namely, the National Bank of Commerce, now the Guardian National Bank of Commerce.*

Any investments made with funds of the three accounts carried in the National Bank of Commerce, now the Guardian National Bank of Commerce, were, therefore, investments of funds *in two commercial and one savings account held in trust by Father Coughlin.*

To review this entire charge of gambling: While the officers of Mr. Stair's institution, if not Mr. Stair himself, were advising their personal friends and clients, the trustees of the widow and orphans of Detroit, to buy Detroit Bankers stock, Father Coughlin was choosing Packard and Kelsey-Hayes as stocks, and the bonds of the United States Government for the accounts under his control.

Today the stock of the Detroit Bankers is absolutely worthless and carries with it a theoretical liability. This stock is worthless because of mismanagement, while the Government bond is about par, while Packard and Kelsey-Hayes at least have tangible values.

For Mr. E. D. Stair to display the losses an investor had in buying Michigan Motors and Government bonds, when the stock of his own company meant a total loss to those who held it, is bad taste. Particularly is it bad taste in respect to Packard, whose advertising the *Free Press* enthusiastically solicits.

To the good fortune of the Radio League, Father Coughlin invested according to his own best judgment, and thus saved \$97,000 out of \$110,000. *Had he followed the banker's advice and bought Detroit Bankers stock, the \$110,000 would have vanished, and a theoretical liability of approximately \$17,060 would have remained as a souvenir.*

The mere transfer of funds among the various accounts, namely, the two commercial accounts of the Radio League of the Little Flower and the Ste. Therese Parish account, and the "C. E.

Coughlin" savings account, a trust, represents nothing except repayment of monies previously borrowed, and evidenced no breach of trust.

Accompanying the libelous and calumniating charges of gambling, the *Free Press* in its vicious propaganda presents to the people "photostatic" copies of sales records and purchase orders emanating from stock brokers' offices with the intent of deceiving the public into believing that Father Coughlin carried accounts with stock brokers, gave instructions to stock brokers to buy and sell, and generally was not averse to stock gambling.

Inspect the true copy of the original invoice No. A 21180. Note that it carries the address of the National Bank of Commerce. (Page 214).

Note that the name "Fr. Coughlin" does not appear on this invoice.

Note that the invoice form was designed for a self-addressed mailing. The address on the invoice was so placed as to appear through a "window envelope" when the invoice was folded and inserted. The guide lines or angles on the form are designed to spot the address so that it will appear in its proper place when the invoice is folded.

Now inspect the "photostatically" reproduced record by the Detroit *Free Press* of this Paine-Webber invoice. It shows the obliteration or covering up of the address and the obliteration of the two upper guide angles.

Written across the lower half of the form or invoice is "Fr. Coughlin," which, of course, was written before "photostating" the invoice.

In the Paine-Webber transaction with the National Bank of Commerce, someone, in order to reproduce a record in a way where it would appear to the greatest disadvantage to Father Coughlin, had to have access to the files of the National Bank of Commerce, now the Guardian National Bank of Commerce, to secure the sales invoice addressed to that bank. Someone had to cover up the proper address, write "Fr. Coughlin" across the face of the invoice, and photostat the altered document.

Instead of running a photostatic reproduction, the *Free Press* ran a libelous creation of an original invoice doctored to suit the malice and taste of the author of the libel. To prove that Father

MEMBERS  
 NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE  
 BOSTON STOCK EXCHANGE  
 NEW YORK COTTON EXCHANGE  
 CHICAGO BOARD OF TRADE  
 CHICAGO STOCK EXCHANGE  
 DETROIT STOCK EXCHANGE  
 HARTFORD STOCK EXCHANGE  
 CLEVELAND STOCK EXCHANGE

**Haine, Webber & Company**  
 100 PENOBSCOT BLDG.  
 DETROIT, MICH.

A21180

NATIONAL BANK OF COMMERCE  
 BLVD BRANCH  
 DETROIT MICH  
 ATT MR BREYDEL

FOR DELIVERY 2-27-29

NOTE: STOCK EXCHANGE RULES COMPEL US TO CHARGE INTEREST ON THE GROSS AMOUNT DUE IF NOT PAID FOR ON OR BEFORE DELIVERY DATE.

IF YOU WISH STOCK CERTIFICATE TRANSFERRED PLEASE ADVISE US FULL NAME AND ADDRESS, DESIGNATING THE TITLE MR., MISS OR MRS.

**BOUGHT** FOR YOUR ACCOUNT AND RISK ACCORDING TO THE RULES OF THE NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE OR OTHER STOCK EXCHANGES.

BROKER	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT	COMM'S	GROSS AMOUNT
500	KELSEY HAYES WHEEL	60	30000 00	87 50	30087 50
	DUPLICATE				

FORM 329

It is agreed that transactions between us are subject to the rules and customs of the Exchange where such transactions are consummated and the Clearing Houses of such Exchange, and are under and in pursuance of our current standard form of customer-broker contract.

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

# IFICATION

March 28, 1933.  
 Fitzpatrick,  
 Station WJR,  
 Michigan.  
 Fitzpatrick:  
 ing action for libel and  
 slander against Father  
 E. Coughlin, your stand  
 your allied group of  
 , for the utterly false  
 ous attacks upon Mr. E.  
 ir, The Detroit Free  
 and Mr. Stair's asso-  
 you are hereby having  
 to your attention your  
 responsibility and co-  
 ship in this campaign of  
 ion.

is being officially sent  
 as a matter of record  
 in case of continued  
 n of the laws of libel,  
 to the illness of Mr.  
 e are unable to proceed  
 stely. We wish to as-  
 su that you personally,  
 ur station, will be held  
 t accountability in this  
 future action.

Very truly yours,  
 Malcolm W. Bingay,  
 Editorial Director,  
 The Detroit Free Press.

similar to the above has  
 to the 26 allied stations  
 oadcast Father Coughlin's  
 Sunday.)

March 28, 1933.  
 agene O. Sykes,  
 an,  
 Radio Commission,  
 ington, D. C.  
 dr. Sykes:

our information so that  
 understand future ac-  
 am enclosing in this  
 opy of a notice sent to  
 to Fitzpatrick, manager  
 ion WJR, Detroit.

Very truly yours,  
 Malcolm W. Bingay.

ie as Plane  
 alls in

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# 'A Crap Game Played with Other People's Money'

(Excerpt from Father Coughlin's Radio Address of Sunday)

**Paine, Webber & Company**  
 100 PENOBSCOT BUILDING  
 DETROIT, MICH.

No. A21180

For Delivery 2-27-29

BOUGHT for your account and risk according to the rules of the Boston, New York & Chicago Stock Exchanges

BROKER	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT	STAMP TAX	COMM'S	NET AMOUNT
500	KELSEY HAYES WHEEL	60	30000 00		87 50	30087 50
						23 39
						30110 89

*Handwritten notes:*  
 30110 89  
 30087 50  
 23 39  
 ---  
 30110 89  
 JH Coughlin  
 2190  
 1950 00  
 10587 50  
 ---  
 2087 50

It is agreed between you and ourselves:  
 1. That transactions executed on the Boston Stock Exchange, the New York Stock Exchange or other Exchange shall be subject to the rules and customs of the Exchange where executed, and of its Clearing House.  
 2. That securities from time to time carried for your account or deposited on deposit on account may without further notice to you be borrowed and used in making deliveries on account of sales ordered by other customers and may be loaned by us or be pledged by us either for the sum due thereon or for a greater sum, and either separately or together with other securities.  
 3. That you are to keep good a margin satisfactory to us, and that whenever we deem necessary for our protection, we shall have the right in our discretion to close your account, either at public or private sale of both, and without further notice to you or any demand for more margin.  
 W.P.O.E.

Above is a photostatic copy of the purchase order for 500 shares of stock in the Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Corp., executed by the National Bank of Commerce (now the Guardian National Bank of Commerce), for Father Charles E. Coughlin. The stock was later sold

through the Nicol-Ford brokerage house, and in the transaction the radio priest lost in excess of \$13,000. Photostatic copies of other stock market transaction records, and the priest's brokerage account with the bank, appear elsewhere in the edition.

# Priest Mark Thous

## Funds Se Used ir Bar

There is gold  
 That is pro-  
 Rev. Charles E.  
 Each Sunda  
 hookup.

The contri-  
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 Leo J. Fitzp  
 WJR, admitted  
 telephone comp  
 each Sunday res

These contri-  
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 as \$30,110.89 fo  
 has been bitterly  
 addresses.

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 These are th  
 priest's account  
 merce. He con  
 institution.

One of these  
 C. E. Coughlin.  
 League of the L  
 of St. Theresa's

On Feb. 27, 1  
 bought for him 5  
 Cost which was

WEDNESDAY

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

Coughlin had no contact with the brokerage house of Paine-Webber, as the public was led to believe by the so-called "photostatic" reproduction of the *Detroit Free Press*, we reproduce here with a true copy of the letter of Paine, Webber & Company.

REVEREND CHAS. E. COUGHLIN,  
Woodward Avenue and Twelve Mile Road,  
Royal Oak, Mich.

*Dear Sir:*

Your letter of April 7 received. In reply we state that the presumed copy of a memorandum of purchase through our firm of five hundred (500) shares of Kelsey Hayes Wheel at \$60.00 per share, under the date of February 27, 1929, as appearing in the *Detroit Free Press* as of Wednesday, March 29, 1933, is not a copy of any record held in our office, but presumably a copy of an original memorandum of purchase for a party whose name does not appear in the copy as published in the *Press*: therefore, could not have been obtained through any looseness or carelessness, or, other means occurring in our office.

Further, we may state that as far as our records are concerned, we find no reference to any account of purchase or sale of securities for the name of Father Coughlin or for the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin, or such.

Further than this we prefer not to be on record at this time, but if we can be of any help in arriving at the truth regarding any accusation whereby we are involved, if you care to call upon us at our office at the above address, we will be pleased to discuss the matter with you.

We appreciate the high opinion which you have expressed regarding us and feel as far as your letter is concerned, such an estimate of our business principles may be maintained.

Sincerely yours,  
(Signed) B. C. LUCE  
PAINE, WEBBER & COMPANY

In the case of Nicol-Ford, again someone had to have access to the bank record, had to extract the sales memorandum, write "Fr. Coughlin" several times across the face, and photostat it.

Thus the National Bank of Commerce, now the Guardian National Bank of Commerce, stands responsible for a violation of every ethical principle in releasing, or permitting to be released, or in improperly guarding against release, its own invoice and sales memoranda, together with what is unfortunately more important, the statement of a depositor, for "C. E. Coughlin's" bank statement was also photostatically reproduced.

This bank statement of "C. E. Coughlin," I repeat, is not a statement of a "personal" account, but rather a trust account for monies of the Radio League and identified by the name, "C. E. Coughlin." It was an interest-bearing account for surplus funds.

At a time when every citizen is experiencing scant trust in banks, the *Free Press* proves how public one's private business affairs can be made if a banker-publisher sees fit to expose the records to the public gaze.

After such evidence as this, think of the audacious gall of Mr. E. D. Stair in wiring to the President of the United States complaining that "A slanderous radio attack has been made against myself. . . . To still all false rumors, and to vindicate the dignity and decency of our community . . ." This is the Stair language on Monday. The altered documents are Stair's *Free Press* language on Wednesday.

The truth is that Father never had an account with Paine-Webber nor with Nicol-Ford, two stock brokers with offices in Detroit, whose records are "photostatically" presented in large display to the readers of the Detroit *Free Press* in connection with the Charity Fund story.

If there ever was a case of deceit and the spirit of forgery it is in the *Free Press* reproduction "photostatically" of these records.

The account of Paine-Webber was with the National Bank of Commerce, now the Guardian National Bank of Commerce, which the Detroit *Free Press* admits in its articles. It was not an account with Father Coughlin. Radio cannot lie or fake invoices to deceive a people as did the *Free Press*. Unfortunately radio cannot answer a pictorial or graphic lie.

A few more statements made in this article need to be answered. The article does not cover any personal account in the sense of a private account of Father Coughlin's. The "C. E. Coughlin account," we repeat, is a savings account for surplus monies of the League or the Parish or both.

The fact that it was drawn upon heavily merely indicates that the money was spent. It was spent, of course, for the legitimate purposes for which it was collected.

Far from denouncing "this sort of gambling," Father Coughlin has always defended productive American industry against the non-productive usurious business of bankers.

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

Detailed and insignificant statements perhaps should be answered likewise.

It so happens that Father Coughlin seldom visited the bank and that his parent, Thomas J. Coughlin, is not his business manager.

In the last paragraph of this famous "lead" story of March 29, the description of his religious life as a member of the "Basilian Order" is a glaring inaccuracy. It is refuted in an early chapter of this book.

Father Coughlin read carefully the libelous story accusing him of gambling with charity funds. He filed with every newspaper in the twenty-seven cities having broadcasting stations on his network, and with the Associated Press and other services, the following telegram:

March 29, 1933.

The Detroit *Free Press* in an extra and first edition last evening published a false and libelous statement misrepresenting my handling of alleged trust funds in an effort to punish me because last Sunday I exposed the position of E. D. Stair, who is at once the publisher of the Detroit *Free Press* and president of the Detroit Bankers Company, a holding company of a group-banking system in Detroit which failed.

I am informed that the Detroit *Free Press* has forwarded this libelous article to your paper to be published in your next edition. I am obliged to notify you that the statement is groundless and libelous and that my legal rights must be asserted and preserved and that the Detroit *Free Press* is responsible for this libel.

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

II.

On Wednesday, March 29, 1933, the following appeared under the caption, "Notification."

March 28, 1933.

MR. LEO FITZPATRICK, *Manager*,  
Radio Station WJR,  
Detroit, Mich.

*Dear Mr. Fitzpatrick:*

Pending action for libel and criminal slander against Father Charles E. Coughlin, your station, and your allied group of stations, for the utterly false and vicious attacks upon Mr. E. D. Stair, The Detroit *Free Press*,

W E D N E S D A Y

and Mr. Stair's associates, you are hereby having called to your attention your joint responsibility and co-partnership in this campaign of vilification.

This is being officially sent to you as a matter of record for use in case of continued violation of the laws of libel.

Due to the illness of Mr. Stair we are unable to proceed immediately. We wish to assure you that you personally, and your station, will be held to strict accountability in this and in future action.

Very truly yours,  
(Signed) MALCOLM W. BINGAY,  
*Editorial Director,*  
*The Detroit Free Press.*

To this letter the following sentence was added, "Notice similar to the above has been sent to the 26 allied stations which broadcast Father Coughlin's address Sunday."

The following letter was incorporated:

March 28, 1933.

MR. EUGENE O. SYKES, *Chairman,*  
Federal Radio Commission,  
Washington, D. C.

*Dear Mr. Sykes:*

For your information so that you may understand future action, I am enclosing in this letter copy of a notice sent to Mr. Leo Fitzpatrick, manager of Station WJR, Detroit.

Very truly yours,  
(Signed) MALCOLM W. BINGAY.

Receiving no reply, the *Free Press* sent the following letter to WJR:

MR. LEO FITZPATRICK, *Manager,*  
Radio Station WJR,  
Detroit, Michigan.

*My dear Mr. Fitzpatrick:*

On March 28 I sent you a letter calling attention to your joint responsibility and culpability in connection with the libelous and slanderous utterances made through your station by Father Charles E. Coughlin. The medium whereby a libel and a slander are disseminated is, under the law, equally guilty with the author of the article.

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

To date I have not had the courtesy of an acknowledgment of my notification nor has any retraction, repudiation or even explanation been made by or through your station.

So that my records will be clear in presenting our case will you please put in writing, as the manager of WJR, your reasons for refusing to acknowledge my communication.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) MALCOLM W. BINGAY.

Mr. Fitzpatrick replied as follows:

March 30, 1933.

MR. MALCOLM W. BINGAY, *The Editorial Director*,  
The Detroit Free Press,  
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Mr. Bingay:—

The reason that you did not receive a reply to your letter of March 28, 1933, was because I did not think it called for an acknowledgment.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of your letter of March 28, 1933, wherein you threaten legal action for libel and criminal slander against Father Charles E. Coughlin, Radio Station WJR, its allied group of stations, and myself.

It has been the policy of this station since its organization to afford equal opportunity to both sides of questions of public interest in the use of its facilities, and I understand this policy has the approval of the Federal Radio Commission and is in complete harmony with the wisdom of our laws.

The final determination of such litigation referred to in your communication of March 28, 1933, is wisely entrusted to the established courts and whether or not you see fit to carry out your threat I personally, and on behalf of Station WJR, wish to extend to you or to Mr. E. D. Stair or to any spokesman whom you may designate, the opportunity at any convenient time to make use, without cost, of the facilities of this radio station for the purpose of answering any alleged charges against Mr. Stair or his associates, or The Detroit Free Press, or to explain their position in this controversy.

This offer is made pursuant to the long established policy of this station and in order to avail yourself of it it will only be necessary for you to communicate with me, and I personally will arrange the necessary details.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) LEO FITZPATRICK,

WJR THE GOODWILL STATION.

## W E D N E S D A Y

The policy thus set forth by WJR is in dramatic contradistinction to that of the *Free Press* which published an "ex-parte" argument for a week. Naturally the *Free Press* made no use of the facilities of WJR to present the case openly where the voice could be heard; the *Free Press* chose to remain hidden behind headlines, pictures, fake photostatic copies of invoices, editorials with glittering generalities, and the insufficient quotations of men interviewed.

Nine weeks have since passed and the threatened action for libel and criminal slander has not been started by the *Free Press*.

### III

Again, on Wednesday, March 29, 1933, the *Free Press* printed under Father Coughlin's picture the following "history":

The "Religious Walter Winchell," as Father Coughlin calls himself, is no stranger to radio troubles.

He was barred from the great national chain of the Columbia Broadcasting System in 1931.

Assailed for his inflammatory utterances and denounced on the ground that he was sowing seeds of revolution, the storm which his talks created reached such force that the Columbia chose to ban what it called "commercial religious programs."

Faced by the loss of his radio audience and a sudden stoppage of the stream of gold that was flowing through his hands, the Royal Oak priest made arrangements with Leo Fitzpatrick of Station WJR for a smaller independent hookup.

But the bitterness of his addresses was not tempered. It rose to such heights that in April, 1932, Father Coughlin was publicly rebuked by William Cardinal O'Connell, head of the Catholic hierarchy in America, who charged that the speeches fanned the fire of unrest.

"The Priest has his place and he had better stay there," said His Eminence.

The radio broadcasts did not cease. Instead, the vehemence of their tone increased. Between the days on which Father Coughlin broadcast, he broke often into the headlines of the Nation's newspapers.

There was the time when he became the hero for an hour of the Broadway nightlife crowd who hailed Mayor Jimmy Walker, of New York, as "the greatest fellow who ever lived," and who were quite willing to overlook the desertion of his wife and other immoralities.

Representatives of New York's decent elements were after the debauched Mayor. They had publicly shown that they had the proof of "incompe-

## FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

tence, gross negligence" and worse. The Mayor issued one of his flip retorts and was off to attend a function of the New York Fire Department.

When he arrived, he found Father Coughlin addressing the gathering. The voice which spoke over the radio every Sunday was declaring that the attacks on Mayor Walker veiled the hidden hand of Communism which was attempting, through this attack, to tear down the City, the State and the National Government.

By name Father Coughlin assailed the Mayor's critics, the Reverend John Haynes Holmes and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. And Mayor Walker responded to the radio priest's defense with the promise, "The impending fight will find me in the forefront."

Shortly thereafter he resigned under fire and left for the Riviera, where he has been enjoying a long holiday in the company of Betty Compton, former motion-picture actress. Monday his wife divorced him.

The radio priest said no more about Mayor Walker, but he has never lacked for subjects.

Called before the Hamilton Fish committee for the investigation of Communism in the United States, Father Coughlin blamed Henry Ford for forcing workers into the Communist Party and said that he saw a revolution approaching.

From time to time newspaper headlines and stories carried further evidence of the radio priest's running attacks.

He told a Canadian audience that the United States was "a nation of plutocrats, lowest in the scale of self government of all the English speaking nations of the world." (Father Coughlin was born in Hamilton, Ontario.)

He denounced the spending of American money for "starving Belgians and famished Syrians who did nothing to defend our Country's flag" and drew a public reproof from Albert G. Aboud, a Detroit Syrian, who termed the remarks an insult to his people, and who reminded the radio priest that Syrians were among the first to enlist in the defense of American ideals.

The public was given an unexpected peep into the intricacies of Father Coughlin's broadcasting activities when the priest brought suit against publishers who were bringing out his books of radio sermons.

The suit was brought in Philadelphia and in the course of the hearing, Father Coughlin's attorney declared, "Every dollar collected by Father Coughlin directly or indirectly from his lectures is devoted to charity.

"Not one cent is ever used for his own interests and the parasites and vultures who are seeking to profit through the works of Father Coughlin are robbing the poor."

Whereupon Father Coughlin was in turn sued by publishers of his books and in the end it was announced that a satisfactory settlement had been reached.

Finally, there is the recent book in which Father Coughlin is quoted as follows: "Do you know how I would live if I renounced religion and was illogical enough to disbelieve in a life beyond—in the real life? Why, if I threw away and denounced my faith, I would surround myself with the most adroit hyjackers, learn every trick of the highest banking and stock manipulations, avail myself of the laws under which to hide my own crimes, create a smoke screen to throw into the eyes of men, and—believe me, I would become the world's champion crook. If I didn't believe in religion and in a happy beyond, I would get everything for myself that I could lay hands on in this world."

Little comment is necessary. Father Coughlin never remembers calling himself the "Religious Walter Winchell."

The fact that he was barred from the Columbia Broadcasting Chain is the subject of a chapter called, "The Turning Point" and contains an account of all the circumstances under which this "bar" took place.

The public rebuke by William Cardinal O'Connell is the subject of a separate chapter of this book under the title "A Cardinal Speaks as a Layman."

With respect to Mayor Walker of New York, Father Coughlin did defend Mayor Jimmy Walker of New York. So did many thousands of Americans, all of whom are deeply humiliated by the subsequent happenings in Jimmy Walker's life. Father was addressing city employees on the subject of loyalty to the established government.

With respect to the Hamilton Fish committee for the investigation of Communism in the United States, Father Coughlin put the responsibility in part where it belonged, on industrialists who ruthlessly dismissed labor.

Regarding his address to the Canadian audience, if he told the Canadian audience that the United States was "a nation of plutocrats, lowest in the scale of self government of all the English speaking nations of the world," such a description does not vary much from what he told the American people about the Mellon regime, so ably defended by the *Detroit Free Press*.

Father Coughlin never "denounced the spending of American money for starving Belgians and famished Syrians who did nothing to defend our country's flag." He drew attention to the fact that while our own soldiers, who had served our country's flag in

the World War, marched on Washington, and were met with a bayonet, help could be given them if it were logical to spend money in charity abroad. There was no criticism of the money spent abroad. There was distinct criticism of the attitude of a government that would spend it abroad and deny it to our own.

The abortive lawsuit referred to by the *Free Press* was a simple action involving the misuse and illegal use of a copyright belonging to Father Coughlin. The injection of statements by others than Father Coughlin is too indirect a charge to deserve an answer, but this very chapter describes the disposition of funds received.

Finally, Father Coughlin's speculation as to how he would live if he had not the Faith is but indirect evidence that the Faith has been a powerful influence in his life.

#### IV

On Wednesday, March 29, 1933, the *Free Press* ran the following news article under the caption, "Records Spike Radio Charge." It follows:

LANSING, March 28—Charges of the Reverend Father Charles E. Coughlin that the two Detroit holding companies owning the stock of the First National and Union Guardian groups were conceived with a desire to evade the law as to stockholders' liability are directly refuted by records of the Attorney General's office in Lansing.

These records show that when the holding companies were formed in 1929 the legal points since raised were referred to the then Attorney General, Wilber M. Brucker, later Governor. On October 9, 1929, he advised the incorporators that their plan was in accordance with the law and did not involve any evasion of the liability phase of banking.

The Brucker opinion also clears up questions raised by Governor William A. Comstock and by Patrick H. O'Brien, the present Attorney General, as to the technical status of the holding company, formed under the corporation laws of the State, as related to the banking laws and the statutory provision for the liability.

Mr. Brucker's opinion was asked by Rudolph E. Reichert, who has been continuously at the head of the Banking Department since that time, and who has just been named to share dictatorship of the State banks with Governor Comstock.

Mr. Brucker held that a corporation organized under the General Corporation Laws of the State may legally buy and own shares of stock in State banks if the scope of its charter is broad enough to include these purposes.

He held, however, that the bank's corporate entity must be maintained and its business managed in fact by its own respective officers and directors.

The responsibility for seeing that the holding company remains in the corporation field and that the bank continue its banking existence as a separate organization was placed squarely on the shoulders of the Commissioner.

Stress was laid on the clause in the charter of the incorporating holding companies which says:

"The holders of the stock of this corporation shall be individually and severally liable—in proportion to the number of shares of its stock held by them respectively—for any statutory liability imposed upon this corporation by reason of its ownership of shares of the capital stock of any bank or trust company."

Mr. Brucker's opinion says:

"It is, therefore, my opinion that shareholders may be bound to an added liability when the same is properly expressed in the charter of the company, and this liability may be enforced as provided by law.

"The question now arises as to how this liability can be enforced when the stock is owned by a holding company. If the stock has sufficient value so that its sale will produce enough to satisfy the assessment, it makes no difference whether the stock is owned by an individual or a holding company. If the stock has no value—as in the case of insolvency—recourse must be had to the personal assets of the individual, or in case of holding company ownership, to the assets of that company.

"If the company is uncollectible, the court probably would look through the company to its stockholders and enforce the liability against them. Particularly would this be true where the stockholders assumed liability as here expressed in the charters of the holding company."

Lansing veterans recall that when the organization of the holding companies—designed to permit group banking—was first discussed, the legal points involved were thoroughly threshed out by the then State officials. The Brucker opinion was regarded as having settled the existing questions and shortly thereafter the formation of the holding companies was announced.

Inclusion in their charters of the express provision that stockholders' liability was accepted and the printing of the same definition upon the back of each certificate issued, established beyond question the good faith of the organizers, it is asserted in Lansing.

Attorney General O'Brien, who earlier in the day had intimated that the holding company responsibility was a moot question, said Tuesday night that he was in nowise disposed to disagree with the Brucker opinion. That

would be his own interpretation, he said, *but his earlier comment was merely intended to convey the information that there was a dissenting legal viewpoint.*

The important consideration in the foregoing news article is the reported opinion of Wilber M. Brucker, one-time Attorney General of the State of Michigan. If Brucker is correctly quoted, he limited the holding company to shares in *State Banks*. The Detroit Bankers Company, a holding company, held practically all the shares of the *First National*, a *national bank*.

Referring to liability, Mr. Brucker had said, "If the company is uncollectible, the court *probably* would look through the company to its stockholders and enforce the liability against them."

Thus two things are apparent; first, the Detroit Bankers Company must be organized as a corporation in the general corporation field and not in the banking field or it is admittedly illegal. Then, in its charter must be specific provision for double liability in the case of the insolvency of any bank whose stock it holds. This liability must not only be expressed in the charter but must be incorporated as a notification on each printed certificate of stock.

When all these things are done, namely, the holding company kept out of the banking field, its charter written to express added liability, and its certificates of stock written to express double liability, then and then only, to repeat Mr. Brucker's statement, "*The court probably would look through this holding company to the stockholders in case a bank becomes insolvent.*"

The collection of double liability depends wholly upon the court's interpretation of whether or not the stockholder is bound by these gestures which must be made to get a holding company's charter granted.

Admittedly, the Detroit Bankers Company ran into difficulty, and there was much argument in Lansing, Michigan, before the charter was forced through. The Brucker opinion helped. The placing of responsibility for the integrity of the Detroit Bankers Company structure in the hands of the State Banking Commissioner helped, but there was dissenting opinion enough to warn the country that the entire double liability requirements were illegal.

In Michigan there is no court decision that proved the legality

of double liability in the case of any holding company's stock. Even the Attorney General's opinion is so weak as to be laughable when it incorporates these words, "If the company is uncollectible the court *probably* would look through the company to its stockholders and enforce the liability against them."

Certainly the Detroit Bankers Company is defunct. Certainly Father Coughlin had a right to allege that the Detroit Bankers Company was a hideout company, an illegal company, a company designed to cheat the orphan and the widow. Certainly the Detroit Bankers under the quoted opinion was not authorized to hold the stock of any but a State bank.

This day the final efforts are being made to avoid double liability by having the Treasury and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation rehabilitate the old banks, pay the depositors, and let the stockholders escape free.

## Thursday

### I



THURSDAY, March 30, 1933, brought the classic example of *Free Press* integrity. In this instance the *Free Press* published an editorial under the heading, "Thanks to all of You" which is quoted:

The Detroit *Free Press* has been swamped with letters, telegrams and phone calls since Monday morning by its friends, offering support and encouragement because of the vicious attacks made upon it by a man, who, through an accident of position, has loomed larger in the national political picture than his size would warrant.

To answer all the many thousands of friends and well wishers would be impossible in a personal contact, so the *Free Press* takes this means of thanking you from the depths of our sincerity. It is peculiarly gratifying to this paper that more than half of the messages of good cheer have come from outstanding members of the Catholic Church who understand Coughlin and deplore his activities.

They congratulate the *Free Press* for having had the courage to call a spade a spade and to bring closer to an end the political career of a man who has become both a national menace and a nuisance. To save the peace of the community something had to be done and the *Free Press* accepted the challenge. It could not have done less and maintained its traditions as a newspaper.

To the few, most of them regrettably anonymous, who have found fault with our determination to defend our good name against slander, we can only say that time will vindicate this paper. We feel that a real service has been done the Church and the community.

This editorial deserves rereading. If it says anything it says, "The Detroit *Free Press* has been swamped with letters, telegrams and phone calls . . . "from the many thousands of friends and well wishers" . . . "More than half of the messages of good cheer have come from outstanding members of the Catholic Church who understand Coughlin and deplore his activities."

## THURSDAY

This then is the picture that the *Free Press* holds up to its readers as a result of its vilification of Father Coughlin.

It has been swamped with responses. "Many" thousands have replied or contacted the *Free Press*. "Many" thousands according to the Century Dictionary must mean "a large number" of thousands, "numerous" thousands, "a multitude" of thousands, "a great aggregate" of thousands.

Let us assume that "a great aggregate" and "a multitude" and "numerous" mean that five thousand had communicated with the *Free Press*. Now the majority of these, or 2,500, were outstanding Catholics "who sent their messages of good cheer, who understand Coughlin and deplore his activities." Therefore, at least, 2,500 outstanding Catholics "have congratulated the *Free Press* on having the courage to call a spade a spade and to bring closer to an end the political career of a man who has become a national menace and a nuisance."

The Bishop of Detroit also received mail on the question but ninety-five percent of the Bishop's mail was favorable to Father Coughlin.

Strange, is it not, that the outstanding Catholics, 2,500 at least, congratulate the *Free Press* and constitute over fifty percent of the *Free Press*' correspondents in this controversy, but that ninety-five percent of all who write the Bishop of Detroit, including Catholic, Protestant and Jew, praise Father Coughlin?

The *Free Press* admits, "a few, most of them regrettably anonymous, find fault." The Bishop of Detroit finds five percent of his mail anti-Coughlin.

The truth is that the *Free Press* could never show from its records 2,500 outstanding Catholics, outstanding Protestants or outstanding Jews who ever phoned, telegraphed or wrote letters, commending it on any one stand it ever took in its 102 years of existence. "Thanks to you all."

## II

On Thursday, March 30, 1933, a front page story carried the headline "Bishop Declares Charges Made by Father Coughlin are 'Unthinkable'." A discussion of this article is found in another chapter, "The Priest and his Bishop."

It was in this article that the *Free Press* was guilty of a greater

breach of trust than when it actually faked the stock invoice of Paine-Webber for propaganda purposes.

To secure this article it sent William C. Richards to interview Bishop Gallagher in the Chancery office. The Bishop refused an interview.

If any man in the world ever spoke "off the record," Bishop Gallagher did that day. He did not want to be interviewed for publication. He specifically told Mr. Richards that he did not care to be interviewed, he was not speaking for publication.

Mr. Richards understood, and yet on the return to his superiors, every trust was violated, and a *Free Press* interpretation of Bishop Gallagher's remarks was printed with a statement at the end, "The Bishop spoke informally."

### III

On Thursday, March 30, 1933, appeared the following most interesting editorial entitled, "Away with Bigotry."

The violence and viciousness of the radio utterances of the Reverend Father Charles E. Coughlin cannot be any excuse for the fanning of the flames of bigotry in Detroit. This city has no place for religious fanatics of any denomination.

It must be kept in mind that Father Coughlin's slanderous attacks were also visited upon leading Detroit Catholics, splendid men who have devoted their lives to the building up of their community. He did not spare them his venom. The proud record of the Roman Catholic Church for service to Detroit is one that traces back to the very beginnings of our city. The peace and tranquillity of our religious community should not be disturbed by the mouthings of an immigrant firebrand who is temporarily among us.

The City of Detroit was founded by devout members of the Catholic Church. Father Gabriel Richard, whose statue graces our City Hall, was the first educator in Detroit and brought here the first printing press. He offered his life, time and again, in bringing into the wilderness the message of Christ—and died a hero's death during the great cholera epidemic that swept Detroit in 1832.

Working shoulder to shoulder here with him was the Reverend John Montieth, sturdy Scotch Presbyterian. These two men, with Judge Woodward, were the co-founders of the University of Michigan. Their zeal for the work of God transcended all denominational barriers and in those frontier days they planted the seed of religious tolerance and understanding under the Great Fatherhood which has blessed our community ever since.

Detroit has never had any religious strife and God grant that it never will. When the religious bigots sought to abolish the parochial schools recently, the right thinking men and women of Detroit, Protestant and Catholic, Jew and Gentile, united to stamp out the flames of blind hate.

The *Detroit Free Press* lived through the stirring early days of the struggles of Father Richard and Dr. Montieth and their followers to bring the peace of understanding to our community.

It has kept true to its historical traditions and was not lacking in the last great fight to retain to the people of Catholic faith their inherent rights to their schools.

The *Free Press* is quite willing to leave the case of Father Coughlin in the hands of his own people and the leaders of the Catholic Church. The leading Catholic laymen—lifetime friends of their fellow churchmen who as bank directors were slandered by Coughlin—resent his wild utterances far more than any Protestant could.

The old Mother Church has a way of taking care of her recalcitrant sons and in the proper time and place will see to it that the harsh voice of destruction and communal strife is stilled.

It must be remembered that Coughlin was not assailing Protestants alone—he was blackening the names of men far more honored in his own church than he ever has been.

In this the *Free Press* cries, "Peace, peace where there is no peace. The lying pen of the scribe hath wrought our desolation."

Coldly analyzed, there is no violence or viciousness in a single radio utterance of the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin. His whole life is dedicated to tolerance and charity and by no stretch of the imagination can one honest man accuse him of bigotry.

The specious argument that Father Coughlin's slanderous attacks were directed against leading Detroit Catholics is written to direct men's attention from the banking collapse to a suspicion or hatred of Father Coughlin.

Never one word in his life disturbed the religious peace and tranquillity of this religious community of Detroit. It is a most gratuitous assumption that "an immigrant firebrand is temporarily amongst us." He has stayed at least seven years on his present job.

The beautiful tribute to Father Gabriel Richard and Reverend John Montieth is equally applicable to Father Coughlin were the *Free Press* to examine the relationship existing between Reverend Charles E. Coughlin and hundreds of ministers of other denominations.

The Detroit *Free Press* boasts that it "lived through the stirring early days of the struggles of Father Richard," when on the same page of Thursday's *Free Press* it records the fact that the *Free Press* was founded in 1831 and Father Richard died in 1832.

The *Free Press* hypocritically states that it is willing to leave the case of Father Coughlin in the hands of his own people and the leaders of the Catholic Church, while its publisher, E. D. Stair, wires the President for help, its editorial director threatens court action for libel, and the journal itself points the way to the Apostolic Delegate and the Vatican in order to get rid of this trouble-maker.

As Henry the Second appealed to his Court concerning Thomas A'Becket, the *Free Press* cries out, "Who will rid me of this troublesome priest?"

"Old Mother Church" does have a way of taking care of her recalcitrant sons. But to be recalcitrant one has to do more than follow the specific instructions of Leo XIII and Pius XI in a method deserving of the *imprimatur* of the Ordinary, the Bishop of Detroit.

To the everlasting credit of Father Coughlin, he exempted all honest bankers, and no dishonest banker in Detroit simply because that banker might be a Catholic.

Full credit should be given Father Coughlin for his sweeping indictments of dishonesty. If such action be "fanning the fires of bigotry, it fans them only in the mind of a paranoiac."

## [ CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR ]

### *Friday*

#### I

**F**OR four days then the attack on Father Coughlin had continued in the *Free Press*. On Friday, March 31, 1933, the front page of the *Free Press* was decorated with a picture of His Eminence, William Cardinal O'Connell, who upon his return from the Bahamas, keeping Lent in the swankiest winter resort in the western hemisphere, commented as follows: "Well, a priest has his place. If he remains in his place, he is highly honored."

Around this geographical platitude the *Free Press* built its story rehashing the comments made a year ago by the Cardinal on Father Coughlin's activities and covered in another chapter in this book.

#### II

On the front page also of the *Free Press* for Friday, March 31, appeared an article, under the following head, "Coughlin Tax Inquiry Begun"—"He filed no Returns before 1931," which is quoted.

The Reverend Father Charles E. Coughlin filed no income tax returns for a period of years up to 1931.

This fact was disclosed Thursday as the local office of the Collector of Internal Revenue began an investigation to determine why no returns were filed.

Collector Fred L. Woodworth declined to discuss details of the inquiry, or to reveal the nature of the returns filed by the priest for 1931 and 1932. He assigned Fred L. Cook, chief deputy field agent, to the inquiry. Cook heads the division which checks up on delinquent taxpayers.

The Federal law forbids the making public of returns filed by taxpayers, Mr. Woodworth pointed out. He declined to state whether returns filed by Father Coughlin included any stock market transactions.

Father Coughlin came to Michigan from Canada in 1922. In his first return filed for 1931 an error in arithmetic was discovered and the priest

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was required to pay a tax. The amount paid as a result of this checkup was not disclosed by the Collector of Internal Revenue.

The Shrine of the Little Flower, being a church, is not required to make any return.

In a statement to the *Detroit News* Thursday, Father Coughlin contradicted a statement made on his behalf in the *Detroit Times* of Wednesday, which was a contradiction of the statement made in the *Detroit Free Press* Wednesday morning.

The *Detroit Times*, his personal organ, had quoted him as saying that he had lost \$7,000 playing the stock market on margins.

An analysis of the income tax situation is very amusing. The *Free Press*, after ringing in the Canadian birth for the "nth" time, states in the quotation above, "In his first return filed for 1931 an error in arithmetic was discovered and the priest was required to pay a tax. The amount paid as a result of this checkup was not disclosed by the Collector of Internal Revenue."

On April 4, 1933, Mr. C. W. Conley and Mr. Lyall F. Martz, Deputy Collectors of the Internal Revenue Office from Detroit, visited Father Charles E. Coughlin to investigate his books and the books of the Radio League of the Little Flower, Incorporated (not for profit).

Relative to Father Coughlin's investing his own funds and funds from the Radio League of the Little Flower in Kelsey-Hayes and in Packard stock in the year 1929, the investigators found that the transaction was perfectly legal. Article 3 of the application for Charter of the Radio League of the Little Flower, under Act No. 84 of the Public Acts of Michigan, 1921, permits the Radio League of the Little Flower to enter into such contracts as may be necessary to carry on the purpose or the purposes of the Corporation.

The facts are that before 1931, Father Coughlin paid no income tax because he had no personal income large enough on which to assess a tax; that the only "mistake" ever made amounted to \$8.61 and this was on the 1931 return.

The investigation by Conley and Martz of the personal income tax returns filed by Father Coughlin for the year 1931 disclosed an overpayment of tax in the amount of \$8.61, which represented the total amount of tax paid for the year. This amount will be refunded to Father Coughlin by the Department of Internal Revenue.

Thus the activity of the *Free Press* again went for naught.

The *Free Press* gains this advantage. It heralds Father Coughlin as a possible delinquent taxpayer. It suggests that through an "error in arithmetic" an undisclosed amount was due the United States Government which the priest was required to pay.

A week later, after these statements had been registered with the people, buried in the inside of its paper was a little statement to the effect that the Government found nothing wrong.

Of such "stuff" are the Coughlin exposures by the *Free Press* made.

The remainder of the article quoted above refers to an investment covered in the preceding chapter.

### III

A third article appeared Friday, March 31, 1933, under the head, "Father Coughlin Tells Police Bomb was Exploded in His Basement; Windows Broken." The following is the story:

At three o'clock Thursday morning the Reverend Father Charles E. Coughlin notified the police that a bomb had exploded in his home in Royal Oak.

Fearful that something serious had happened, the police rushed out a large squad of men.

Father Coughlin told the police that he was awakened by a terrific explosion which rocked the house. From traces found in the basement, police decided the bomb was a comparatively harmless affair consisting of black powder in a cardboard carton. The glass in some of the basement windows had been broken, a steam pipe was torn and some of the canned food in the storage room was slightly damaged.

The police found a piece of long white cord hanging through one of the windows and believe the bomb was lowered into the place with this after a window pane had been broken in. However, no broken glass was found in the basement. Detective Sergeants Hugh Myers and Adam Shriner, of Detroit, are working with Royal Oak police in the investigation. They reported that they had been unable to find any clues.

Father Coughlin told reporters that he would tell all about the incident in his next radio speech.

Up to the time of going to press the police stated they had no further developments and no theories.

The foregoing article is subject to the same criticism of poor reporting.

Father Coughlin did not call the police, but rather neighbors who heard the explosion called the police. A *Free Press* reporter arrived a few minutes after the bomb exploded, and accompanied the police who answered the call.

“Fearful that something serious had happened, the police rushed out a large squad of men.” The large squad that came in answer to the original call amounted to two men and the *Free Press* reporter.

The glass in every basement window was broken. The steam radiator, not a pipe, was torn from the ceiling, and what canned goods were damaged were damaged beyond the point of giving them to the poor to eat.

This story contains one direct falsehood, namely, “Father Coughlin told reporters that he would tell all about the incident in his next radio speech.” The silence that Father Coughlin maintained for five days, during which he declined all interviews with the single statement that there would be nothing from him till the next Sunday, was interpreted by the *Free Press* as saying that he would tell all about the bombing incident in his next radio speech.

The truth is that Father Coughlin never regarded the bomb as anything different from what the police described it, namely, an “intimidating bomb,” not designed to kill, not designed even for an undue destruction of property.

The food stored in the basement was the food of God's Poor Society. The bomb story is referred to in a succeeding chapter covering that society's activities.

## [ CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE ]

### *Saturday*

#### I

**T**HE attack continued through the sixth day. The principal article was captioned "Bishop to See Coughlin Text," which is quoted in full:

Bishop Michael J. Gallagher expects to read in advance or to hear outlined the radio speech Father Charles E. Coughlin intends to make Sunday afternoon over his usual hookup, and he said Friday he hoped to persuade the radio priest to speak with "more moderation."

The Bishop said Friday that he had not seen or heard from the Little Flower priest since last Wednesday morning, but said that he had no reason to feel that Father Coughlin would not consult him as usual Saturday evening and go over what he intends to say Sunday afternoon.

"All I know is that Father Coughlin was furious Wednesday morning when I talked to him over the telephone," the Bishop said. "He had read an account in the *Free Press* of some old stock deals in which he had taken part and I never heard a man in a stiffer rage.

"It is reasonable to assume, although I haven't heard from Father Coughlin since that time, that his anger has moderated. I understand that the Mayor spent considerable time with him, and no doubt the counsel of other friends has had a mollifying influence.

"After all, what reason is there now for vituperation? The squabble is over a dead horse. The bank problem here has been settled, whether one likes the way it has been settled or not."

The Bishop and Father Coughlin talked last week about the speech the radio priest said he planned to deliver on the following Sunday. The Bishop said he saw nothing objectionable in it as Father Coughlin outlined it.

When the Bishop dialed in on the radio Sunday, he was surprised to hear the priest take an entirely different tack from the one discussed and launch into a savage attack on E. D. Stair, publisher of the *Free Press*.

"I telephoned him and asked him why he had changed his speech," said the Bishop. "He said he had been advised to—after he had talked to me."

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It is understood a large number of prominent Catholic laymen are preparing to appeal to the Apostolic Delegate at Washington and through him to the Vatican unless Father Coughlin curbs his viciousness. This is the routine procedure in a lay appeal from the diocese. The Right Reverend Msgr. Amleto Cicognani, the new Delegate, is now on his way from Rome. His predecessor, Archbishop Fumasondi, recently was made a Cardinal with executive duties at the Vatican. He is thoroughly familiar with the Detroit situation, these laymen point out.

A Catholic bishop's power over priests in his diocese is virtually absolute, according to church scholars asked Friday to outline the disciplinary powers invested in a diocesan head of the church. Only the Pope or his representative, the Apostolic Delegate, has any authority over him.

The new code of canon law cites numerous causes which might lead to a priest's removal.

An interpretation of the canon law widely accepted and authorized by Father Charles Augustine, a Benedictine, of Missouri, says: "A priest may be removed from his parish by his Bishop for any reason which renders his ministry harmful, or at least inefficient, even though there be no grievous fault implied on his part.

"In particular, these reasons are: '(a) Inexperience or permanent mental or bodily infirmity which render the pastor incapable of discharging his obligations properly, provided, however, the Ordinary (Bishop) is convinced that the welfare of the souls in his charge cannot be insured by the appointment of a coadjutor.

" '(b) Popular hatred, even though unjust and not general, provided it is such as to prove an obstacle to the pastor's useful ministry and is not likely to cease in a short time.

" '(c) Loss of esteem among righteous and serious-minded men.

" '(d) A probable crime imputed to the pastor, which, though secret, may in the Bishop's judgment create great scandal among the faithful.

" '(e) Faulty administration of the temporalities, to the great damage of the church or benefice.'

"In such cases, the removed priest has but two recourses. He may appeal to the Apostolic Delegate of the Church at Washington or he may appeal directly to Rome.

"The procedure within the diocese, when one of the charges given above or some similarly just charge is preferred against a pastor, is to allow the priest a certain fixed term for answering the Bishop's demand for his resignation.

"If the pastor does not act upon being thus warned, he may be removed by the Bishop at once.

"If he refuses to resign, he must state the reasons for his refusal in writ-

ing. The Bishop shall then discuss these reasons with two examiners. This discussion is required to validate procedure.

“The Bishop need not accept the examiner’s advice.

“If the Ordinary, after hearing their advice, which he is not bound to follow, deems the reasons brought against the removal groundless or unlawful, he shall repeat the exhortation to resign under threat of involuntary removal in case the pastor refuses to leave the parish within the time appointed.

“After the expiration of this term (which may, however, according to the prudent judgment of the Ordinary, be prolonged), the Bishop may then issue the decree of removal.”

Thus writes the *Free Press*, inspired by some pussy-footing priest. This marks a new day in the history of the American newspaper. The *Free Press* starts its course in Canon Law.

It programs the removal of Father Coughlin. It does this in the name of prominent Catholics. It makes those prominent Catholics go directly over the head of their Bishop. They are to appeal to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington. But the prominent Catholics anticipate an unfavorable reception, so they appeal to the Vatican.

What charges does the *Free Press* suggest be made? The answer is found in Canon Law. The prominent Catholics can charge a harmful ministry or general inefficiency; they can charge infirmity, popular hatred, loss of esteem, probable crime, and the faulty administration of temporalities.

What a witness the *Free Press* could make were it permitted to testify. “The lying pen of the scribe” would be needed in all courts, for Father Coughlin’s is a harmful ministry only to banker and banker-publisher; he was inefficient only in his stock investments; he is popularly hated only where the crooked are found; he has lost esteem certainly among the 2,500 “outstanding Catholics” the *Free Press* has created.

The *Free Press* can prove he gambled where it has its own faked certificates to indicate he dealt with Paine-Webber, and as to the “faulty administration of temporalities” did he not switch money from a savings account belonging to the Radio League of the Little Flower into a commercial account belonging to the Radio League of the Little Flower? Did he not identify a trust account with the name “C. E. Coughlin”?

This article by the *Free Press* is a gratuitous insult to its readers. The *Free Press* knew that no "large number of Catholic laymen" were preparing an appeal to the Apostolic Delegate; "Prominent Catholic laymen" is simply an invention of the *Free Press*. The group can write the *Free Press*, wire it, telephone it; the group can prepare an appeal to the Apostolic Delegate over the head of the Bishop of Detroit; the group can go over the head of the Apostolic Delegate to the Pope. There is nothing this group cannot do in the hands of its creator, the Detroit *Free Press*.

The *Free Press* puts itself into a secure position. It quoted a Cardinal-Prince when he spoke "as a laymen" against a priest, Father Coughlin.

It insufficiently quoted Bishop Gallagher on occasions when full quotation and honest reporting would defeat its purpose. It violated every tradition of honest reporting likewise, when Bishop Gallagher refused an interview, talked "off the record" and made remarks that were distorted from a complete defense of Father Coughlin into a virtual indictment of all that Father had said.

All these being insufficient for its purpose, the *Free Press* manufactured a body of at least 2,500 outstanding Catholics, who phoned, wired or wrote to it. It used this creature of its own imagination to appeal over the head of the Bishop of Detroit to the Apostolic Delegate or to the Pope himself.

Such was the desperation reached by the *Free Press* by Saturday, April 1.

## II

Saturday, April 1, 1933, brought forth another specimen of *Free Press* propaganda under the "Good Morning" column quoted as follows:

"The Catholic Church is a tremendously serious organization. It deals in human souls."—Cardinal O'Connell.

A Prince of the ancient Church has said in one sentence what I have taken many columns to say during the past few years in my efforts to make the clergy of all denominations realize that their duty is to stick to the tasks to which they have dedicated their lives and for which they have been ordained.

In his strong, quiet denunciation of the tactics of Father Coughlin, His Eminence calls attention, also, to the fact that the radio is a new thing which the Church has not yet been able to orient to its place.

## SATURDAY

He wants to know why in the Catholic Church—a universal institution—a parish priest should take it upon himself to talk to the whole world instead of to his own people. Are there not priests in other parts of the earth to carry on the tasks of the Church?

The Cardinal calls Coughlin's slanderous attacks on decent citizens mere "demagogic stuff—froth and poison."

Could the highest ranking Churchman of the faith in America say more?

Yet he does. He says more. He calls attention to the insidious virus of vanity, the seeking of personal popularity. And herein he touches on all that I have said in the *Pellucid Pillar* against all sensational preaching.

Whether he be Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian or what, the preacher stands before the people as a minister of God. The faithful of the flock look up to him as the vicar of Christ. He holds in their eyes a hallowed and sacred place. When he speaks to them they feel they are listening to the Voice of Authority.

He is therefore raised above his fellows.

And so, when he uses that high place to play politics, to pour out the venom of personal hate, to discuss economic isms and other worldly affairs, he is not only an ill-qualified man to speak but he is a traitor to his God and a betrayer of those who trust him. He has prostituted the high office to which he has been honored.

He stands in the same position morally—as I see it—as a venal judge who pretends to be delivering fair and impartial opinions but who is actually using the power and dignity of his position to trick those who stand before him. They think that he is speaking as a judge because he wears the judicial ermine when, as a matter of fact, he is the blindly partisan advocate of a cause.

The clergyman of any denomination who wanders from his duty is in the same position as a physician who takes advantage of the faith and confidence that is imposed in him by the patient to sell him oil stock or bad bonds.

The Reverend Peter Doe, let us say, steps into a pulpit sanctified for holy purpose. He speaks. What he says becomes to those who trust him as the gospel because he says it from his pulpit. He endorses this candidate and that school of economics. They listen. If he were to be just plain Peter Doe, insurance man, doctor, lawyer, or journalist they would take him and his views for what they are worth—and dismiss them.

The Reverend Father Charles E. Coughlin began his radio addresses by preaching sermons, fine moral lessons. His voice has a timber and quality that is pleasing. A poll of Eastern stations paid him the doubtful compliment of being the most popular "entertainer" on that network, being closely followed in the contest by Amos n' Andy, Fu Manchu, Jack Pearl, Ruth Etting, Ed Wynn, Katie Smith and Eddie Cantor.

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My point is that if a cleric wants to do a vaudeville or radio act he should join the Equity and be an actor; if he wants to be a politician he should go out on the hustings as a politician and be able to take as much as he gives. He should not hide cowardly behind the power of his position to stab others. He should not pollute the sanctity of his Church by bringing in his personal hates and glorifications.

That is what this self-appointed radio Richelieu of the Roosevelt regime has done.

The seed of his destruction lies in his vanity, his arrogance and his lust for power which has caused him to throw truth to the winds. To again quote Cardinal O'Connell:

"The Church was founded on God's truth. The spectacularly talking man gets great popularity and is consumed with false pride. That is the way trouble has always started in the Church. He may become popular in a false cause."

Coupled with this age-old and historic tradition of the Church, there is the "practical politics" of Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt to be considered. He is too smart a politician to want to be the storm center of a religious war. Father Coughlin's "support" will be dropped like a hot potato.

Long after Coughlin has passed out of the picture along with Bob Shuler, of California, and Goat-gland Brinkley, of Kansas, the problem of the insidious radio will still be before the people.

It steals into the home with its whispered words, coming from no man knows where. It is a voice and it is gone. There is no record. There is no permanent printed word. The poison of the demagog, of the atheist, the communist, and the lecherous fills the air of the home and is gone, leaving its stain. Vile and suggestive songs, words of double meanings, pour forth to be subconsciously accepted. And there is no written record to prove the injury, no way of combatting the evil that is done.

One of the great problems before our Civilization today is the sinister insidiousness of the radio.

This column also needs an answer. The sixteen words of the Cardinal have given the *Free Press* occasion for another diatribe. Keeping Lent in Nassau has given the Prince of the Church a new view of a priest's place in his parish.

Vanity is not the ruling passion of Father Coughlin. But the danger is well pointed out and the warning accepted.

Christ, Leo XIII, Pius XI and his Ordinary, the Bishop of Detroit, are better counselors to be followed than even the Cardinal Prince.

No traitor to God or betrayer of men is Father Coughlin who follows these four.

*The Second Sunday*



ON Sunday, April 2, the *Free Press* turned Catholic. It proclaimed the Holy Year. It "sought to awaken in the heart of all mankind the peace and understanding of God with faith and hope and charity as the thought for the day."

To understand the true attitude is to read Alessandro Manzoni's "I Promessi Sposi" (The Betrothed). In the famous eleventh chapter, Don Rodrigo is plotting with Attilio to revenge themselves on a monk. Don Rodrigo had not avenged himself because he feared the Church. Attilio eggs him on.

Attilio—"Did you let him go away as he came?"

Don Rodrigo—"Would you have me draw upon myself all the Capuchins of Italy?"

Attilio—"I don't know whether I should have remembered, at that moment, that there was another Capuchin in the world except this daring knave; but surely, even under the rules of prudence, there must be some way of getting satisfaction even on a Capuchin! We must manage to redouble civilities cleverly to the whole body, and then we can give a blow to one member with impunity."

The *Free Press* and its cultured executives had not missed Manzoni. In the haste to murder a friar they must not bring down upon their heads the wrath of the "Capuchins of Italy," but must redouble civilities, and consequently, on Sunday, April 2, and for a few days before and after, although continuing their attacks on the friar, Father Coughlin, they sought industriously to increase their civilities toward the Catholic Church.

They became more Catholic than the "Osservatore Romano." Every prominent Catholic layman, every priest was given the full run of the *Free Press* lest anyone in the city think that the attitude of this newspaper was anything but liberal, just and magnanimous.

Dr. Edmund A. Walsh, Vice-President of Georgetown Uni-

versity, frequent visitor to Detroit, received a tribute, splendid and most deserving, but unusual in the light of his past lectures in this city.

Theodore F. MacManus, LL.D., L.H.D., Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory, Knight of Malta, "one of the most brilliant writers in America, a frequent contributor to such magazines as the *Atlantic Monthly*, and a much beloved Detroiter, the acknowledged intellectual leader among Roman Catholic laymen," is secured to grace the front page in a splendid article on the Holy Year and latterly secured as a contributor of articles of current topics for the readers of the *Detroit Free Press*.

Dr. George Herman Derry is given wide and deserved publicity on the reception of the great papal honor, Knight Commander of the Order of St. Gregory.

The Director of the Diocesan Apostolate, Father Wittliff, breaks the front page for the second time in his life, this time with an "inspired sermon."

Cardinal O'Connell has his year-old remarks reproduced to make a front page story out of an elaboration of the sixteen words uttered against Father Coughlin this year.

Father Edward F. Murphy of the *Acolyte* has his article reproduced, but the able answer by Father F. Albert Kaiser in the following issue of the same magazine, though called to the attention of the *Free Press*, received no mention.

The Palm Sunday services, the Tre Ore services of Good Friday, Easter in the churches, all were thoroughly covered, and such treatment will be accorded the Church under the principle known to Attilio and Mr. Stair, "*We must manage to redouble civilities cleverly to the whole body and then we can give a blow to one member with impunity.*"

*The Second Monday*

**F**OR the eighth consecutive day, the *Free Press* carried on its attitude. In full display was the following eight-column head: "Father Coughlin's Radio Speech Ignores His Own Stock Gambling and 'Bombing.'" Father Coughlin did not ignore the stock gambling charge of the *Free Press*. He very definitely stated in answer to the *Free Press* charges: "It defames the Radio League of the Little Flower and myself for investing in productive Michigan industry which we will do again, while it canonizes a gambling organization which pertains to the Detroit Bankers Company."

Of the bombing he had nothing to say directly, because he possessed no definite proof regarding it. Indirectly, Father Coughlin made light answer to the story by suggesting to his audience that "They stoned the Prophets."

It is scarcely necessary to point out, however, that the *Free Press* cannot dictate the content of a Father Coughlin speech.

The *Free Press* was most desirous to get away from the banking question in Michigan, most desirous to get away from any mention of the Detroit Bankers Company and Mr. E. D. Stair. It desired to put the issue squarely on personalities where its power of abuse and slander would put it in a superior position.

Father Coughlin merely indicated some public history of Mr. E. D. Stair. He then proved beyond cavil his charges against the Detroit Bankers Company.

He asserted his right to speak on the economic, and proved his right by the example of Christ Himself and by Popes Leo and Pius.

But this discourse needs no interpretation. It provides the proof of dishonest banking in Detroit. It stands as a complete refutation of most of the material maliciously carried by the *Free Press* for the preceding eight days. The address "The Truth Must Be Told," is here reproduced in full for the record

## FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

Of course there is no topic for discussion which currently bears half the interest as does the financial question. It is one which is far-reaching. The past is strewn with the wreckage of mismanaged banking institutions. The future is lighted by the lamp of a new hope, of a new deal, which gives promise of the return of a sane prosperity.

Naturally, the present is disturbed. It is a period of transformation of social conflict. Old prejudices, worn out systems, impractical methods and immoral ideals have been washed aside by the flood-stream of righteous indignation.

On the one side, tenaciously clinging to the past, were the speculative bankers, the credit inflationists, the gamblers with other people's money.

Opposing them were the battalions of the exploited—the deceived investors, the small depositors, the anxious industrialists, the hard-pressed merchants, the laborer and the farmer.

The inevitable happened!

Armed with the weapons of truthful facts, the exploited rose in their might to overwhelm in the first pitched battle the forces of the exploiters. History will record this victory as the birthday of the first Federal controlled bank in the United States of America.

As far as Detroit is concerned, its two most important old banks are hopelessly insolvent; \$150,000,000 insolvent according to the *Detroit Times*, which is now about to run an exposé. They have gone forever.

Just as all important sections of the United States have been interested in this conflict, so, too, they will be doubly interested in its aftermath.

Now is the time to repeal the false ideals of the old system. Now is the time to insist, first, that stockholders in these old banks shall pay their double liability to the depositors as demanded by the law of the land. Now is the propitious time to outlaw once and for all the holding companies which were part and parcel of the old system; holding companies which last Sunday I termed "hide-out" companies behind whose corporate walls widows and orphans and small depositors were artfully and cruelly despoiled.

What was said on this subject of "holding companies" in last Sunday's discourse I neither retract nor modify. Today it is my aim to amplify these statements with concrete reference to the Detroit Bankers Company. My approach to the dissolution of the Detroit Bankers Company is necessarily along the tortuous pathway which leads to the editorial rooms of the *Detroit Free Press*. Its publisher is at once the President of the Bankers Company. I refer to Mr. E. D. Stair, who is now enjoying the clemency of Florida weather.

The *Detroit Free Press*, be it known, has functioned in this City for over one hundred years. Its traditions were moulded in the sands of a former age.

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Older institutions have outgrown it because in their veins there flowed the virile blood of progress. Younger organizations whose pulses beat in the tempo of the new day have discovered new outlets for their energy, new services for their clients.

Not unkindly do I characterize this institution of the *Detroit Free Press* as moribund. In journalism it lacks the vivacity of its local contemporaries. In policy it appears to be wedded to silly class supremacy. It does not seem to comprehend that no longer is it possible to hide behind the walls of its pressroom and dominate the thought of the community where it functions.

Someone has quoted these verses for its epitaph:

“Pillars are fallen at thy feet,  
Fanes quiver in the air.  
A prostrate city is thy seat,  
And thou alone art there!”

Unconscious of the far-flung influence of the radio, this relic still carries on its warfare for the continuance of the obsolete, for the preservation of the corpses of the past.

Ladies and gentlemen, in our contest against the old banking system, we were not disappointed in finding the forces of the *Detroit Free Press* arrayed against us. Nor were we chagrined at its tactics. To become angry and disturbed because of these tactics on my part would be to betray intemperance where sympathy is rather required.

I regretfully understand why this journal all week long expended both its maximum effort and talent in assailing me with personalities because I, of necessity, was forced to identify its banker-publisher in my condemnation of the holding company, the hide-out company, over which he presides.

More headlines, more space have been wasted by the *Detroit Free Press* in one week in an effort to vilify me, than were devoted to the relief of the poor, of the starving, in this year of our sorrowful man-made famine.

Morning after morning my name and my “nefarious” activities were held up to the hatred of many, while some 270,000 fellow citizens were forced to eat the scanty crumbs which fell from the table of the Lord, and not one paragraph to defend them. This was the only forceful argument which this journal could employ to defend the integrity of holding companies. Its pretext for assailing me was founded on the assumption that I had made a personal attack upon its editor and others.

As a matter of record, I referred to Mr. Stair as the publisher, as the banker. I regarded him as much a public character as was, for instance, the indicted Mr. Charles Mitchell of New York or Mr. Insull, because he was president of an institution which controlled the destinies of hundreds of thousands of depositors. To this public gentleman I referred last Sunday in

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rather strong but rather truthful language. But to the private Mr. Stair, as yet, I did not even allude.

Ladies and gentlemen, this broadcast that is coming to you today would have been prevented if the *Detroit Free Press* had been successful in its devisals. I regret that the journal which proudly bears the appellation of "Free Press" forgot itself to such an extent as to endeavor to intimidate free speech. In desperation, its editor wrote a letter to every interested radio station and to the Federal Radio Commission, intimating legal proceedings for my alleged libelous statements regarding Mr. Stair and others.

This journal, which has constantly belittled the activities of broadcasting, is to be pitied in its futile attempts to sustain the dead past; in its attempt to impede the establishment of an honest banking system. Little heed is paid to these senile tactics by the intelligent American who has grown weary of this type of decadent journalism, a type which in the mirror of today is reflective of the actions of yesterday.

Yesterday! May I open for you the pages of our State history to substantiate this assertion. It was the year 1912. The Honorable Chase Osborn was then Governor of Michigan. That year was identified with the obnoxious saloon. That year was notable for the many discussions on woman suffrage.

In Michigan, there was an organization known as the Knights of the Royal Ark. This order petitioned the State Legislature to oppose any liquor legislation designed to clean up the saloon and the bar-flies that inhabited it; to oppose the bonding laws' changes, woman suffrage, referendum, recall, etc. Saloon-born politics were distasteful to more progressive minds. It was high time for progress to seek its ideals and to select its direction from sources other than the cuspidors and the brass rail which give impetus to many editorials.

Thus, in an official document filed in the State archives, Governor Osborn makes the following record:

"The Order of the Knights of the Royal Ark is composed of saloonkeepers. These saloonkeepers are all dependent upon the Michigan Bonding and Surety Company for their bonds. . . .

"The connection between the Knights of the Royal Ark and the Michigan Bonding and Surety Company and the large brewers . . . is unbroken. They might be warranted in taking a position in opposition to the proposed brewery and bonding legislation; but when they extend their influence to such questions as the . . . referendum . . . and woman suffrage, it proves that they fear the wholesome public voice and are disposed to smother it wherever possible."

So speaks the official document. Governor Osborn continues with the observation that:

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"The Detroit *Free Press* and The Detroit *Journal* (now defunct) are active supporters of the Michigan Bonding and Surety Company and of the brewery-owned saloon."

Later on in this public document that is filed in our archives, the Governor states that:

"E. D. Stair, a large owner of these papers, won his money from the cheap and vulgar and suggestive theater business. So illy-conducted were some of them that one at least became known to the police and public of Detroit as the *Crime Academy*."

And so this official document asks the question of the State Legislature:

"How many of us will flock with the Michigan Bonding and Surety Company, the brewery-owned saloon and Mr. Stair, and who will foregather with those who are standing and hoping for better things in Michigan. . . . The agents of evil obtained their profits from the common people by selling them things that excite sensual debaucheries (referring to the saloon and the melodrama) and then use the same money to prevent their emancipation and improvement, thus keeping them in a state of sad bondage wherein they are most easily preyed upon. Thus are the masses made to forge their own shackles and wear them."

In such forceful language did the former Governor of Michigan strongly speak of the Detroit *Free Press* and its former affiliates. The point is, to quote the former Chief Executive of our State: "It proves that they fear the wholesome public voice and are disposed to smother it wherever possible." The unerring pen of history continues to record this characteristic of the *Free Press*—a characteristic that is linked with opposition to reform.

Reverently I approach this blemished page of modern history, which tells of the only journalistic disgrace perpetrated during the Presidential campaign. Need I rehearse for the people of the country the glorious platform of President Roosevelt? His more glorious progress?

A few weeks before his election to the Presidency, Mr. Roosevelt visited the City of Detroit. Disparagingly the Detroit *Free Press* referred to him. Contumeliously they insinuatingly compared his importance and popularity to those of a convalescent chimpanzee, Jo Mendi, by name. No wonder you gasp! Twenty thousand citizens interested in the President, insinuated their article. Forty thousand persons interested in the monkey!

Need I now explain the reason for this journal's personal attack upon myself? Arguments spun out of billingsgate; insinuations coined in the mint of desperation; headlines set in the type of deception; all because I allegedly attacked their publisher's personal character when I merely scratched the surface of the official activities.

All I am interested in, when disclosing these well known facts, is that the Detroit *Free Press* is today, as of yesterday, interested in obstructing

the establishment of wholesome progress. Yesterday, it defended the obnoxious saloon and opposed woman suffrage. Today, it defended a rotten financial corpse and opposed the Federal banks. Yesterday it advocated the retention of the old deal, the Mellon deal, by stooping to insult our beloved leader. Today it argues for the sanctity of holding companies by painting me as a scoundrel.

While I thank the *Detroit Free Press* for their compliment in so classifying my efforts, nevertheless, I am inclined to absolve them for any intended hurt aimed at me either through the activities of their investigators or through the paragraphs of their editorials. But bear in mind, the *Detroit Free Press*, which has undertaken to be the defender of stockholders and holding companies, is offering no defense for its cause when it dodges the issue to indulge in personalities. It accuses me of uttering falsehoods and cannot substantially prove its own statements. It defames the Radio League of the Little Flower and myself for investing in productive Michigan industry, which we will do again, while it canonizes the gambling organization which pertains to the Detroit Bankers Company.

My friends, as we approach the end of this broadcasting season, it is apposite that I restate the position of the Catholic Church and of its clergy relative to their discussing economic questions officially—a question that was forced upon me by the *Detroit Free Press*. For several years I have addressed you on topics dealing with social justice—labor, the concentration of wealth, exploitation, taxation—subjects which are of paramount importance to all of us.

While the world is confronted with definite problems, it is erroneously inferred that the clergy should be satisfied with speaking in wide gauged platitudes. In the face of universal distress, it is falsely presumed that clerics should appease their consciences with the narcotic of silence, a silence that has been dramatic. These unchristian thoughts suggest a serious question, namely, whether it is within the province of a priest to deal officially with these modern problems or whether he should confine himself to the preaching of things spiritual only.

I wonder how the gentle Christ would make answer to this question? Supposing that this year, this very day, He returned in the flesh to walk amongst His brother men. Where would you find Him? Wintering in the soft effeminacy of a southern isle or mingling with the unfed, the unclad in Union Square?

Behold your Christ as He mingles with the unfortunate! Once more He would gather around Him the cold, thin forms of little children! Bread for the hungry, the medicine of miracles for the sick, consolation for the out-cast—these are His immediate gifts.

“Why,” asks He, “must men starve in the midst of plenty? Why must

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there be luxury and ease and lenten holidays? Why must the poor be trampled upon? Why must God's brothers be treated like servile beasts? Why?"

Of old did He not break the sinful silence of cowardly conservatism to inveigh against the Pharisees? And now, will He not wax eloquent against the Pharisees of concentrated wealth? Tell me not that Christ will speak in platitudes when fifteen million men are unemployed; when twenty million families are burdened with unbearable debt!

If an Annas or a Caiphas must be assailed as unworthy leaders in the sight of heaven, will not Christ condemn them? If the princely lords of Wall Street try to catch Him in His speech—call Him the friend of Beelzebub, call Him demagog, call Him radical, will He, the fearless, peerless One, hold a sinful peace—when there is no peace! Not He! "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, ye hypocrites—Ye who bind heavy and unsupportable burdens and lay them on men's shoulders! Ye who devour the houses of widows! Well do ye make void the commandment of God, that you may keep your own tradition."

Hear ye! Hear ye the words of the courageous Christ proclaiming His doctrine of brotherhood, even at the expense of the lashings of malefactors! "The poor shall have the gospel preached to them"; for neither Christ nor His Church, in the words of the great Leo, "are so concerned with man's spiritual welfare that they neglect his temporal good."

Thus, my friends, from Christ's example, I dare pass on to the supreme authorities in the Catholic Church, Leo and Pius, the noblest pontiffs of them all! From them every cleric gains added authority to speak on matters economic in the name of Christ and of religion.

In his letter named *Quadragesimo Anno* (Forty Years After), Pius XI says: "We lay down the principle long since clearly established by Leo XIII that it is our right and our duty to deal authoritatively with social and economic problems. . . . Indeed the Church believes that it would be wrong for her to interfere without just cause in such earthly concerns; but she never can relinquish her God-given task of interposing her authority, not indeed in technical matters, for which she has neither the equipment nor the mission, but in all those that have a bearing on moral conduct."

This is the earthly concern of the moment—one particularly "in defense of the poor and the weak," as Pius characterizes it, wherein "every minister of holy religion must throw into the conflict all the energy of his mind and all the strength of his endurance." That is the doctrine of the Catholic Church and not the doctrine of the *Detroit Free Press*.

This is the same economic conflict which caused the head of the Catholic Church to oppose the immoral conditions of his time when laborers were paid insufficient wages—a condition which he then termed little better than slavery.

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What would Leo XIII say today when fifteen million men are idle in this country with no wages at all? Little better than slavery in 1891, when there was work.

My friends, in a simple manner I have dared to defend the poor and the exploited; dared to do my duty, cost what it may! For this I gladly stand condemned by those who refuse to understand the Christ of the Cross Who was crucified because He assailed the Pharisees.

If, occasionally then, I have used the scourge of rhetoric to help drive out of public leadership those who have controlled the policies of poverty, of idleness, of worn-out and disgraced financialism, I have done less by far than did the patient, loving Master Who scourged the money-changers from the temple, the Master Who had compassion on the multitudes, the Master Whom they crucified because the high priests of compromise framed Him with fake witnesses.

My friends, every age has its proper problem. Every age should find the Church always alert to cope with peculiar difficulties, always courageous to lead. Thus it was that Pius remarked that "At this moment the condition of the working population is the question of the hour and nothing can be of higher interest to all classes of the State than that it should be rightfully and reasonably solved."

How harmonious is this thought to the one expressed by his predecessor of 1891, namely: "It must not be supposed that the solicitude of the Church is so occupied with the spiritual concerns of its children as to neglect their interests temporal and earthly!"

It is for that reason that I have considered it a beautiful privilege to apply the principles of my leaders to the problems of our day—"our day," says Pius XI, "when it is evident that wealth is accumulated by immense power, and despotic domination is concentrated in the hands of a few, and that those few are frequently not the owners but only the trustees and directors of invested funds who would minister them at their own good will"—the will which dominated the activities of crap-shooting bank affiliates and their hide-out holding companies.

This is my commission. These are but suggestions from the leader of the flock. If I be a demagog, so must be Leo and Pius. Whatever I am, I am not important. But my doctrine is of paramount importance.

Briefly, then, this is a struggle between right and wrong; between worn-out capitalism and Christian democracy; between threatened communism and distributive justice. The only answer for our economic salvation is to oust the money changers from the temple of God and within its hallowed precincts to re-establish the virtues of Christian morality.

This, I swear to God, has motivated my attack on the money-changers, by name, if you will; by specific activity, if you please, because they were

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hidden behind the pages of purchased propaganda and meretricious publicity, where the uninformed citizen could not discern them.

Thus, the unpleasant task devolved upon me to make mention of the Detroit *Free Press* and its banker-publisher, as obstacles in the way of sound banking.

The penalty for doing this was obvious. I could expect little less than was received by the Prophet Isaias, who was sawed in two for having disclosed the wickedness of King Manasses; sawed in two, to destroy the doctrine that I preached; sawed in two, so that the Manasses of journalism could survive!

And so I return to my indictment of the gambling company and of the Detroit Bankers Company. As for the affiliate of the Detroit Bankers Company, let me read for you an astounding criticism of it made by Senator Carter Glass. The Senator records the following officially:

"I learned that one of the most distinguished lawyers at the American bar, at one time president of the American Bar Association, Solicitor General of the United States under President Taft, had given an exhaustive, searching opinion as to the legality of national bank affiliates. I have read the opinion. Although not a lawyer, I venture to pronounce it a legal classic, searching and sweeping. The opinion is, in effect, an unmistakable declaration that national bank affiliates are absolutely illegal, that they contravene the national bank act, that the parent bank contravenes the national charter, and the affiliate in many instances the State statute and the charter of the State from which it derives its existence. Court opinion after court opinion of both inferior courts and the Supreme Court of the United States are cited.

"No action was ever taken under this tremendously important opinion of the Solicitor General of the United States. Not only was no action taken, but it is within the confines of fact to say that the opinion was suppressed; and few things have ever happened in this country that better illustrate the power and the blandishments of inordinate wealth, because the opinion dealt with institutions and individuals who had accumulated inordinate wealth. Not only did the Attorney General at that time fail to act, but another Attorney General, some years afterwards, elevated to a place of even higher distinction, declined to permit the opinion to be made public."

I said that holding companies made it possible to cheat the widow, to rob the orphan and depress the poor while they enabled the artful dodger of high finance to escape the law. Here are facts to substantiate this unthinkable assertion.

First: The Detroit Bankers Company, in its series of reports to the stockholders, failed to disclose by the balance sheets included therein the true

statements of its capital structure. In 1930 \$8,300,000 of capital issued was concealed. A serious statement! I have proof for it. In 1931 \$6,100,000 of capital issued was concealed. In 1932, in the report signed by Mr. E. D. Stair, the impeccable president, \$5,601,960 of capital issued was not disclosed. That, my friends, is deceit. That is falsification of the records (of which I spoke last Sunday and was called the tantamount of a liar for saying so)—records which have been handed every stockholder and copies of which I have in my possession.

Second: In this same series of reports to stockholders, the Detroit Bankers Company makes no mention of the balance sheet of the following subsidiaries or affiliates, namely, The First Detroit Company, The Detroit Company, First National Company and Assets Realization Company. The First National Building and Garage Company once owning an edifice costing millions has evidently lost the building; for in the petition for a receiver filed March 29, 1933, the structure is not listed as an asset. If it were sold, let Mr. E. D. Stair tell us what became of the proceeds.

Third: Another subsidiary of the Detroit Bankers Company is the Detroit Trust Company, owners of thousands of shares of Detroit Bankers stock. Some was held for estates of the deceased, leaving widow and orphan protected with the penniless properties of the Detroit Bankers stock.

But the Detroit Bankers Company is not devoid of assets. They have stocks in various banks. But the majority of the banks are closed and the asset is a liability amounting to millions. They have \$51,000 balance in the First National Bank, but this is slightly offset by a loan from the same bank of depositors' funds to the extent of \$3,982,664.99. They also have \$200 cash on hand. The Detroit Bankers Company also have an asset of \$4,270,000 in a note from the Assets Realization Company, whatever that is worth.

Again I find a \$1,000,000 note made by the Detroit Bankers Company to the First National Bank and one for \$250,000 to the Detroit Trust Company, given in return for the hard earned dollars of the depositor to shear up the tottering structure of the holding company.

These loans were made on collateral—collateral worth today less than \$400,000. But on January 18, this year, \$180,000 was borrowed from the Detroit Trust with no security. In other words, the Detroit Bankers Company looted the Detroit Trust for \$800,000 and the value of the security is \$110,000 as appraised by competent authorities just yesterday.

Fourth: Now pause to see what the Detroit Bankers Company did to the First National Bank. On two days in January of this year the holding company borrowed from the First National Bank \$2,982,000 at three percent interest with no security, and owes an extra million secured by property worth today \$300,000.

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Fifth: The Detroit Company, another subsidiary, once a great corporation, has its capital listed today at \$1000. But it owns 41,211 shares of Detroit Bankers stock. How in the name of God can it meet its assessment of \$804,200 as double liability?

Sixth: The First National Company is another \$1000 capital company. But it owns 5,465 shares of Detroit Bankers Company stock with a liability of \$109,300.

Seventh: The Detroit Trust Company has 71,682 shares of Detroit Bankers stock with a liability of \$1,433,640.

Eighth: Then comes the stockholders' list that Detroiters saw yesterday, which was interspersed with hide-out names, with dummies legally owning thousands upon thousands of shares; legally liable for hundreds of thousands of dollars that have gone forever!

Thus the roll call of every grand old name in Detroit. With these people I deeply sympathize. They are people around whose names is woven the story of our progress, our culture and our stability; people who unwisely permitted their fortunes to be melted in the fires of greed lighted too often by misunderstanding men!

Their estates are ruined not by the upheaval of a bloody revolution; not by the red menace of the communism we fear; but by the unethical, unskilled banker—not the grand old conservative who was shelved to make place for lesser men—who, I repeat, were experts, gambling with loaded dice, with other people's money.

These are the unthinkable charges, still unthinkable to any man with a life-time of character behind him, charges that are proven. The facts and figures are furnished, first from the reports of the Detroit Bankers Company to its own stockholders—reports that the executives were too careless to check for internal contradictions. The facts and figures are furnished from the Detroit Bankers own petition for a receiver filed in the Circuit Court of the County of Wayne in the State of Michigan, Friday, March 29, 1933, No. 214,667, an official document, officially condemning the holding company as a hide-out company to anybody who cares to read it through. This is the proof that I was dared to produce. Any person who wants a copy of this official document can obtain it at the County Clerk's office.

Throughout the nation such progressive and honest news journals as the *Detroit Times* or the *Detroit News* will continue to work towards sound banking, honest banking and the return of prosperity. Dishonesty and knavery must be uncovered at any price. The news journals of character must not forget their obligations to the public. Nor may clerics refrain from throwing into this struggle for economic freedom the justice and charity for which Christ lived and died, and the teachings of His spokes-

men, whose example condemns cowardly silence and plutocratic Bourbonism.

Oh, there is so much to be done! Away with our bickering! Let the dead past bury its dead. Let's look to the future and solve the mighty problems which needs must be solved! Behold the forced idleness which is ravishing the flower of our country's youth! Shall that continue?

Behold fifty million dependents who are wondering this evening where life's bare necessities can be found! Underfed babies, ragged children, closed factories, burdened farms, empty churches, soap box communists! Behold what is in our midst!

Of old Christ stood weeping on a hilltop as He gazed upon the Jerusalem which He loved. Its people had fallen into the hands of a foreign foe. There was poverty because there was exploitation. There was injustice because of gold-seeking Pharisees. There was discontent, because of lying, cowardly leadership. Now as of then, the same Christ looking down upon both crowded city and far-flung farm lands, says to the Jerusalem of America:

"Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not? Behold, your house shall be left to you, desolate. For I say to you, you shall not see me henceforth till you say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Fellow countrymen, think me not bold or arrogant if I plead with you to gather under the outstretched wings of Christ's cross! Our houses must not remain desolate! Our vision of prosperity and of Christian happiness cannot be realized until as a nation we dry the tears from the cheeks of the rejected Christ and welcome Him and His doctrines—His social justice, His economic liberty, His Christian democracy, His divine charity—to come in the name of the Lord!

Too long—much too long—have we followed the rules of error, of greed, in our mad endeavor to substitute for the laws of God and the doctrines of Christ the man-made legislation of financial slavery! For God's sake let us think of sound men—sound in body and in soul—rather than of that fiction of sound money, sound according to some worn-out formula! Clear the park benches of the derelict! Empty the darkened hall rooms of the disconsolate! Open wide the factory doors! Give us this day our daily bread—bread that is earned by the sweat of the brow! The bread that can save America from a catastrophe!

## II

A front page article in the form of an editorial captioned "Coughlin Dodges Issue" is reproduced herewith:

## THE SECOND MONDAY

Father Coughlin inaugurated the Holy Year of his Church on Sunday with a hymn of hate.

While others throughout the world sought to awaken in the hearts of all mankind the peace and understanding of God, with Faith and Hope and Charity as the thought of the day, Father Coughlin in a disjointed harangue that at times became hysterical, poured forth venom and vituperation, to the glory not of God but of the newspapers of William Randolph Hearst.

His slanderous reiterations were sent out over Station WJR, ironically enough, advertised as "the good-will station."

Coughlin's chief advisers in Detroit—The *Detroit Times* and Mayor Frank Murphy—had promised the people that Coughlin would answer the charges of stock market gambling made by the *Detroit Free Press*.

Coughlin made no defense whatsoever.

He ignored the only issue that the people wanted to hear from him on.

He stands accused and has made no reply.

He had promised to answer specifically the eight direct charges of falsehoods made by the *Free Press* on March 28 in its categorical refutation, by facts and figures, of his previous address. He answered none of them.

He and his press agents, the Hearst organization, ballyhooed for days that he was going to tell about the "terrible bomb explosion" that "rocked his house."

He made no mention of this piece of showmanship.

The address was a rewrite of his speech of the previous Sunday.

He continued his onslaught on the old banks despite the fact that the United States Government, President Roosevelt concurring, had named seven members of the old boards to that of the new bank. Four of them are from the Detroit Bankers Company—all associates of Mr. E. D. Stair. One of them is the vice-president and treasurer of the *Detroit Free Press* which Coughlin spent most of his afternoon attacking.

The burden of his new attack on Mr. Stair consisted of a ghoulish digging into the political graveyard for an incident that happened in the year 1912—twenty-one years ago. Chase S. Osborn was at that time Governor of the State of Michigan. Mr. Stair and Mr. Osborn disagreed over matters of state policy. Mr. Osborn—for one thing—was, and still is, a whole hearted Dry. Mr. Stair, though a teetotaler himself, did not believe in the success of Prohibition. In the heat of a long political controversy Governor Osborn sent a special message to the state legislature. It carried in it all Mr. Osborn's genius for vehement expression. But it was privileged matter as an official message to a legislative body.

At the time Mr. Stair challenged Governor Osborn to come out from behind the immunity of his office and repeat his charges on a public platform so that he could be taken to court.

This Mr. Osborn declined to do.

When the storm blew over Governor Osborn came in person to Mr. Stair to apologize for his hot-headedness. He admitted he had been misinformed and since then both men have been warm personal friends.

As to the merits of that incident the *Free Press* is quite content to leave the verdict in the hands of Mr. Osborn.

The radio Richelieu has performed the service asked of him by the agents of William Randolph Hearst in Detroit, not for the peace and harmony and well being of this community but to gain circulation.

For this and other vicious things he has said and done, it is presumed he will be held answerable to his superiors in the great Church he misrepresents.

Meanwhile, a board of directors has been chosen for the National Bank of Detroit. They are honorable men highly respected and trusted in Detroit despite what Coughlin has called more than half of them.

The United States Government is in charge here.

As for Coughlin's libelous utterances and criminal slander the courts before which all transgressors can be brought to justice still stand.

In the proper time and the proper place Coughlin will be called upon to prove his charges. As his own Bishop remarked in his official statement: "He talks like a prosecutor but furnishes no proofs."

The *Free Press* will carry on to the best of its abilities, serving this community as it always has. We feel content that the people of our community know both the Detroit *Free Press* and the Detroit *Times*; they know also Mr. Stair and Mr. Hearst.

To this editorial the following sentence was added: "(Mr. Stair left for Florida under the doctor's orders, due to ill health, on his seventy-fourth birthday. This is written by his staff in his absence.)"

In this editorial the Detroit *Times* and Frank Murphy are held responsible for Father Coughlin's refusal to have his speech dictated by the *Free Press*.

Both the discourse of Father Coughlin and this editorial refer to Chase S. Osborn's attack on Mr. E. D. Stair in 1912.

The *Free Press* makes much of the long twenty-one year interval but wholly ignores the question as to whether that attack was justified. Did Chase Osborn tell the truth about E. D. Stair?

## Conclusion

### I

**A**N honest summary of the charges found against Father Coughlin appears to carry the following net results: Father Coughlin is a "demagog." His figures on withdrawals from the First National Bank of Detroit are excessive. He slandered E. D. Stair, an upright gentleman. He gambled with charity funds. He declared the Detroit banks insolvent. He declared the Detroit Bankers Company a "hide-out" company. He declared the Detroit Bankers Company to be a legal but unmoral holding company, which made it possible to cheat the widow and the orphan. He was rebuked by a Cardinal. He defended Jimmy Walker. He was born in Canada. Once he blamed Henry Ford for his share of evils consequent to mass-production. He was once rebuked by a fellow priest, Father Wittliff. Twenty-five hundred outstanding Catholics are against him and so communicated with the *Free Press*. His Bishop repudiated his statements. He dodges income taxes. He was a spokesman for the Roosevelt administration. He said the *Free Press* was located on Fort Street and not Lafayette.

*Answer:*—Every specific charge has been answered in detail in the foregoing pages. To summarize: Father Coughlin admits he is a "demagog" in the original sense of the word, "a leader of the people." His figures on withdrawals from the First National Bank of Detroit are correct. He proved E. D. Stair to be what he is, on the testimony of a Governor of the State of Michigan. He never gambled one penny of charity funds. The Detroit banks were insolvent on February 11, 1933. They were formally declared insolvent on March 25, 1933, by the best authority in the world, the Secretary of the Treasury, and on May 14, 1933, three months and four days after they were closed, the *Free Press* finally admits their insolvency.

The Detroit Bankers Company is recognized as nothing but a "hide-out" company, presumably operating in the corporation field and not in the banking field, a hopelessly insolvent company, which has looted its affiliates and subsidiaries and declared dividends while hopelessly insolvent itself. There is no place in the National Banking Act nor in the Michigan statutes for the Detroit Bankers Company as a banking company. Its charter restricts it to the general corporation field and excludes it from the banking field. Every act of its existence has been strictly in the banking field.

He was rebuked by a Cardinal Prince of the Catholic Church. He did defend Jimmy Walker. He was born in Canada. He did blame Henry Ford for his share in the evils due to mass-production. He was rebuked by several fellow priests. The twenty-five hundred outstanding Catholics are a *Free Press* creation. The Bishop put his *imprimatur* on every discourse. His income tax record is clear. He was a spokesman in one particular radio presentation for the Roosevelt administration. He did say the *Free Press* was "the old lady of Fort Street" when he should have said "the old lady of Lafayette Street."

These are all the charges and these are the truthful answers.

Let us sift the eight true charges:

The mere assertion that a man is a "demagog" must be dismissed, for the *Free Press* never defined the word which Father Coughlin had already used in its original sense. The opposition of a certain Cardinal is natural if one will speak publicly the truth against great wealth. He defended Jimmy Walker, the elected representative of a city of six million, before charges were proven against him. This was his right and duty. The most serious charge of all is that he was born in Canada. The criticism of Henry Ford was Father Coughlin's criticism of mass-production and in no way implies any blemish of character. Let the priests and laymen read the encyclicals before they criticize. Father was spokesman on one occasion for his Government. This is an honor. He called the Detroit *Free Press* "the old lady of Fort Street" instead of "the old lady of Lafayette Street."

The net result of the *Free Press*' nine day campaign of calumny proved conclusively and to Father's everlasting shame that he was born in Canada; he called the *Free Press* "the old lady of Fort Street."

## CONCLUSION

### II

The important thing, however, is not "who Coughlin is" but "what he said" in the controversy.

The following charges were openly made and "ducked" by the *Free Press*, the defender of E. D. Stair and the Detroit Bankers Company.

The Detroit Bankers Company was insolvent. It was an unmoral holding company cheating the widow and the orphan. It issued false financial statements. It declared dividends when it was insolvent. It was a "hide-out" company and aimed to dodge double liability. It gambled with other people's money. Its affiliates were illegal. It concealed its capital while setting up its capital structure. It concealed the conditions of its affiliates and subsidiaries in their reports to stockholders. It sold to a subsidiary, namely, the Detroit Trust Company, stock for clients and thus cheated the widow and the orphan.

The Detroit Bankers Company had assets of \$4,270,000 in a worthless note from the Assets Realization Company, a subsidiary; \$51,000 on deposit in the First National Bank; \$200 cash on hand and liabilities of \$3,982,664.99 in notes to the First National Bank. It owned the Detroit Company, a thousand dollar corporation with 41,211 shares of Detroit Bankers stock—proof of an attempt to escape added liability. Its stock was placed with dummy stockholders, namely, chauffeurs, servants, etc., together with corporations organized solely to hold bank stock and from which no added liability could be collected.

In respect to the First National, leading subsidiary of the Detroit Bankers Company, Father Coughlin made the following charges:

The bank was insolvent. It had made unwarranted loans, unsecured and undersecured, to its own officers. It had loaned excessively to dishonest builders and rabid speculators in apartment houses and subdivisions.

Father Coughlin also exposed E. D. Stair, president of the Detroit Bankers Company, the only one person on whom responsibility must be placed for the wreckage of the great banking institutions held by this "hide-out" holding company. Father Coughlin charged:

Mismanagement of his banking property; a life-long history of reactionary principles; money-making from the cheap, vulgar

and suggestive end of the theater business; the control of one theater known as the Academy of Crime; selling things to excite the senses of the people and leading them to debauchery; using money to prevent the emancipation and improvement of the people and forcing the masses to forge their shackles and then wear them. Not one charge was truly answered by the *Free Press*. All stand today substantiated by *prima facie* and conclusive evidence.

### III

The foregoing chapter on the Detroit *Free Press* was written rather extensively because of the crucial question at stake.

In one sense it is the second turning point in Father Coughlin's career.

Most likely in the history of American journalism, or for that matter in the history of our republic, no clergyman was ever subjected to such a belabored and dishonest criticism as was the pastor of the Shrine of the Little Flower.

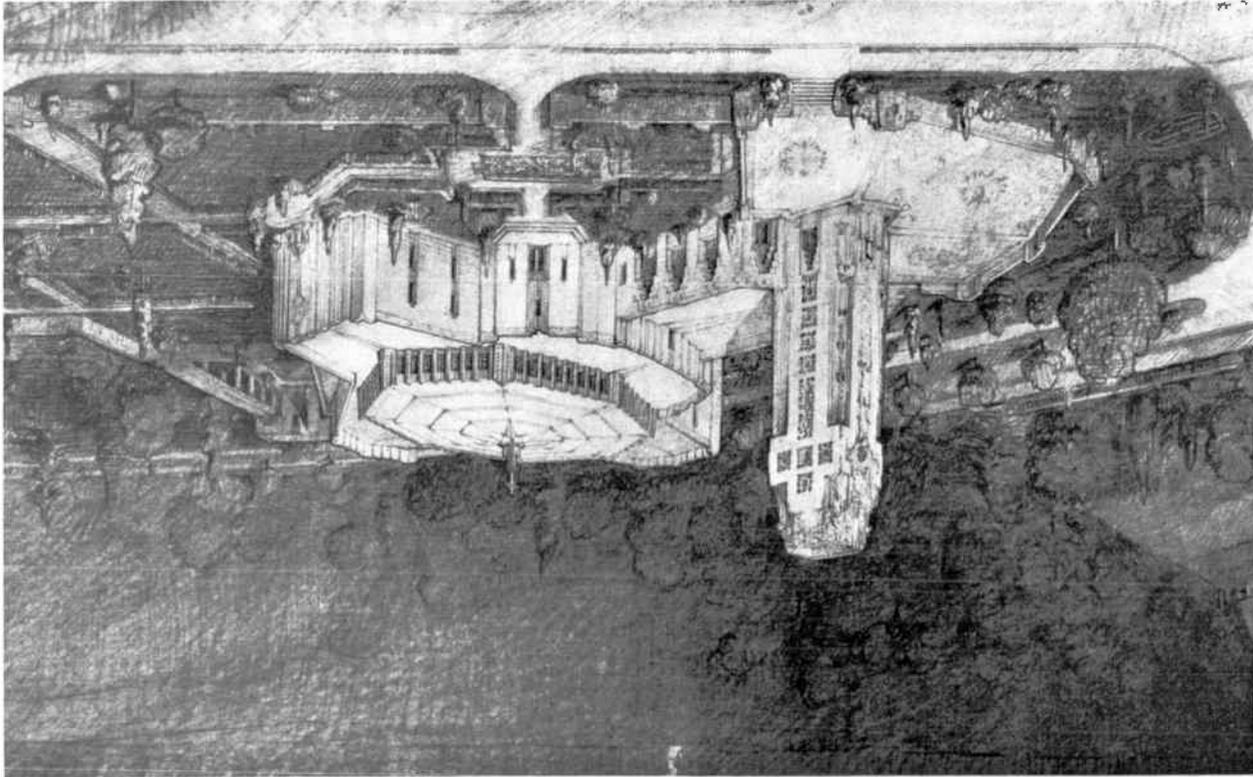
He was a man who had stepped to the very forefront of his calling for the purpose of advocating in a very practical and concrete manner the principles which had been propounded by his highest superior.

They were principles which in season and out of season the Detroit *Free Press* had consistently opposed.

The abuses which he had pointed out as necessary to be removed, and the men who had fostered these abuses had been protected editorially by this news journal. To destroy this priest, therefore, was to forestall the inevitable day of reckoning. It is all reminiscent of that page of English history which tells us the story of a greedy, self-centered and exploiting monarch, who, angry because his policies had been frustrated and his will thwarted, spoke these words to his willing henchmen, words that have gone ringing down the centuries: "Who will rid me of this troublesome priest?" Thomas à Becket sacrificed his physical life to the enmity and hatred of a vicious Henry II.

Was it not possible that the spiritual and intellectual leadership of Father Charles E. Coughlin could be murdered to perpetuate the modern policies of this Henry II of journalism? In the evolution of Machiavellian diplomacy, the crudeness of the earlier century had developed into a finesse of execution.

EXTERIOR WHEN COMPLETED—Shrine of the Little Flower





PART VI—FATHER COUGHLIN  
AND CATHOLIC CHURCHMEN



*A Cardinal Speaks as a Layman*

I

**H**IS EMINENCE, WILLIAM CARDINAL O'CONNELL, Prince of the Roman Catholic Church, at a meeting in Boston, delivered an address, excerpts of which are quoted from the *Pilot*,—official organ of the Archdiocese of Boston, of Sunday, April 18, 1932. I have not presumed to change a word of the reported speech.

"We do not like to hear almost hysterical addresses from ecclesiastics," said Cardinal O'Connell. "They have a way of attracting attention they do not deserve." Then he explained how the Pope speaks to the whole world on the subject of universal truth, the bishop for his diocese and the parish priest for his parish.

"When the parish priest tries to direct the affairs of a neighboring parish, he is very soon called to order by the bishop," states His Eminence.

"But the radio, it is new and has brought new problems. Now individual priests try to speak to the whole world. That is all wrong. Let him speak to his own parish, his own people. To do otherwise creates disorder and confusion." Then, launching his attack directly at Father Coughlin, he said: "The individual in Michigan takes it into his head to talk to the whole world. To whom is he responsible? Some people prefer to talk rhetoric instead of facts, but we are careful about that . . ."

"The Catholic Church is a tremendously serious organization, for it deals in human souls. You can't begin speaking about the rich, or making sensational accusations against banks and bankers, or uttering demagogic stuff to the poor. You can't do it, for the church is for all."

Cardinal O'Connell expressed his gratification that the Sunday afternoon broadcasts for the season had been stopped and his hope that such practice would be discontinued.

It is believed that Father Coughlin's appearance before the congressional committee considering the veterans' bonus caused the Cardinal to speak so vehemently yesterday. Father Coughlin, last week in Washington, advocated the immediate payment of the bonus, even if suspension of the gold

standard were necessary, and criticized the government for the aid extended bankers and business without paying attention to the needs of the workers.

The Cardinal said in part: "I want to emphasize that I am speaking for myself, as a Catholic citizen in America, not as a priest, a bishop or a cardinal. We are passing through times that are serious. There is no doubt that all men, with exceptions here and there, not caring for their party, are doing their best to obtain a solution.

"They are talking it out, fighting it out. Each is suggesting and talking, but that is inevitable. Out of it will come a solution that is sensible and practical, a solution that will be for the general advantage of the nation and not for any one side, class, or party.

"We have come to a time when these things must be secondary to the general welfare of the nation. The parties talk about each other, but we can put that all aside, for they are trying for a solution. We Catholics know it to be true that unless mankind turns to God there will not be any solution.

"Will it be solved? Yes, with God's help. The solution will come when leaders are utterly unselfish, not thinking of their own popularity but really and truly of the welfare of the people. When the leaders of the nation and the world forget themselves (the first requisite is absolute unselfishness) will they solve the problem? Yes, with God's grace.

"We learned years later that Washington, in the midst of his troubles was on his knees, praying to God. We must feel that these men, these leaders are so in earnest, in common sense they must know the importance of aid and be on their knees in this crisis.

"What must the people do? We must exercise patience and not lose our heads in these trying times. What is the first rule in a crisis? Don't get rattled, keep calm. Nothing is achieved by arousing popular excitement. When we are so near the crisis that anything may spill it, don't be whisked off your feet by oratory.

"Men most able to act don't talk. They do, in a quiet sort of way, and they don't want credit for it. In a moment of crisis we must forget ourselves. Surely that is not asking too much from the American people, to ask them to hold their feet on the ground, and not be whisked off their feet by spectacular talk, mostly froth, but some with poison in it.

"The distinguishing mark of the intellectual should be a sense of judgment, judiciousness. The Guild of St. Apollonia can help by spreading the word. Don't be whisked off your feet, hold your ground steadily and firmly. There is altogether too much talk. We should not have the time to talk, unless we have really something to say, something that is sensible.

"Often in times like this, the thing to do is to grit the teeth and go on. Things right themselves in time, but not in confusion. I again want to

## A CARDINAL SPEAKS AS A LAYMAN

emphasize that I am talking for myself, as an ordinary Catholic citizen in America.

"We do not like to hear almost hysterical addresses from ecclesiastics. They have a way of attracting attention they do not deserve. The fact is they are not entirely just. We Catholics know the normal way the faith is propagated and its principles enunciated. When it is a case of universal truth the head of the church, the Holy Father, speaks.

"When it is a diocesan matter, the bishop is the spokesman and speaks for the diocese. The parish priest speaks for his parish. It is a beautiful order, with things in their places. When the parish priest tries to direct the affairs of a neighboring parish, he is very soon called to order by the bishop.

"But the radio, it is new and has brought new problems. Now individual priests try to speak to the whole world. That is all wrong. Let him speak to his own parish, his own people. To do otherwise creates disorder and confusion. The radio is a new problem, but the church will take care of it in time.

"There is a man in Florida or Michigan, I forget which, who talks every Sunday afternoon. He talks to the world. What right has he to do this? If he talks about those things which are religious, we do not mind. Here we have the Catholic Truth Hour on Sunday, but I know who is talking, and he knows I am listening.

"Later, we have the hour of the National Catholic Welfare Council. At least the priests who talk are responsible to the head of that organization. If the speaker begins to talk nonsense, or pure emotionalism, or simply spectacular talk, that is the end of him. The results of anything different are so tremendous that we ourselves cannot afford to toy with anything like that.

"The individual in Michigan takes it into his head to talk to the whole world. To whom is he responsible? Some people prefer to talk rhetoric instead of facts, but we are careful about that.

"The church was founded on God's truth. The spectacularly-talking man gets great popularity and is consumed with false pride. That is the way trouble has always started in the church. He may become popular in a false cause, if not false, at least indiscreet.

"The Catholic Church is a tremendously serious organization, for it deals in human souls. You can't begin speaking about the rich or making sensational accusations against banks and bankers, or uttering demagogic stuff to the poor. You can't do it, for the church is for all. Not one party, one class, the church is for all. If something is different, then it is something to be watched.

"For the Catholic Truth Period and the National Catholic Welfare Council which many Protestants love to listen to, we take responsibility.

## FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

For others, who take it upon their shoulders to talk politics and touch especially on dangerous lines, we take no responsibility. Sooner or later, and I hope sooner, it will stop. They may be sensational, but the church is not sensational. A bishop is apt to be aware of men who are sensational. Popularity is apt to go to their heads when they receive hundreds of letters. Sooner or later it gets to their head.

"This Sunday afternoon radio address has been stopped for the season. I am glad, for it was going a little too far. While we believe in free speech, you do not have to be told that the priest has his place, and he had better stay there. Better for him and better for the world at large.

"I am saying this in perfect charity. Still, we vouch for only two programmes and no others. We are working for mankind and the Church, and we cannot allow anyone to help themselves at the expense of one or the other. This popularity is like the bouquet thrown to the opera singer—sometimes it hits her on the head. They cry Hosannas today, and crucify you tomorrow. The Church does not take sides; it is there like universal truth."

## II

The *Echo* of Buffalo, New York, under date of May 5, 1932, reviewed the reception the Catholic Press gave the attack of Cardinal O'Connell in an article reproduced as follows:

Cardinal O'Connell's criticism of Father Coughlin's radio addresses has created a greater stir among the general public than in the columns of the Catholic press. A number of Catholic papers published the Cardinal's utterances without comment; none that we have seen sided with the Boston prelate as against the Detroit priest, while a few are outspoken in their defense of Father Coughlin.

Among the Catholic papers that have broken a lance for Father Coughlin is the St. Louis *Western Watchman*, in which J. Mutton-Flynn, who conducts a special column, comes to the defense of Father Coughlin as follows:

"In line with the unfortunate pronouncements of Alfred E. Smith with regard to protecting the rich, Cardinal O'Connell has made the same sort of unhappy statement. When the Cardinal issued his virtual attack against Father Coughlin it is fortunate that few in the country sided with him. It has been only a few days since the statement, yet the great wave of feeling that has swept the country shows two things: that Father Coughlin, three years ago a comparatively unknown priest, has stirred the nation profoundly at a time when it is looking blindly for a leader; the second is that the people will support a priest who preaches for social justice rather than a prince of the Church who attacks him.

"The apostles did not mouth generalities. They called down by name

## A CARDINAL SPEAKS AS A LAYMAN

the evildoers of their days. But we have grown subservient to a class which has grown fat on our indifference to their sin. The Church is for rich and poor alike, as she is for saint and sinner. But there is a constant warfare against sin. And when the rich as a class come to that state where they are constituted a class by social crime, then there must be warfare against the rich. But that will not be the setting of class against class, it will be the warfare against crime; it will be the act of retributive justice.

"And so, the Cardinal was hardly right when he said that there was too much talk. After all man is a social being, and there can be too much talk only when talk degenerates into dribble, such, for example as the frequent protests that we must not say anything against the criminally rich. The one who talks too much is the Cardinal. He has been indulging in Hooverisms, which we all know is the lowest form of speech. The ones who say things really constructive are men like Father Coughlin and Dr. Ryan. And if the matter ever should come to Rome, we would feel much safer on Father Coughlin's side than on that of Cardinal O'Connell."

The *Indiana Catholic* of Indianapolis expresses the opinion that the only exception that might be taken to Father Coughlin's radio addresses is the fact that they come from a church, from the Shrine of the Little Flower.

"There has been no little excitement," says our Indianapolis contemporary, "not only in Catholic circles, but amongst Americans generally within the past few days, owing to the opinion his Eminence Cardinal O'Connell expressed about the radio address of the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin of the Shrine of the Little Flower, Detroit.

"There should not be any excitement about it. This is a free country and members of the clergy and laity are entitled to express their opinions on public topics, provided always of course, that they do not attack the government of these United States or when the clergy are involved that they do not utter some heresy. Every priest is subject to his Bishop in his own diocese according to the Canon Law of the Church. If a priest does wrong, it is for his own Bishop in his own diocese to call him to account. The beloved Bishop of Detroit, the Most Reverend Michael J. Gallagher, is one of the outstanding Bishops of the Church in America. At the same time we might remark that he himself has always been given to freely expressing his opinion on any subject, religious or otherwise, that concerns the welfare of his fellow citizens."

### III

Such was a cross section of the Catholic Press reception to the Cardinal's speech. Father Coughlin kept his silence, but his Excellency, Michael J. Gallagher, Bishop of Detroit answered as follows: "I have no intention of interfering with Father

Coughlin. Christ was not setting class against class when he rebuked the abuse of wealth.

“Neither Pope Leo nor Pope Pius has been accused of setting class against class in their encyclicals regarding the abuse of riches and power and the rights of labor.

“Father Coughlin has said nothing stronger on these subjects than was said by Pope Leo or Pope Pius.

“To accuse him of fomenting class bitterness is to accuse the Popes and to accuse Christ of setting class against class.”

#### IV

Father Coughlin was interviewed and asked whether he would refer in his broadcast to Cardinal O’Connell’s criticism. He answered as follows: “No, you see I am a soldier in the ranks. Bishop Gallagher is my superior, and I shall do what my Bishop tells me.

“It would be egotistical for me to disclose the confidence which Bishop Gallagher has oftentimes spoken to me about my broadcasts.

“He is not only my Bishop and my inspiration, but my friend. I can simply say that he has stood behind me and encouraged me to preach the encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pope Pius XI.

“The last encyclical of Pope Pius XI (The Charity of Christ), which was printed under date of Saturday, May 21, 1932, has clarified any controversy regarding my radio sermons.

“If I have been demagogic, those who made the assertion must likewise be logical enough to accuse the head of the Catholic Church of the same shortcoming.”

Pius XI has written, “Such being the case, the same charity of Christ moves us to turn once again to you, Venerable Brethren, to the faithful in your charge, to the whole world, and to exhort all to unite, and to resist with all their might the evils that are crushing humanity and the still graver evils that are threatening.”

It is necessary to state to many thousands who do not understand that a Cardinal cannot speak as a layman and divorce himself from his robes; that the one in authority over Father Coughlin is the Ordinary, the Right Reverend Michael J. Gallagher, Bishop of Detroit, and that in the organization of the Catholic Church the great Cardinal, realizing the limitations of his authority, but

still desirous to speak to his public concerning a simple priest outside his jurisdiction, took the occasion to step out of his ecclesiastical habit and assume the role of the layman, in order to play the part of a critic.

Unfortunately for the records, many Americans could not distinguish the role being played, and the record will always show "the Cardinal" or "the Church" to have criticized and rebuked Father Coughlin. Of course, the Church never rebuked him, for in this instance the Church was his lawful superior, Bishop Gallagher. To the Bishop's everlasting credit, he stood squarely behind the actions and words of the priest of his diocese, and publicly compared his utterances to those of Christ and to those of Holy Fathers, Leo XIII and Pius XI.

## [ CHAPTER THIRTY ]

### *The Priest and His Bishop*



ALL that I am is due to my Bishop. He made me and can break me." These words of Father Coughlin's express in typical brevity his appreciation of the past and his dependence in the future upon his ecclesiastical superior, the Most Reverend Michael James Gallagher, Bishop of Detroit.

"All that I am is due to my Bishop."

Father Coughlin is never unmindful of the fact that he was in-cardinated into the Diocese of Detroit by the grace and good will of Bishop Gallagher.

Neither is he unmindful of the plain fact that he was given all the encouragement, the advice and the support in speaking from a parish pulpit to the whole world if the whole world cared to listen.

Parochial walls are high. "Lawful pastors" have geographical boundaries in which to operate.

It is believed by some that there is even jealousy at times within the priesthood.

Here in Detroit is a Bishop who apparently looks back to Christ and the Apostles, a Bishop who apparently realizes that he is a successor to an Apostle, a Bishop who recognizes, however, that when a priest is ordained he has all the power that any Bishop in the world has in the three essentials of sacrifice, preaching and blessing.

Nevertheless, when it comes to jurisdiction, the priest is limited to his parish; when it comes to publication, the priest is limited by the *imprimatur*.

Here in Detroit is a Bishop who has permitted a parish priest, Father Coughlin, to take advantage of the microphone and thereby reach the millions. The radio is new. The Bishop has given to Father Coughlin, over a period of seven years, full permission to make use of the microphone.

## THE PRIEST AND HIS BISHOP

The priest's abstract right to preach is equal in all respects to the Bishop's. Father Coughlin's permission to speak *through the microphone* was granted generously and enthusiastically by Bishop Gallagher.

Throughout the past seven years, Bishop Gallagher has stood squarely behind Father Coughlin, not only with respect to his permission to speak through the microphone, but with respect to endless hours consumed in reading the discourses, in the splendid advice and sagacious counsel given to Father over the years, and in the Bishop's steadfast refusal to listen to the many excoriating, calumniating, and vilifying attacks launched against this parish priest by representatives of the State, by politicians, bankers, ecclesiastics and laymen.

When his Eminence, William Cardinal O'Connell, viciously, insincerely and indecently leveled his attack against Father Coughlin before a Boston audience, the Bishop of Detroit calmly, serenely, but with determination answered: "I have no intention of interfering with Father Coughlin. Christ was not setting class against class when he rebuked the abuse of wealth.

"Neither Pope Leo nor Pope Pius has been accused of setting class against class in their encyclicals regarding the abuse of riches and power and the rights of labor.

"Father Coughlin has said nothing stronger on these subjects than was said by Pope Leo or Pope Pius.

"To accuse him of fomenting class bitterness is to accuse the Popes and to accuse Christ of setting class against class."

When priests representing different schools of thought criticized Father Coughlin in the columns of the Catholic press, particularly in the *Acolyte* and in the *Fortnightly Review*, Bishop Gallagher urged that full and complete answers be submitted to the editor in each instance.

When a great industrialist sent an emissary to Bishop Gallagher with the implied threat that Catholics might be refused employment unless Father Coughlin was thrown off the air, the Bishop refused to weaken or to change his attitude until one misstatement of fact was proved in the indictment which Father Coughlin launched against the principles of mass production.

When Mr. Wilson D. Mills, Chairman of the Board of the First National Bank of Detroit, approached the Bishop, remind-

ing him of the diocesan debts to the banking institution, and finally attempted to make Father Coughlin the scapegoat for the Detroit banking condition, the Bishop listened to his statement, checked the actual facts of withdrawals and permitted and encouraged Father Coughlin to continue.

When the most powerful interests in Detroit were attempting to re-establish the hopelessly insolvent great banking institutions, every power available in Detroit was commissioned to put pressure upon Bishop Gallagher to oppose the establishment of the new government bank in Detroit, as advocated by Father Coughlin.

Old friends among the bankers, distinguished and leading members of the bar, personal friends, politicians, and men high in the public trust in the State of Michigan, all centered their efforts on Bishop Gallagher to induce him to uphold the old insolvent institutions and to oppose the new clean, governmental banking structure.

The Bishop was reminded of the diocesan debt to the banking institution; he was reminded of the extent of the diocesan deposits; he was reminded emphatically that he was a stockholder (though the stock was a gift to the diocese and held in trust); he was appealed to in the name of the small depositor; he was appealed to in the name of the thousands of small merchants; every selfish and every patriotic motive was laid before him on which he could choose to stand. The facts were concealed intentionally and persistently.

In the meantime Father Coughlin was speaking over the air at the direct request of the Secretary of the Treasury, asking that in that critical moment the people of Detroit support the judgment of the Government of the United States.

To offset the influence of Father Coughlin, the bankers themselves, distinguished members of the bar, personal friends and politicians, urged Bishop Gallagher to send a representative of the Diocese of Detroit to Washington to plead with others for the rehabilitation of the old banks.

The Diocesan Attorney was named by the Bishop to represent the Diocese of Detroit. Before the train left he was recalled as the diocesan representative and as the Bishop's representative. He insisted on going in a personal capacity and as an observer only.

## THE PRIEST AND HIS BISHOP

The Bishop was definitely committed to the new bank and was misrepresented in Washington by his own Diocesan Attorney.

The Detroit *Free Press*, whose publisher was Mr. E. D. Stair, President of the Detroit Bankers Company, holding company for the largest banking group in the State of Michigan, naturally espoused openly the rehabilitation of the old banks and made full use of all the news it could create or obtain to place Bishop Gallagher squarely behind the old banks and against the new governmental institution.

Every fear the Bishop had with respect to the small business man, every fear he had on hasty liquidation of the old institutions, every fear he had that receivers would throw securities and real estate on the market was fully portrayed to the people in the columns of the *Free Press*.

The unlisted telephone number of the Bishop was passed to the *Free Press*. A reporter secured a telephonic interview on March 23, 1933. The Bishop revealed his attitude toward the old banks and to many of the directors with whom a warm friendship had existed over the years, but he added to these expressions of his attitude, an essential condition that he desired the continuance of the old banks only upon the governmental guarantee of deposits. This the *Free Press* omitted from their story; they did not directly misquote; they insufficiently quoted.

Thus, in the face of every pressure brought to bear by lifelong friends, by the money changers themselves, by their paid attorneys, by publishers, by politicians, by men pretending to represent industrialists, and by the Diocesan Attorney himself, the Bishop sought out the facts and upon the submission of the true facts concerning the Detroit banking situation, he issued the following statement under date of March 24, 1933:

I heartily approve, now, of the formation of the new National Bank of Detroit. Having received assurances that the small business man will be protected, that no reckless nor hasty program of liquidation will ruin the city, now my ideal of a reliable bank is realized.

I was insufficiently quoted in my telephone remarks last evening. What I said was not fully covered in the report of the interview.

I wanted government banking, but I wanted no ruthless liquidation of the old institutions, no throwing of securities on the market, no throwing of real estate on the market.

## FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

Frankly, I regretted to see the old banks wiped out, because they had been very accommodating in the past. But my recent approval of their continuance was conditioned upon government guarantees of deposits.

This is the fact of the matter. I had no chance to prepare a statement, but was taken by surprise by a reporter who somewhere got my private telephone number.

As I publicly stated a year ago, the only way of restoring confidence was the government guarantee of deposits, which was evidently not forthcoming.

In my "interview" last evening, this important qualification which I placed upon any judgment favorable to rehabilitating the old banks was omitted.

Without such a guarantee, I knew that the old banks could never have the confidence of the people and bring out of their hiding places the millions that had been withdrawn by the people.

I have had every faith in the administration handling this banking situation.

The government had facts that it has not revealed, to director, to stockholder, much less depositor. On the facts the government has rendered its judgment.

I congratulate the administration for establishing a truly governmental institution in Detroit. I congratulate General Motors in investing immediately and then offering the people all their stock. I commend to the confidence of the people this new National Bank of Detroit.

On the Sunday following, March 26, 1933, Father Coughlin indicted Mr. E. D. Stair, banker-publisher, President of the Detroit Bankers Company, Publisher of the *Detroit Free Press*, the one man whose business it was to know the true condition of his banking companies, including the holding company, of which he was President, the banking members of the group, their affiliates, the subsidiaries, and incidental corporations attached thereto.

Bishop Gallagher was interviewed on Monday, March 27. The interview appears in the *Free Press* of March 28 as follows: "Bishop Gallagher Defends Old Banks, Blames R. F. C."

Father Coughlin made serious charges against some of the Detroit bankers.

As this address was written Saturday night, after 10 o'clock, I was not aware of its contents. He has acted the part of a prosecuting attorney and made his charges vigorously.

He claims to have the proofs, but has not yet produced them.

## THE PRIEST AND HIS BISHOP

Personally, I have always had the greatest confidence in the integrity of our Detroit bankers, as is shown by the fact that I withdrew no funds from the banks, other than those necessary in the ordinary course of business. As yet, I have had no reason to change my attitude.

I cannot conceive of any banker deliberately wrecking his own institution, and I never could believe that any of them would try to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor, or intentionally bring disgrace upon the financial institutions of our city.

If our bankers, in the boom days, loaned money on real estate mortgages, not foreseeing the depression, their judgments were not different from hundreds of thousands of the rest of us, who had the same idea of the permanence of prosperity. Therefore, they cannot be accused of dishonesty, when they fall into an error which is common to us all.

It is true that the Diocese of Detroit had borrowed considerable sums from these various banks before the mergers, but, although the material property has depreciated, nevertheless the churches and schools erected are just as useful and valuable to us as when they were constructed, and as soon as the industries open up, these debts will gladly be paid to the last dollar.

Needless to say, we are everlastingly grateful to our bankers for enabling us to build churches and schools in some sixty parishes to provide for the large influx of Catholics seeking work in the automobile industry. For this reason we would infinitely prefer to continue business with the men whom we know, and who understand our situation, than with total strangers.

I had hoped that it might be possible to re-establish these banks with Federal aid, so that the process of liquidation might be orderly and not injurious to the patrons of the banks.

If the R. F. C. had given fifty million dollars to save our banks, it would have been money saved for the United States.

The loss of confidence resulting from this lack of help caused the closing of all of the banks in the United States, and, consequently, a loss to business industry of untold millions.

With these investments in our banks, the Government would have such a control that it could supervise the conduct of banking, so the deposits would be safe, and we would have Government guarantee, as we have in our new bank. I regret the abolition of these old banks and hope that the Government will see its way to re-establish from their ruins a new Government guaranteed bank.

It must be understood that when Father Coughlin discusses the banking situation, he is not speaking for the Catholic Church and his opinions are only as good as his arguments.

Note this statement of Bishop Gallagher's. Reread it if you will, compare it with his formal statement of March 24, three days before he had commended the new bank to the people. He had done this in a formal statement sent to each of the Detroit papers.

Now the *Free Press* interviews him. He has already told the people that the confidence in the old banks is gone and that it can never be redeemed without the guarantee of bank deposits. He had made this statement a year before. Now the *Free Press* puts him in a position of still defending the old banks.

An editor whose week's work was unproductive in establishing a single charge against Father Coughlin was now starting to use the Bishop against his priest in an effort to destroy that priest.

This entire incident was actually closed three days before this new story by the establishment of a Government bank fully endorsed by Bishop Gallagher.

The people through Father Coughlin had won their battle.

The National Bank of Detroit, the first governmental banking institution in our history controlled by the United States Government, was established. The First National Bank and the Guardian National, the old banks, were not to be rehabilitated out of the taxpayers' money.

The *Free Press* had lost the battle and saw in Bishop Gallagher the one opportunity to destroy Father Coughlin. They secured an interview after every banker, lawyer, personal friend, politician, priest, and propagandist, who were available for such work, had been sent to the Bishop to poison his mind, to threaten him with financial loss, to deny Father Coughlin's charges, to promise endless exposures, to suggest legal proceedings, court actions, and public scandal if Father Coughlin were permitted to continue his broadcast.

The Detroit *Free Press* sent its representative, Mr. William C. Richards, for an interview with Bishop Gallagher on Wednesday, March 29, 1933.

Mr. Richards met the Bishop in the Chancellor's office. Bishop Gallagher definitely and positively refused to be interviewed by a representative of the *Free Press*. His words had already been twisted, his meaning distorted, and he had been insufficiently quoted in the preceding few days.

## THE PRIEST AND HIS BISHOP

Mr. Richards is an experienced newspaper man. He thoroughly understood that there was no interview being granted. He understood perfectly that the Bishop was talking "off the record." Mr. Richards asked directly whether Bishop Gallagher thought E. D. Stair was dishonest. The Bishop was asked if he knew Mr. Stair personally, he was asked what he thought concerning personal attacks on individuals. He was engaging in a personal conversation explicitly declared to be not for publication and "off the record."

The Bishop was asked concerning the stock investments. He said that he had not studied them and knew nothing about them.

From this moment on the Bishop launched into a defense of Father Coughlin—on the expenses of the Shrine, on the radio expenses, on travel, on hard work, and the justice of personal rewards, on his right to defend himself over the radio, and the personal conversation concluded with a reiteration that it was not for publication. Mr. Richards left.

The facts of the interview come from Bishop Gallagher himself. The "interview" comes from the *Detroit Free Press*. Unquestionably the *Free Press* violated every tradition of honor and integrity when it made use of the material conveyed to it under the sharp and prejudicial questions of an experienced *Free Press* man. The Bishop in the interview had defended Father Coughlin. Naturally, he did not give an employee that which was an undeserved answer to a prejudicial question, namely, what do you think of Mr. Stair, is he dishonest?

In justice to Mr. Richards it may be assumed that in reporting to the *Free Press* he relayed Bishop Gallagher's order not to publish.

The following is the verbatim report of an "off the record" interview granted Mr. William C. Richards from the *Detroit Free Press*, Thursday, March 30, 1933, under the heads, "Bishop Declares Charges Made by Father Coughlin are 'Unthinkable,'" "His Excellency Asserts that He Can't Condone Personal Radio Attacks," "Thrust at Watkins Is Held Ill-Advised," "Prelate Refuses to Say If He Will Limit Air Talks."

The Most Reverend Michael J. Gallagher, Bishop of the Catholic diocese, was asked Wednesday: "Do you believe the charges made by the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin against Edward D. Stair, publisher of the *Free Press*?"

## FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

"I do not," he said. "They are unthinkable."

"Do you know Mr. Stair personally?"

"I do not, but during my years in Detroit I have had every assurance of his integrity from many competent sources. Only this morning when Mr. Watkins' delegation came back from Washington, one of the members of the group in whom I have the fullest confidence told me again that Father Coughlin's attack on Mr. Stair could not possibly stand up."

"What do you think of the attack on Mr. Watkins?"

"I think it was tremendously ill-advised for Father Coughlin to assume that because Commissioner Watkins owned a nominal number of bank shares, this made him ineligible to speak for many small depositors in the Police Department who naturally look to him to speak for them."

The Bishop said that he had not had time to study the account of Father Coughlin's dealings in Kelsey Wheel and Packard Motor Car stock.

"As far as I went into them I could not see, however, where the priest had done anything particularly sinful. When a man has a wife or children to take care of that is where his money belongs. Father Coughlin has no such charges.

"If he wanted to put money into the market, he is not unlike thousands of others who had the same craving back in 1928 and 1929. I see by one of the newspapers that he, like other people, lost money, and he says it taught him a lesson. A lot of other people learned a lesson."

The Bishop said that he took issue with any charge that the priest's market operations diverted funds from the purpose for which they were intended when the money was sent to Father Coughlin by his devotees.

"I don't think all the money sent to Father Coughlin is intended for charitable uses," he said. "People realize that it costs money to keep the Shrine of the Little Flower radio going. I suppose it costs more than \$200,000 a year. Easily that.

"It costs Father Coughlin to go here, there and the other place. He has to pay his way. For a man who works as hard as he does, moreover, I see nothing wrong in some of the money going to him personally as extra reward for extra hard work."

The Bishop refused to say whether he would limit Father Coughlin's radio activities.

"One thing I cannot condone is personal attacks against individuals over the air," he said. "I thought there was some kind of law against it. If there isn't such a Federal law, there ought to be."

The Bishop said that he had no intention of denying "Father Coughlin's inalienable right" to answer the charges brought against him.

"No one can take that right from him," the Bishop said. "Personally I regret the whole occurrence. In my years in the diocese, as I told Father

## THE PRIEST AND HIS BISHOP

Coughlin many months ago, the Catholic Church has found the bankers most considerate.

"Today I cannot believe there is fraud. I can only believe that they, like great numbers of people, are victims in great measure of the excessive confidence that all of us felt four years ago."

While Bishop Gallagher talked informally and said that he would have no formal statement to make at this time, one of the priests of his diocese, the Reverend Father Stephen A. Wittliff, the director of the diocesan apostolate, outlined graphically the law of the church in such cases as that of Father Coughlin.

This interview revealed one important fact. The Diocesan Attorney is, of course, the "one member of the group who joined Mr. Watkins' delegation to Washington."

He returned to explain to the Bishop how Father Coughlin's charges against Mr. Stair "could not possibly stand up." The Bishop's attitude was a natural attitude when understood. He consistently defended Father Coughlin, but it was not his place to make the charges himself. He had reasons to be friendly to many of the old bankers, he had reasons likewise to be impressed by the hoard of bankers, publishers, politicians, lawyers and advisers, some in the pay of the banks, some in the pay of Mr. Stair's corporations, some with past banking activities to defend, most of them stockholders, all of them selfishly interested in hiding the true condition of the old banks.

The Bishop's attitude was precisely what it should be to defend the priest, while awaiting proof of downright dishonesty on the part of the bankers.

Thus the public was led to believe that a break had occurred between Father Coughlin and the Bishop of Detroit.

The truth was that a series of circumstances had changed the normal procedure with respect to this particular discourse entitled, "From the Ashes We Shall Rise Again," the discourse in which Mr. Stair was exposed. This discourse was delivered on Sunday, March 26, 1933. The material for this sermon was naturally difficult to obtain from unquestioned and authentic sources, and was not completely secured till Friday evening. Father planned to write his discourse Saturday. Parochial duties compelled Father Coughlin to devote nearly all his time Saturday to other things. By evening, he had outlined his proposed re-

marks. He called his Bishop and told him that he had not completed his discourse and would not be down to see him.

There was always complete understanding between the Bishop and Father Coughlin that Father had the right to preach without the approval of the Bishop. He had, however, no right to publish the sermon, without the *imprimatur* of the Bishop. Consequently, he preached the discourse that he completed and revised immediately before speaking Sunday afternoon.

Before printing, of course, Father Coughlin submitted the discourse to the Bishop. It received the *imprimatur*.

Despite all the activities of the *Free Press*, despite slander and libel, altered documents, innuendo and insinuation, despite the rehash of Cardinal O'Connell's attack and the sermons and writings of priests, despite the "increase of civilities to the whole body," the misquoting, insufficient quoting, and unethical quoting of Bishop Gallagher, the *Free Press* failed—failed to drive its wedge between the priest and his Bishop.

Bishop Gallagher gave the *imprimatur* and thereby said to the whole world concerning the discourse of Father Coughlin, "Let it be printed."

On many occasions I have observed Father Coughlin presenting his discourses to Bishop Gallagher.

Knowing his enthusiastic love of the truth, and his deep interest in the radio programs, it was "unthinkable" to me that Bishop Gallagher could give the *Free Press* the interview it claimed.

His public statement of March 24 refutes his "interview" of March 23. The one comes from the "lying pen of the scribe" who did not tell the whole truth, but quoted insufficiently. The refutation came from the Bishop of Detroit.

On the next occasion, the *Free Press* has the Bishop still defending the old banks in the face of his complete and published endorsement of the new Government bank.

In the third instance, a complete defense of Father Coughlin, given informally and "off the record" with a complete and thorough understanding that there would be no interview used, is made into a vicious refutation and denunciation of the Priest of the Radio.

At one time I thought, on reading the *Free Press*, that the Bishop had weakened under the pressure of bankers, life-long

friends, of lawyers, politicians, public office holders, personal friends, and diocesan counsel. It was an uncharitable thought.

The Bishop stood fast, and was only a victim of a frenzied and unscrupulous banker-publisher.

Because of the wide publicity given Father Coughlin and his Bishop, I wanted just one man to introduce this volume. It needs no *imprimatur*. However, the Bishop of Detroit is the ideal man to introduce the story of the life and work of a priest under his jurisdiction. It would be a manifest injustice to ask Bishop Gallagher to introduce this volume were not these chapters that concern him read in their entirety to him.

On May 22, 1933, the true story of the priest and his Bishop was completed. I read this chapter to him. I also read the chapter entitled "The *Free Press* and Father Coughlin." I read other chapters and outlined the rest of the book to him.

I asked him if he would write an introduction. He agreed to do so and an outline was prepared. He was dissatisfied with it. He delayed an entire week and then contributed the strongest introduction that the most ardent admirer of the Reverend Charles E. Coughlin could expect.

The introduction to this volume should for all times silence the pens of those who, desperate to destroy the priest, attempted to set the mind of Bishop Gallagher against him. Never in the seven years of Father Coughlin's radio career has Bishop Gallagher refused an *imprimatur* or failed to support Father Coughlin.

A lying scribe, seeking to drive the wedge between the priest and his Bishop, influenced temporarily thousands of minds to believe there had been a breach.

*The Response of the Clergy*

IN writing any record of Father Coughlin's activities, no one in honesty can avoid the impression that many priests resented the fact that a churchman from a small parish was gaining an audience the length and breadth of the nation.

The author has heard a hundred criticisms directed against Father Coughlin "stepping out of the true place of the priest" to talk on economics in any of its phases, but the author has read the letters of four hundred and forty-nine members of the clergy which were contained in a single portfolio, received within a short few months of time.

These are letters of highest commendation, letters congratulating Father Coughlin for the propagation of the faith throughout the United States, praising him, particularly, for the great good he has done in the Southland, pointing out the practical elimination of bigotry in many a small town, telling him that his courage was akin to that of Chrysostom.

This single file of four hundred and forty-nine letters, commenting on two particular broadcasts, represented seventeen religious groups, predominant among which were the Franciscans, the Carmelites, the Basilians, the Jesuits, the Dominicans and the Paulists.

One missionary sent in his last dollar. Parish priests in many states simply said in varying language something to this effect: "I thought it would encourage you in your work to know that I received two converts today, who told me frankly that their introduction to the Church was by way of your radio addresses."

There are other letters that say in effect: "I have heard you abused so much by the priests that I thought I would write you a note telling you that I for one believe you are doing a great work for the Church in this country of ours."

The record shows that over ninety-nine percent of the priests

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who write in, write letters of high commendation and pray for the success of the work of the Shrine.

For the non-Catholic interested in the Church, Father Coughlin invariably recommends instruction by any priest available to the convert.

He does not expect that his personality will be pleasing, his method acceptable, or his popularity approved by all of his brethren of the clergy. He rejoices in the words of praise so many of them have given his effort, but appreciates far more their prayers for the success of the work.

A letter such as the following is a joy to his heart, for it represents the coöperation of the brother priest in the winning of souls:

*Reverend dear Father:*

It must be a pleasure for you to receive letters of appreciation from your many listeners, since it is a sign that the good seed is being received with joy. But just as in the gospel narrative, the seed at times bears no fruit, not because of any defect of the seed, but of the heart receiving it, but if you are assured of actual fruit, a real conversion, the return of a sheep that had strayed—that is a consolation the priestly heart seeks. And of one such I wish to tell you briefly.

After your sermon last Sunday a person came to confession to me. A few days later he returned and told me it was your sermon that gave him the courage. I was also given permission to inform you of it, for your consolation.

For seven years unworthy confessions once a week, and unworthy Holy Communions daily—and now a humble contrite confession.

Though I have full permission to speak I will say no more. It is not necessary. Your priestly heart understands and I wish it to rejoice with me. It is the Good Shepherd Who brings back the sheep, but it must be gratifying to you to know He chose your words to call the erring one.

I did not hear your sermon myself, since I was visiting the sick just then. I would, therefore, appreciate your sending me a copy of the sermon for myself and another for this soul converted by means of it.

God bless your work for souls!

In recent months a great change has taken place in the attitude of the clergy toward Father Coughlin. Many, who formerly protested that the priest was stepping out of his "character" and talking on the economic conditions of the day, are writing in their comments to the effect that when all is said and done, a discourse

on the Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal" has little practical use in this world of ours unless one points out what theft today is, what the right of property is, and how the Commandment is being violated in the market place, on the "street," in the banks, by usurers, by internationalists, by industry and commerce, by unjust taxation, and the host of methods and means by which man robs his fellowman of his own substantial goods.

Others of the clergy, with their interests wholeheartedly bound up in the Catholic educational system, are realizing that there is a relationship between the principle of Catholic education of the child and the Catholic education of the adult. If the child should have the truths of revealed religion intertwined with all the content of the educational process, so should the priests enthuse over the Church's teaching of moral principles intertwined with adult minds in their wealth-getting and wealth-expending activities.

It is useless, they say, to permit moral and religious training to remain in its academic stage in the parochial school and not have its application in the market place, where men need to have pointed out to them the corollaries, deductions and applications of Catholic teaching in their daily economic lives.

A number of the Bishops have from time to time encouraged the Right Reverend Michael J. Gallagher in his cooperation with Father Coughlin. These Bishops recognize the great following Father Coughlin has throughout America; they recognize likewise the good work he has done, and, when criticism arises to bring to an end the radio career of this unusual priest, this same group of Bishops are prompt to sense what they consider a recurring danger in shutting off the one popular source of Catholic doctrine on the moral-economic issue.

They have consistently urged Bishop Gallagher to stand steadfastly behind Father Coughlin's efforts for the good of the faith and the country. Bishop Gallagher has been kind enough to show me some of these letters, which reveal the recognition on the part of at least a small group of the Bishops—a recognition that one priest is carrying out to the letter the instructions of Leo XIII and Pius XI.

Father Coughlin's great influence on the priesthood is naturally upon the young priests. Hundreds of students in the seminaries and hundreds of young priests throughout the country rejoice in

## THE RESPONSE OF THE CLERGY

Father Coughlin's ministry. They write to Father Coughlin telling him that his discourses alone have inspired them to great efforts. They tell him frankly that in their minds he is the ideal priest and that in many ways his record is truly remarkable.

With a love of athletics from boyhood to the present day, he has yet to take up a golf stick, although a member, by courtesy, of one of the finest golf clubs in America.

In a day when the pulpit is suffering because of the unprepared sermon, he actually practices the reading of each epistle and gospel rather than standing before his congregation with the assumption that he knew the content too well to waste time in preparation.

He prepares not only the Sunday sermon, delivered frequently at each of the six Masses, but, for example, he preached at the thirty-one evening devotions through the month of May, 1933.

He says an early morning Mass, reads his office, and is at work promptly at eight-thirty o'clock at his desk in the Tower. He shuts himself off from the telephone, except for sick calls and important engagements that have to do with his principal activities.

Two evenings a week, Tuesday and Thursday, he sets aside solely for calls from his parishioners. He allows himself one hour for lunch and approximately two hours for dinner. At seven-thirty in the evening, during at least three months in the year, he conducts services.

He also conducts three novenas a year; the novena to the Holy Ghost ending with Pentecost, the novena to the Little Flower ending May 17, and a second novena to the Little Flower ending October 3.

He never neglects the confessional.

He prepares a special sermon every Sunday in the year to the little children, and is their devoted patron at the holidays, at the May festival when the True Queen is crowned, and on some summer day, as for example, once when thirty thousand children were assembled at a single party. He spends many hours in the attempt to provide work for his parishioners. His welfare work under God's Poor Society is described in another chapter.

I have estimated that during the past year, Father Coughlin has spent nearly three thousand hours at his desk and in his church, wholly aside from any preparatory work on his discourses. Over and above these hours, are the endless ones spent at night in his

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home in study, in contacts, in writing and creating the thoughts that are sent over the ether wave. At eight-thirty in the evening he resumes work and retires between one and four o'clock in the morning.

He actually crowds into a single month more activity than many of the clergy devote to their ministry in an entire year.

His ministry, he frankly states, is nine-tenths "perspiration" and one-tenth inspiration. He believes thoroughly in the principle that the quantitative is one road to the qualitative; that the more things he has to do the better he does each one of them.

This is one of the reasons why that great American university, Notre Dame, which has had a profound influence on the priesthood of America, chose him to deliver the Baccalaureate sermon in June, 1933. His work finds appreciated recognition as this same great university grants him the honorary degree, Doctor of Laws, in 1933. This particular response of the clergy is cherished at a time when many lesser minds have concentrated in an attack on his ministry.

PART VII—PREACHING CHRIST  
AND HIM CRUCIFIED



*The Passion and the Resurrection*



ASK a thousand men anywhere in America concerning the content of Father Coughlin's discourses, and well over nine hundred will tell you that these discourses concern the economic and the social phases of life.

No true interpretation of the work of Father Coughlin could be written without giving full credit to the preparation and delivery of the most complete, authoritative and impassioned sermons on Christ Himself that are to be heard from the American pulpit.

Father Coughlin loves the life of Christ, loves to devote hundreds of hours a year to the four gospels and to the works of many commentators.

He loves to harmonize the gospels, to read and reread them and their interpreters, that he may bring to the minds of his congregation in his little parish church, and to the minds of the millions who hear him on the air, that intimate, personal, sympathetic and loving understanding of the Central Figure of this world's history, before Whom all was preparatory and after Whom all is slow fulfillment.

In preaching the passion of Christ, Father Coughlin, in 1933, adopted a strictly historical presentation, calling the days with their momentous events—Sunday, the triumphant entrance into Jerusalem; Monday, the driving out of the money-changers; Tuesday, the biting, damning excoriation; the eight vehement apostrophies, in which he pronounces maledictions upon the exploiters, the cowardly leaders who hear the law of God and live it not. Wednesday—the day spent in teaching the apostles and the disciples—Thursday, the feast day of the Passover, the day of the institution of the Eucharist—Good Friday, the day of the sorrowful death.

Every principal event of each day is recorded and interpreted in

imagery so beautiful and description so correct that the millions followed Christ, reliving the tremendous drama from the first moment of His triumphant entry into Jerusalem until Joseph's tomb is opened to receive Him.

On the following Sunday, Easter, Father Coughlin preached his sermon on the Resurrection, continuing in dramatic, historical manner, the events of Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday.

The protection of the tomb, the precautions against perjury, the clear, historical record, with the meaning and the import of the Resurrection, all are portrayed as Father Coughlin leads his audience to the door of the tomb to witness the reception of Mary Magdalen, Mary the mother of James the Less, Salome and Joanna.

Then the transcendent miracle of all! But read—read in Father's own words two of the most remarkable sermons this nation ever heard.

I  
COULDST THOU NOT WATCH  
ONE HOUR WITH ME!

*Broadcast April 9, 1933*

On this solemn occasion, when the minds even of indifferent men are concerned with the passion of Jesus Christ, I thought it most appropriate to outline in a brief manner the true biblical facts, and in their proper order, which were enacted during the first Holy Week.

During this Holy Year, which will be occupied with commemorating the events of the original Holy Week, you will hear from time to time explanations describing each scene in the drama of Christ's Passion. It begins specifically with Christ's entrance into Jerusalem and ends with His glorious resurrection from the dead. Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday!

At the outset I can recommend to your reading no better volume than Fillion's "Life of Christ." It is complete, accurate, easily understandable and approved by the best biblical scholars both inside and outside the Catholic Church.

PALM SUNDAY

Reverently we shall unfold these events by beginning with the first day of Holy Week—Palm Sunday.

Christ is sojourning at a little town named Bethania. It is the season of the feast of the Passover. Great crowds from every section of Palestine are

## THE PASSION AND THE RESURRECTION

gathering at Jerusalem. The majority of these folks have heard of Jesus. For three years the news of His many miracles and of His new Gospel have been carried into practically every town and hamlet of the Holy Land. Well did the Master know that His earthly days were coming to a close. Now it was time for Him to make manifest His full identity.

Already the people knew Him as man. Was He not the Nazarene carpenter? Already they recognized Him as a great prophet, as a great wonder-worker. Had they not listened to the sermon on the mount and heard of the multiplication of the loaves? But as yet He had not publicly disclosed to His admirers and followers the full proof that He is both the Messiah and the Saviour, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Therefore, taking advantage of the festal day when a cosmopolitan crowd gathered in and about Jerusalem, Christ decides that this is the proper time to demonstrate that He is the Messiah, the King, under Whose leadership the people at large will be rescued from bondage.

Sometime previous to this feast of Palm Sunday, Christ had refused an enthusiastic multitude the privilege of crowning Him as king. That was owing to the false idea which the majority of the Jewish people had entertained. Many thought that Christ's kingship was of this world, one of sword and conquest, one where might was right. Moreover, because His hour had not yet come, it was inopportune to antagonize His enemies.

Now, however, the hour had come!

It was the afternoon of the first day of the week. To His disciples He gave a peculiar order—the first of its kind that He had ever given. Go ye into the village that is over against you, and immediately at your coming in thither, you shall find an ass tied and a colt with her, upon which no man yet hath sat. Loose him and bring him hither. And if any man shall say to you, What are you doing? say ye that the Lord hath need of him, and will immediately send him back hither."

These words are remarkable because of the tone of authority which they exhibit. Here Jesus appears as the Messiah Who by virtue of that title exercises the right of commandeering, the right of requisition over His people's material possessions. Indeed He is the King.

The order was fulfilled. Thus, mounted upon this beast of burden, unlike an earthly king who would have chosen a mighty charger; surrounded by His disciples and the pastoral people of Judea instead of by princes and by sword-bearing soldiers, the procession begins. It wends its way toward the Holy City. Garments are spread on the roadway. Palm branches are strewn before Him. The voices of the multitude are raised in shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" It was a twofold exclamation prophetically spoken.

The "Hosanna to the Son of David!" is equivalent to "Long live the

King, our ruler!" or "Hail to the Messiah!" The "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" is a confession in the divinity of Jesus Christ. Here is the Son of God.

There are two instances which cast a passing cloud of sadness over this glorious procession of triumph.

From the earliest days of our Lord's public life, we constantly meet the Pharisees dogging His footsteps, engaged in spying on Him, "tempting" Him, accusing Him. Today, these enemies were active. Jealousy and hatred had drawn many of them to this demonstration, the like of which had never occurred in or near Jerusalem. Here was proof, thought they, that Christ's popularity among the people was more than a passing fancy.

"Do you see," they said to one another, "that we prevail nothing? Behold, the whole world is gone after Him. Why have we not been more energetic in destroying this Jesus even from the outset?"

Another Pharisee, wishing to dampen the enthusiastic ardor of the vociferous demonstration, approached the Christ with the request: "Master, rebuke Thy disciples."

They intimated that this manifestation of joy and gladness was vulgar and informal.

Christ's own reply to these intriguers was: "I say to you, that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out."

And so the procession moves on until the city itself came into view.

As Jesus beheld the proud temple, the gaily colored roofs, He recalled the history of Jerusalem. In the past it was a most loving history on God's part; at present it was a history mostly composed of ingratitude and unbelief; in the future it would be a story of the terrible but just reprisals of heaven, the story of Titus who forty years later would encamp outside the walls of Jerusalem as he prepared to destroy it.

No wonder, then, that the Master wept and paused almost in his triumphal march to exclaim, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace; but now they are hidden from thy eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee and compass thee round and straiten thee on every side and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee; and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation."

Wiping the tears from His eyes, tears which the joyous, laughing throng most likely had not perceived, the triumphal march is resumed. The ranks of the procession are augmented. The Hosannas and shouts of jubilation are swelling. All Jerusalem has acclaimed Him!

Christ Whose kingdom is not of this world has made His triumphal entrance into the City of David. He is the new King, the Prince of Peace,

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Whose doctrines are designed to captivate every human heart, to encompass every land. He is the Christ Who cometh in the name of the Lord, Jesus, the Son of God.

### MONDAY OF HOLY WEEK

When the sun had set Christ retired to the town of Bethania, there to spend the night in rest and in prayer. Early Monday morning He again sets out with His Apostles to visit Jerusalem. As yet He had eaten nothing. Coming to a fig tree whose leaves were green, Christ perceived that it bore no fruit.

Momentarily He paused to remark: "May no man hereafter eat fruit of thee any more forever."

Such a malediction against the fig tree would be hard to explain unless we understood it in its symbolic sense. It is this: Many cities and nations resemble the barren fig tree. They are glorious in their material achievements. Magnificent buildings, external pomp and proud wealth. These resemble the foliage.

What profit all this if, like Jerusalem of old, these cities reject the word of God and bear no lasting fruit which neither death nor time can destroy. These are the cities against whom the malediction of the Lord was directed when He cursed the barren fig tree.

As He enters the city this second time His heart must have been sorely crushed as He beheld the depths to which the people had fallen. There was poverty in the midst of plenty. There were evidences of a selfish, a negligent, a debased priesthood. See the merchants who sold beasts and birds intended for sacrifice—selling them in the very court of the temple. Behold the abuses which have grown around the religion of God! Bankers and money changers are clustered around their little tables counting coins instead of counting prayers. Traffickers exacting usurious rates from pilgrims in need of their services. Monday of Holy Week!

Once again, therefore, by an impressive act of authority, Jesus asserts Himself as the militant Messiah. With holy indignation He began to drive out buyers and sellers, animals and people from the house of God which they were defaming. Who dare stand in His way? He overturns the tables of the money changers and spills their filthy gold and silver upon the pavements. No cringing Christ is He!

What cared He for the piercing eyes of Annas and Caiphas and the high priests who protest against His actions! They dare not resist Him. All yield to the dominance of His irresistible will. All flee like skulking cowards before the scourge which He flayed in their faces. The walls of the Temple shall not house lily-livered scoundrels who bow in reverence before the god of gold.

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“Is it not written: ‘My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations? But you have made it a den of thieves.’”

What a dramatic moment! A house destined for public worship, for the preaching of God’s justice, for the altar of God’s sacrifice, perverted to the worship of gold and commercialism and to the philosophy of greed. A cowardly priesthood defending the gold traffic, the impounding of usury while their people starved and sorrowed.

Thus, without their daring to resist or even protest, was enacted this avenging scene. Outside the Temple gates the money changers began to gather in groups to plot against Christ’s life. They will first destroy His influence by maligning Him. They will resurrect their idol of injustice and of gold even at the cost of His life.

Monday of Holy Week, when Christ signed His death warrant by entering into combat with the powers of evil, of compromise and of cowardice!

Following this impressive episode there occurred two incidents of a wholly different nature, exemplifying the Saviour’s kindness of heart. As He left the Temple He beheld the cripples, the unfortunates who begged alms at the gates. These He cured. Then some little children, so the Gospels tell us, gathered about their Hero and raised their little voices to re-echo “Hosanna to the Son of David!” through the porticos of the Temple.

A spokesman for the Pharisees approached Him and said “Hearst Thou what these say?”

His question inferred: “Do you not notice that these children speak of you as though you were the Divine Messias; and will you tolerate such a blasphemy? Are you not going to silence these children, who know not what they say?” Christ replied: “Yea”; but He asked the Pharisees: “Have you never read: Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?”

Both the question of the Pharisee and the answer of the Christ indicate the conflict of the ages that is about to come. If Christ will escape the violence of Pharisees, He must forbid the children of the world regarding Him as their God, their Defender. He must not interfere in the game of the money changers!

For the rest of that day the people enthusiastically followed their Jesus Who taught them and mingled amongst them. And when eventide had come He again withdrew to Bethania, there to rest and pray, there to prepare for Tuesday’s work.

## TUESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

As Christ prayed and wept, His enemies were active. Four different groups of them met in the darkness of night to form plans which must

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assuredly issue in His crushing defeat. They would attack Him one after the other—members of the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees, the Herodians, and the Sadducees. They would lay clever snares for Him in such wise as to compromise Him before His countrymen and before the Romans while they waited for a chance to seize Him and put Him to death.

Early Tuesday morning Christ came into Jerusalem. What a day this was for Him! It was the last day of His active ministry, the last that He spent in the Temple engaged in the work of teaching. It was a day of conflict, a day of prophecy; a day filled with hate and with intrigue.

First a delegation of the Sanhedrin made up of several of the chief priests, lawyers and notables came upon the Master unexpectedly. The Sanhedrin, by the way, was composed of the seventy-one Priests and notables, who ruled over the local destinies of the Jews.

Christ is teaching before the portico of the Temple. Making a way through the crowds which surrounded Him, the spokesman of this committee confronted the Master and said: "By what authority dost Thou these things? and who hath given Thee this authority that Thou shouldst do these things?" As if he said: "Why are you teaching the people these strange truths? Why are you not content to say your prayers and perform your liturgical duties instead of mingling religion into politics? Tell me the authority which permits such an outrage."

The strife was thus begun upon a point of capital importance. The authority of the Messiah, the Leader of the people, is questioned. The heresy of the ages is being revived. It is bad enough for Christ to claim that He is the Son of God; worse for Him to assume the authority of teaching truth to the down-trodden and justice to the oppressed.

Of course, Jesus did not reply directly to their question, so clearly hostile was their purpose. He merely said to them with wonderful calmness and appropriateness: "I also will ask you one word, which if you shall tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or from men?" This amounted to asking: Was John the Baptist a prophet or an imposter? These few words thwarted the maneuver of the adversaries. The dilemma that Christ put to them was unanswerable. To acknowledge the divinity of John's mission would be to admit that our Lord's mission was also divine. To deny the divinity of John's mission would be tantamount to invite physical violence from the throng gathered about the Messiah.

As to be expected, these Pharisees withheld the truth and said: "We know not."

What a stupid, weaseling subterfuge! By declaring themselves unable to judge the nature of the Baptist's ministry, they also showed themselves incapable of passing judgment on the origin of the Saviour's mission, or of

comprehending the authority by which He preached the Gospel of justice and of charity to the poor.

Now that these men were present and had openly entered the fray, now that He had confounded them, Jesus took the offensive and flayed them before the public with parables.

"There was a man, a householder who planted a vineyard and made a hedge round about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a strange country, for a long time.

"And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant to receive of the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. Who having laid hands on him, beat him and sent him away empty. And again he sent to them another servant; and him they wounded in the head, and used him reproachfully. And again he sent another, and him they killed; and many others, of whom some they beat, and others they killed. Therefore, having yet one son, most dear to him, he also sent him unto them last of all, saying: They will reverence my son. But the husbandmen said one to another: This is the heir; come let us kill him; and the inheritance shall be ours. And laying hold on him, they killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard."

What a castigation of the false leadership which had characterized the history of these high priests of Judea for ages! Kings and priests and doctors of the law had been faithless to their mission. How long had they exploited the people! How often had they murdered the prophets and those who protested against this thing.

History is to be repeated. These very men who stand before Him are the ones who are preparing to kill the Son and the Heir Who had come into their midst to protect the poor, down-trodden citizens!

With this and other parables the members of the Sanhedrin and the Pharisees are discomfited.

Next come the Herodians to catch Him in His speech—the Herodians, the ultra-nationalists, whose only god was the god of the state; whose only religion was the religion of party politics.

Thus, wishing to embarrass the Master before the throng, one of these Pharisee-Herodians held up a coin before Him as he asked the question whether or not it is lawful to render tribute to Cæsar; a question which was tantamount to this: "If you are a good Jew, are you willing to rebel against the Romans and refuse them the taxation which they impose upon us?"

Christ was not at all deceived by their hypocritical maneuver. "Why do you tempt Me?" said He. "Show Me the coin of the tribute."

After a silver denarius was handed to Him, Christ looked at it and said: "Whose image and inscription is this?"

A young Pharisee said: "Cæsar's."

"Taking the Pharisee's reply for His starting point, the Divine Master

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gave one of His most profound decisions, a saying pregnant with happy consequences, when followed in practice: "Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and to God, the things that are God's."

Christ was no communist. He stood not for anarchy but for law; not for atheism but for religion. A religion which by its principles protects the state; a religion which by its principles must find entrance into the affairs of State.

Next came the Sadducees to tempt Him.

The Sadducees were a sect who did not bother much about the sacred teachings of Judaism. They denied both the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body.

The Master made short shrift of their heresy by quoting from the very Scriptures which they followed, quoting certain proof for the immortality of the soul.

Next they asked Him which is the greatest Commandment in the law—a law that they had reduced to three-hundred sixty five negative prohibitions and two hundred forty-eight positive mandates.

Here was the opportunity for Christ to explain once and for all, both for Jew and for Christian, the sum total of all law—the law which bids farewell to slavery; a law before which every other human enactment must become obsolete; a law which first must be obeyed lest every other law become a vice.

Hear Him as He speaks this *magna charta* of morality, of justice and of charity: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength. This is the greatest and the first Commandment. And the second is like unto this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Confounding His questioner, Christ quotes from the Old Testament, from the Book of Leviticus, to emphasize that His religion cannot comprehend how a man can love His God without loving his neighbor—even though that neighbor be a Samaritan, an outcast.

Thus was Tuesday morning of Holy Week occupied by Jesus Christ in warding off the cowardly thrusts of those who were too dishonest to find wherein they could argue with Him. Their only object was to discover where they could catch Him in His speech. They argued against the truths that He spoke and the authority with which He spoke them by the ancient subterfuge of vituperation and cunning.

Tuesday afternoon and evening of this Holy Week shall never be forgotten. Christ realized that it was impossible for Him to soften the hearts of these treacherous men. Every hope of leading them to better dispositions was now lost.

Now, it was important this Tuesday afternoon to put the disciples and

the multitudes on their guard against the godlessness of their sinful leaders. With courage that is unsurpassed in the annals of history, the defenseless Jesus Christ seals His death warrant on this Holy Tuesday afternoon as He launches into the most biting, damning excoriation of the Pharisees that was ever uttered. If He had lashed them out of the Temple with the scourge of His girdle He now lashes them into hell with the whip of His tongue. Why be silent in the face of so much suffering. Why fail to point the finger at those whose politics bred poverty, multiplied injustice, and enslaved His Own brothers? Silence, thought He, was criminal!

The discourse begins thus: "The scribes and the Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do; but according to their works, do you not; for they say, and do not."

Thus, fortifying Himself against the insubordination to lawful authority, Christ continues: "All their works they do for to be seen of men. For they make their phylacteries broad, and enlarge their fringes. And they love the first places at feasts, and the first chairs in the synagogues, and salutations in the market place, and to be called by men, Rabbi."

As if to say that by wearing a scroll of prayers across their forehead, they possess piety; by dressing in fine linens and purples and wide fringes they were better than the rest of men and had a right to exploit them.

And now Jesus enters into the eight vehement apostrophies in which he pronounces maledictions upon the exploiters, the cowardly leaders who hear the law of God and live it not.

"Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you shut the Kingdom of Heaven against men, for you yourselves do not enter in; and those that are going in, you suffer not to enter."

This amounts to saying: "You, the high priests, are leading to hell those for whom, by your high office, it was your duty to open the gates of heaven; those whom you have sworn to defend."

The second anathema shows us the scribes and Pharisees engaged in the most shameful financial slavery. "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you devour the houses of widows, praying long prayers. For this you shall receive the greater judgment."

Widows and orphans, the defenseless ones of human nature! To rob them was considered a right of the protected laws of greed—greed directly protected by law; indirectly by religion which too often had become involved—to rob them under the pretext of promising them prosperity and long prayers for which they were made to pay dearly. Oh, to what depths had fallen the interpretation of the laws of Moses—laws which had been perverted by the prostituted silence of the high priests!

The third malediction condemns the Pharisees because of their ill-

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advised propaganda: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you go round about the sea and the land to make one convert, and when he is made you make him the child of hell two-fold more than yourselves."

This description is full of irony. The apparent conversions which the Pharisees succeeded in making in the pagan world resulted in stirring up bigotry, class ascendancy, out-worn and silly superiority—anything to perpetuate their system of class ascendancy and to add to their ranks a material religion.

The fourth anathema denounces the false theory of Jewish doctors about oaths; about God's rights and human rights over the man-made rights of things commercial.

"Woe to you blind guides, that say: Whosoever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing; but he that shall swear by the gold of the Temple, is a debtor. Ye foolish and blind; for whether is greater, the gold, or the Temple that sanctifieth the gold?"

The Pharisees were indeed blind guides—ready to starve their fellow citizens for the sake of sanctified gold; anxious to respect the gold more than the Temple of God in which it dwelt. Oh, how history had repeated itself down to this very age.

The fifth condemnation sarcastically describes the meticulous conduct of the scribes and their associates with regard to purely imaginary obligations and their curious laxity of conscience in the matter of the loftiest and strictest precepts of religion: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left the weightier things of the Law"—as if Christ had said to them: "You strain out a gnat and you swallow a camel"; as if He proclaimed to them that "Your gold contracts will be kept meticulously immaculate but you will let people starve in the gutter and go naked in the winter storm."

The sixth malediction condemns the Pharisees because in the depths of their souls they were rotten and unclean as they strove outwardly to appear wholesome and holy.

"Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but the inside is full of rapine and uncleanness"—rapine, which means stealing from the widow, robbing from the workmen, exploiting the farmer and filling their own cups and loading their own tables with wine and with food that they have stolen from the exploited.

These are unclean profits.

No wonder that Christ adds next: "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you are like to whited sepulchers, which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all filthiness."

These are the eight condemnations with which on that momentous Tuesday afternoon Christ castigated those holier-than-thou, those cowardly seducers of mankind.

No wonder that as the sun was setting into the depths of the west, and as Christ was wending His way back to Bethania, He paused upon the hillside and looked once more at the scene of His victory and the scene of His betrayal to exclaim: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not—thou wouldst not!"

His heart was filled with pathos. His soul was overcast with the clouds of sadness. And as He walked along the roadway He tried to forget how He had taken His very life into His hands for condemning thieves that were protected by law; thieves that were blessed by priests; preferring to remember His last visit to the Temple when weary and forlorn He watched the widow place her humble mite in the offering box, and exclaimed to His Apostles that "This poor widow hath cast in more than all they who have cast into the treasury. All they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want cast in all she had, even her whole living." All this shows that Christ still had faith in human nature!

And thus, approaching the haven of His rest, sorrowfully to Peter and James and John, He said:

"The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Amen, amen I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal."

Thus, into the night He talked to those who had remained with Him. Talked of the lack of faith among those who should possess it above all, discoursed regarding the destruction of Jerusalem; the end of the world and His second coming.

Tuesday has gone. The Holy Tuesday of Passion Week on which day Christ had sealed His doom irrevocably with those unscrupulous hypocrites who were determined to murder Him at any price.

### WEDNESDAY OF HOLY WEEK

Wednesday—a day spent in teaching His Apostles and His disciples.

Meanwhile, the great city was adding the last touches in preparing for the festivity of the Paschal Feast. Already, perhaps, Christ has said to His followers: "You know that after two days shall be the Pasch and the Son of Man shall be delivered up to be crucified."

All prudence had been cast aside by the Sanhedrin, by Annas and by

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Caiphas. They must seize Christ at any price. If necessary, they must suborn witnesses to besmirch Him and to accuse Him. Oh, if necessary they would resort to the knife of the assassin.

On second thought, is it not better to seize Him secretly in the silence of the night? Or listen! Perhaps, then, one of His associates, one of His friends will betray Him!

Little did they know that at this very instant, Judas Iscariot was on his way to the council of the Sanhedrin to bargain for the life of His Master! He will sell Him for thirty pieces of silver accompanied very likely by a promise of immunity. Thirty pieces—the price paid from the time of Moses for a good slave!

### HOLY THURSDAY

Thursday morning! The feast day of the Passover!

As the sun was rising, Peter and John take leave of the Master. They are going to Jerusalem under specific orders to secure a room, purchase food, and arrange for all the liturgical necessities required for celebrating the Paschal Supper.

Wine pressed from the ruddiest grapes! Unleavened bread, recalling the rigors of the march from Egypt to the Promised Land! Bitter herbs, such as lettuce, cress and parsley, together with haroset, a sauce mixed with dates, almonds, figs and grapes, all mashed and seasoned in vinegar. Finally, the Paschal lamb, an unblemished yearling, the symbol of salvation, the prefigurement of the Christ!

Thursday afternoon!

With the other Apostles, Jesus bids a fond farewell to Bethania; farewell to Lazarus, to Martha and to Mary with whom He had lived, whom He loved. It was nearly sundown when the little group arrived at the house where Peter and John had prepared the supper. In the upper room the blinds were drawn, the candles lighted.

Silently the group stood around the festive board. In every household this same scene was being enacted. Of a sudden the blast of silver trumpets sounded from the Temple tops. It was the signal for the feast to begin! The story of the Passover is recited! The wine cup is lifted to the lips of all! The feet of the Apostles are washed by the Master! A feast with the Christ! A feast of the Christ is about to be partaken!

Need I tell you of the Iscariot? He was there. The only Judean. The rest were Galileans. "Clean men," said Christ, all save one—the one to whom He shall reach dipped bread!

But behold the miracle that is transpiring before the eyes of the Apostles! Quickly, quietly as was the coming of the Divine Child at Bethlehem, follows the birth of the Blessed Sacrament! Bread becomes His sacred Body

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by the same power that God became a fleshly man! The promise is fulfilled! Here on this great Paschal feast is born the Manna of the New Testament!

Food, spiritual food for the wanderers in the desert of life as they journey towards the kingdom of God. "My flesh is meat indeed; My blood is drink—the same blood that shall be shed tomorrow for the salvation of the world."

Long into the night sat Christ with His Apostles as He told them: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

While revelers joyed in the streets below, the chosen few heard the Master speak of the morrow and of death; listened to Him as He says: "If you love Me, keep My Commandments."

Their tears are brushed aside as they learn that they will not be left as orphans but that Christ and the Holy Ghost will take up their abode in them.

It is almost the hour of midnight as Christ rises to depart. He whispers to them: "Love one another." And as with Peter, James and John He walks towards Gethsemane, the Apostles hear echoing and re-echoing within their hearts His parting words: "My peace I leave unto you."

## GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday!

Gethsemane with its bloody sweat! Gethsemane and Judas, the traitor's kiss, the mob!

Good Friday! As He is led to the palace of Annas and Caiphias, His lips burn and His heart is heavy as He remembers the "Hail Rabbi" of His trusted Apostle.

Then comes the travesty of the trial. From Annas to Caiphias; from Caiphias to Pilate; from Pilate to Herod; from Herod back to Pilate, Christ is moved from court to court. Caiphias alone finds cause for action against this Innocent One!

Purchased witnesses swearing against Him! High priests determined to murder Him!

Listen as Pilate speaks: "Tell me I adjure Thee, art Thou the Christ, the Son of the living God?"

Listen to Christ's one boast: "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will build it up again."

Quickly follow the scourging at the pillar and the crowning with thorns. Then comes the memorable scene of the "Ecce Homo"—"Behold the Man"—the Man in Whom Pilate found no just cause. Shall not the hearts of the angry mob be softened? What evil had Christ done? Had He not cured their sick, fed their poor, comforted their afflicted?

Pilate thought so. Thus, feeling assured that now he could release Christ

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legally, the Roman Governor asks the crowd to look upon the bleeding Christ!

"Whom shall I release unto you—Christ or Barabbas? Barabbas, the murderer, or Christ, your Benefactor?"

"Give us Barabbas!" was the ungodly answer. "Crucify Christ?" was the sacrilegious reply.

Friday afternoon!

You know the story of Christ's triumphant march through Jerusalem. Now watch Him walk along those same streets carrying a cross.

Simon of Cyrene who helped Him! Veronica who bathed His brow! The women of Jerusalem who wept for Him! His dearest mother who remained brave for Him!

Calvary's heights are gained! Then the nails, the hammer, the uplifted cross! The last sermon preached from this mighty pulpit! "Father forgive them for they know not what they do!" So spake the Christ as He was derided and spat upon. And the thunders spake overhead protesting against the crime of crimes, while Annas and Caiphas slunk to their homes.

Death—kind death came! Your God and my God hangs upon the cross for our redemption. His life has been lived for us and laid down for us. What will you and I do for Him in return?

## II

## THE RESURRECTION

*Broadcast April 16, 1933*

This feast day, popularly referred to as Easter, records for us the conclusion of the mightiest drama in all history.

Christ is born! Christ is dead! Christ is risen from the grave!

It is a feast day which transcends all limits of human understanding. It marks at once the death of death and the birth of life eternal. It is the promise that He, the risen Christ, shall multiply the miracle performed at the tomb of Lazarus, for you and for me; for our loved ones long since departed. In the light of our faith, graves are but cradles; corpses, but sleeping kings and queens destined to reign with Christ in eternal happiness.

There are many thoughts which I desire to express on this leave taking. First and foremost are the thoughts which are centered around the magnificent feast which we celebrate today—the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Will you bear with me while I sketch for you the historical incidents associated with the burial of Jesus Christ as well as with His Resurrection?

By four o'clock on Good Friday afternoon, the thousands of people who had come out to witness the tragedy of Christ's death had retired to their homes.

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Christ was dead!

Beaten with a scourge, crowned with cruel thorns, weakened from hunger, He carried His heavy cross to the hill of skulls where He was crucified.

Thousands of men and women watched as the nails had pierced His hands and feet. Amidst the rumblings of thunder and the flashes of lightning these same people had witnessed the Roman centurion piercing the side of Jesus Christ with a long spear. Beyond all question the Word Who was Made Flesh is a corpse on the cross!

A prominent Jew by the name of Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrin, approached Pontius Pilate to ask his permission to bury the body of Christ. It was a Joseph who provided the crib of Bethlehem. It is a Joseph who is destined to provide the tomb near Calvary. With Nicodemus, another member of the Sanhedrin, preparations are made for the burial of Christ. Precious ointments are purchased. Fresh linen is procured. Not one detail may be omitted.

A separate bandage for His head. Long, clean bandages for His arms and His legs. Swaddling bandages for His body! Precious ointments to embalm It!

Finally, the cross is lowered. The nails are withdrawn. Mary, His blessed Mother, is there with other women. With tenderness they wash away the encrusted blood from the many gaping wounds. Then they assist Joseph and Nicodemus in wrapping their beloved God in winding cloths.

It was evening when the group of mourners wend their way from the heights of Calvary, carrying with them the body of Christ to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea which was distant not more than one hundred and thirty feet from the base of the hill. Death and darkness seemed to triumph as the great stone was rolled into place at the mouth of the tomb.

Silently and tearfully, all withdrew, leaving their Lord to the care of the angels!

On Saturday morning a delegation made up of the chief priests and Pharisees went to Pilate. Evidently, all was not well in their troubled minds. Had not this Christ changed water into wine, calmed the tempest, cured the sick and even raised the dead to life? Was there not a possibility of a further manifestation of power? They must implore the might of Pilate to forestall such a thing.

"Sir, we have remembered that that seducer said, while He was yet alive: After three days I will rise again. Command therefore the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day, lest perhaps His disciples come and steal Him away, and say to the people: He is risen from the dead; and the last error shall be worse than the first." The last error! The proof that He is the Son of God!

To them Christ is still the seducer. Yesterday they gloried in their power of conquest. Today they are fearful lest His disciples will steal Him away!

## THE PASSION AND THE RESURRECTION

Pilate coldly answered them, saying: "Ye have guards; go guard it as you please."

Accompanied by Roman soldiers, and bearing the seal of the empire, they legally secure a stone that closed the entrance to the tomb and ordered the guards to exercise the strictest watchfulness. All these precautions were providential. They serve to place entirely beyond question the reality of Christ's Resurrection.

Sunday morning—the morning of Christ's triumph!

More than one thousand years before the incident of Christ's Resurrection, David, the Royal Prophet, had exclaimed: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." This is one of the many foretellings of Christ's triumph over death.

At last the moment has arrived when Christ will prove that He is either God or a charlatan. The angels who hymned their glory to God on the highest over Bethlehem's crib are waiting to burst forth with alleluias. Adam and Moses, Abraham and Isaias, the thousands of sainted men and women long since departed are waiting, are praying for the hour of their deliverance.

What are the thoughts of Mary, of John, of Peter? Must these faithful few be left in doubt? Shall perjury and crime triumph over truth and the God of justice? Shall Caiphas and his lying witnesses retain their unholy sway over the oppressed people of Jerusalem? Shall Satan, their master, glory in death and rejoice in the defeat of Him Who once before despised the world and all its riches? Oh, no! Never! This is the day that the Lord has made. Rejoice and be glad in it.

And so with the story!

Do you not remember how on Good Friday morning two witnesses had falsely accused Christ of having said: "This man said: I will destroy this Temple and in three days build it up again?"

At no time did Christ ever give utterance to such a blasphemy. It is true that He did say: "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will build it up again," meaning the Temple of His body. But the perjured witnesses indicated by their false testimony that Christ had planned to destroy the very temple wherein resided the holy of holies, around whose walls there clustered the traditions of thousands of sanctified years.

Had the Divine Master uttered such a traitorous statement as they would put into His mouth, He would have been the father of every Benedict Arnold whom history records. That would have been tantamount to having said: "It is my mission to destroy the government of the Jews, to tear down their flag, to lay waste their public institutions." The insidious calumny that the centuries have flung in accusation against the Church of Christ!

But the false testimony was accepted as truth. Caiphas, therefore, exclaimed that Christ was a blasphemer. On the strength of this alleged blasphemy, He was doomed to death! This is an historical record of the greatest importance. See how Christ uses their very perjury to confound them! It is the dramatic moment when the miracle of miracles is about to be performed.

The Resurrection is of such vast importance that St. Paul exclaimed: "If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain . . ." In vain, say I? Oh yes! Welcome Sodom and Gomorrha with your perverted lusts! Hail an adulterous generation without a sigh! Welcome Nero, with your bacchanalian feasts! Why suffer the pangs of poverty since justice is a by-word and charity a delusion!

If Christ be not risen, then let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die—die forever! The prayers learned at your mother's knee are naught but Aesop's fables.

"Blessed are they who suffer persecution; blessed are the clean of heart; blessed are the poor in spirit"—what mockery and vain poetry are such snares to trap the weakling's mind!

And love! Love for your dear departed—what cruelty to think of an immortality that is vested in worms and corrupt in dust!

Thus, it was of extreme importance for Jesus Christ to prove historically and beyond dispute the fact of His Resurrection upon which is founded the hope of our existence!

Let us assemble the facts associated with this momentous event.

All about the sepulchre the disciples come and go. They are greatly disquieted, greatly troubled as they witness the presence of the Roman soldiery. Early in the morning the Galilean women set forth to complete the process of embalming which had been so hastily performed on the day before the Sabbath. There was Mary Magdalen, Mary the mother of James the Less, Salome and Joanna.

As they were nearing the place, they thought of the heavy stone which they had seen set against the entrance to the tomb. "And they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre?"

These women were not aware that the Jewish authorities had set guards and had placed seals at the entrance to their Saviour's resting place. Despite their faith, they did not think of the possibility of the Saviour's Resurrection.

Great then was their amazement when upon going forward and raising their eyes to the slight eminence that formed Golgotha, they perceived that the stone had been rolled aside and the tomb was open.

St. Matthew informs us that there had been a violent earthquake in the neighborhood early Sunday morning.

## THE PASSION AND THE RESURRECTION

It was God, broadcasting, as it were, the miracle that had transpired. There was an angel who descended visibly from heaven; came to the sepulchre; rolled back the stone and sat upon it in the attitude of a conqueror! The soldiers on duty at the sepulchre were terrified and, falling backwards on the ground, became like dead men, unable to rise. These are facts cited in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But let us return to the holy women of Galilee. After their first surprise and fear at the sight of the open tomb, all entered save Mary Magdalen. To their surprise: "They found not the body of the Lord Jesus," as St. Luke tells us, but they did find another angel seated within the tomb.

In majestic voice he addressed them saying: "Be not affrighted. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come, and see the place where the Lord was laid."

The inspection is made. There is the empty slab! Neatly folded are the linens in which Christ's dead body had been wrapped. Curiosity is satisfied! Only then the angel bids them: "Go quickly, tell His disciples and Peter that He is risen and that He goeth before you into Galilee. There you shall see Him as He told you."

It was not long until Peter and John approached the empty sepulchre. They, too, see the folded linens. They, too, know that the tomb had not been the object of violence. They, too, now have a reason for the faith that is in them relative to Christ's Resurrection. It was briefly expressed by St. John in these words: "He saw and believed."

It is traditional that Christ's first appearance was to His Blessed Mother. But it is historical that Mary Magdalen was the first of His disciples to behold the Resurrected Lord. Next He was seen by the Galilean women on their way to Jerusalem. News of His Resurrection quickly spreads throughout the city. Annas and Caiphas hear of it. They are confounded. Thus, the Gospel narrative suggests to us the latest infamy of the Sanhedrin.

When the soldiers appointed to guard the tomb came back to their senses and overcame the fright that had been caused by the apparition of the angel, they sent some of their number to the chief priest to report the supernatural occurrence which had taken place before their very eyes. The great council is therefore assembled. The silence of the soldiers must be secured at any price. Had not thirty pieces of silver been given to Judas to betray the Master?

Cannot a bribe be arranged to purchase the silence of the soldiers? "Say you," said the high priest to the soldiers, "Say you: His disciples came by night and stole Him away when we were asleep. And if the governor shall hear of this, we will persuade him and secure you." By accepting this proposal the Roman soldiers were accusing themselves of a grievous neglect

of duty, which might cost them their lives. The greed for money and the chief priests' promise to fix up the matter with Pilate should the affair reach his ears, induced them to accept this shameful bargain.

Thus, the lie was spread that Christ was still in the land of the dead, spread by the bribe of purchased propaganda. But St. Augustine adroitly remarks: "If the soldiers were asleep, what could they have seen? If they saw nothing, what is the value of their testimony?" Thus, the truth triumphs, despite this crude attempt at falsification.

"Destroy this Temple and in three days I will build it up again"—the one boast that Christ made during His entire life has been fulfilled. On its fulfillment depended the proof of His Divinity. On its fulfillment depended your faith, your prayers, your Christian poverty, your glorious immortality!

"He is risen, He is not here," said the angel of old.

My friends, Christ and His religion belong in nowise to the tombs of death.

Oh no, He has gone marching down the years triumphantly. With James He crossed the Pyrenees into Spain. He accompanied Andrew into the isles of the Grecian archipelago. Thomas had Him for companion as He journeyed to India.

With no weapons in their hands save the emblem of the cross; with no centurions at their command save the gospels of truth, Peter and Paul accompanied Christ to the very heart of the Roman Empire.

Once more He lives with Lazarus in France, with Patrick in Ireland, with Boniface in Germany, with Cyril and Methodius among the Slavic nations, with Francis Xavier in the Orient, with Brebouef and LaLemont in America—with these noble apostles, the living Jesus Christ has come marching down the centuries fulfilling His promise that He will be with us all days until the consummation of time.

"He is risen. He is not here." Not in the tomb of pagan worship with its multiplicity of false gods, its immorality, its slavery and its gospel of the deification of man.

The bodies of the Pharaohs are buried beneath the piles of the pyramids. The tomb of Pericles is lost in the ruins of Athens. Cæsar and Nero, Charlemagne and Elizabeth, Napoleon and Bismarck are still resting beneath the cold, grey marble upon which is carved the epitaph. "Here lies the mortal remains of one who was, but who has ceased to be."

Christ's tomb alone is empty. There still echoes and re-echoes from its vacant slab an epitaph voiced by an angel: "He is risen. He is not here!"

"Oh death, where is thy victory! Oh death, where is thy sting!" Liberty and peace have been unfurled with the banner of Christ's triumph; death is swallowed up in His victory.

## THE PASSION AND THE RESURRECTION

Your empty grave, oh, Jesus Christ, is a promise to us that some day every graveyard throughout this world shall surrender its loved ones in the Resurrection of the dead.

The second thought which I wish to mention this afternoon is one which is associated with the past twenty-seven weeks.

By this time, my friends, it should be evident that I have devoted these broadcasting hours to a discussion of moral-economic problems.

It has been and still is my contention that unless the unemployment which confronts us, the financial slavery which enthralles us, and the economic injustice which has characterized the broken down system of capitalism—it is my contention, I repeat, that unless these things are remedied, and that quickly, there is little to be hoped for in this or in any other nation other than a complete revolution.

The great unchangeable laws of nature and of nature's God are far more sacred than man's political interpretation in constitutions and legal statutes.

Let us not be blind to the causes which generated the upheaval known as the French Revolution. Let us not minimize the events which preceded the irrational birth of Communism in Russia. Men are not born revolutionists. Rebels are made. They are moulded in the furnace of tyranny. Men suffer and suffer gladly. But when they suffer needlessly they rebel if they are men, fortified by the law of self preservation.

We must be rational and observant.

Great nations of the past have disappeared. Their proud flags are folded in the tombs of time and covered with the dust of forgetfulness. All the sagacity and diplomacy of their leaders failed to save them. And why? "Because man's inhumanities to man made countless millions mourn;" because Christian charity and distributive justice had no place in the councils of the state.

History most certainly will repeat itself.

As a conclusion to these twenty-seven weeks of broadcasting I wish to emphasize the point at this juncture that slavery and Christianity cannot exist together. Be it the physical slavery of the Romans, the agrarian slavery of feudalism, the political slavery of a George III, or the economic slavery of the international banker who worships gold as his god, the inevitable always happens. Christ and His principles can be done to death today and sealed in the tomb, as it were. But there always comes the Easter morn when the angels of truth shall break asunder the seals of the sepulchre. Christ and His principles always triumph. Victory is forever on His side.

During the past twenty years the gospel of man's brotherhood in Christ has been disdained, derided and crucified. Today the world is eagerly awaiting its resurrection. In America we have been promised a "new deal." With acclaim we have applauded its first manifestations.

We are confidently expecting the completion of that "new deal" when the economic injustices, which not only the citizens of this country, but of every nation of the world, have borne like a great cross on their pilgrimage to the hill of skulls will end—we are confidently expecting our leader to break the seals of the old empire—man-made seals; man-made laws; man-made suffering, cost what it may.

First things come first. Let God's laws and Christ's charity prevail. Out with those obstructionist laws coined by wicked men.

On the first Easter morn the angel dispelled all fear from the hearts of the timid followers with his message: "Be not affrighted. You seek Jesus of Nazareth Who is crucified."

Nineteen hundred years later the echo of that angel's voice reverberates through the land swelling in crescendo each hour as it breaks with reassurance over the White House: "Be not affrighted!" You, too, President Roosevelt, seek Jesus of Nazareth Whom man-made laws had crucified.

The rights of the starving millions of our people are above any human laws or special pleaders. "Be not affrighted!" The nation stands solidly behind you. The test of every effort in this regard shall be the barometer of unemployment. "Give us this day our daily bread!" The success of our leader's best endeavors shall be measured not by the yardstick of concentrated wealth, but by its equitable distribution.

Gold must never more be worshipped as our god. But a just and honest wage shall be accorded to every citizen who desires to work. That, in brief, is a summary of the Catholic doctrine on the moral-economic subjects which I have been discussing. But most important, to quote the words of Pius XI, "the whole of humanity is held bound by the financial and economic crises so fast, that the more it struggles, the harder appears the task of loosening its bonds."

I cite this quotation, with all the earnestness that I can command, simply to suggest to you, my fellow countrymen, that despite the honesty, the courage, and the intelligence of our national leader, nothing worthwhile will be accomplished unless we, the people of the United States, return to our God, put aside our irreligion, and restore Jesus Christ and His principles not only to the halls of Congress, but to the hearths both of palace and of humble home.

My fellow citizens, what has happened in the past with other nations shall likewise happen with us, unless you and I, laborer and farmer, banker and industrialist, Congressman and voter, minister and priest, rise from the tombs of death, tombs wherein dwell the philosophy of greed, the leadership of exploitation.

"Who shall roll us back the stone?" exclaimed the women who came on the first Easter morning to visit the resting place of the Saviour.

## THE PASSION AND THE RESURRECTION

"Who shall roll us back the stone of this depression?" once more is the chorus which every mother and father raises to heaven today.

Shall we trust in the power of those—the Annases and the Caiphases and the Herods and the Pontius Pilates—who have crucified Christ and His principles? Shall we take counsel from the money changers whom Christ drove out of the Temple and whom we must drive out of the Temple? What fools we were if such should be our policy!

My friends, if our President were gifted with the culture of a Pericles, with the wisdom of a Solomon, with the judgment of a Daniel, with the tenacity of a Napoleon, and with the eloquence of a Shakespeare, neither he nor all his assistants can roll back this stone which only Christ Jesus by His power can do.

"Our preaching is in vain and your faith in Him is in vain" unless you, the American people, are risen from the dead of the past, unless you return to the faith of your childhood!

Pius XI says in his letter, "*The Charity of Christ*," that, "The right order of Christian charity does not disapprove of lawful love of country and a sentiment of justifiable nationalism; on the contrary," he says, "it controls, sanctifies, and enlivens them.

"If, however, egoism, abusing this love of country, and exaggerating this sentiment of nationalism insinuates itself into the relations between people and people," so he continues, "there is no excess that will not seem justified, and that which between individuals would be judged blame-worthy by all is now considered lawful and praiseworthy if it is done in the name of this exaggerated nationalism.

"Instead of the great law of love and human brotherhood, which embraces and holds in a single family all nations and peoples with one Father, Who is in heaven, there enters hatred, driving all to destruction. In public life sacred principles, the guide of all social intercourse, are trampled upon; the solid foundations of right and honesty on which the State should rest are undermined."

This, my friends, is a call to international charity; is a call to assemble around the lifted cross of the Resurrected Christ. It is the program set for the Holy Year. He alone can roll us back the stone. He alone can rescue America and the world from certain political destruction.

Be not deceived: this contest is between death and life, between the corruption of the grave and the incorruption of the living truth. It is broader and deeper than the puny measurements of any political party. Therefore, in even daring to suggest these things, I hold myself free both from Democrat and Republican—free to encourage whenever truth and justice appear; free to condemn whenever these principles are in danger.

"Be not affrighted." If our present financial policy is being constantly

interfered with by the same old international banking representatives who have fastened themselves like barnacles to the ship of our present administration, clean them off!

If ill-advised obstructionists prevent the normalization of our dollar and thereby continue to force upon us the worst period of deflation that this or any other nation has experienced, if the increase in unemployment which has steadily marched step by step with the cruel deflationary policies continues because of a famine of money, take courage! Flesh and blood and the welfare of Christ's brothers are more important than golden bonds!

Men must get back to work at a living wage. That is primary. That is essential. And secondly, the purchasing power of this nation must be restored, cost what it may to the bondholders or to the defenders of gold at \$20.67 an ounce.

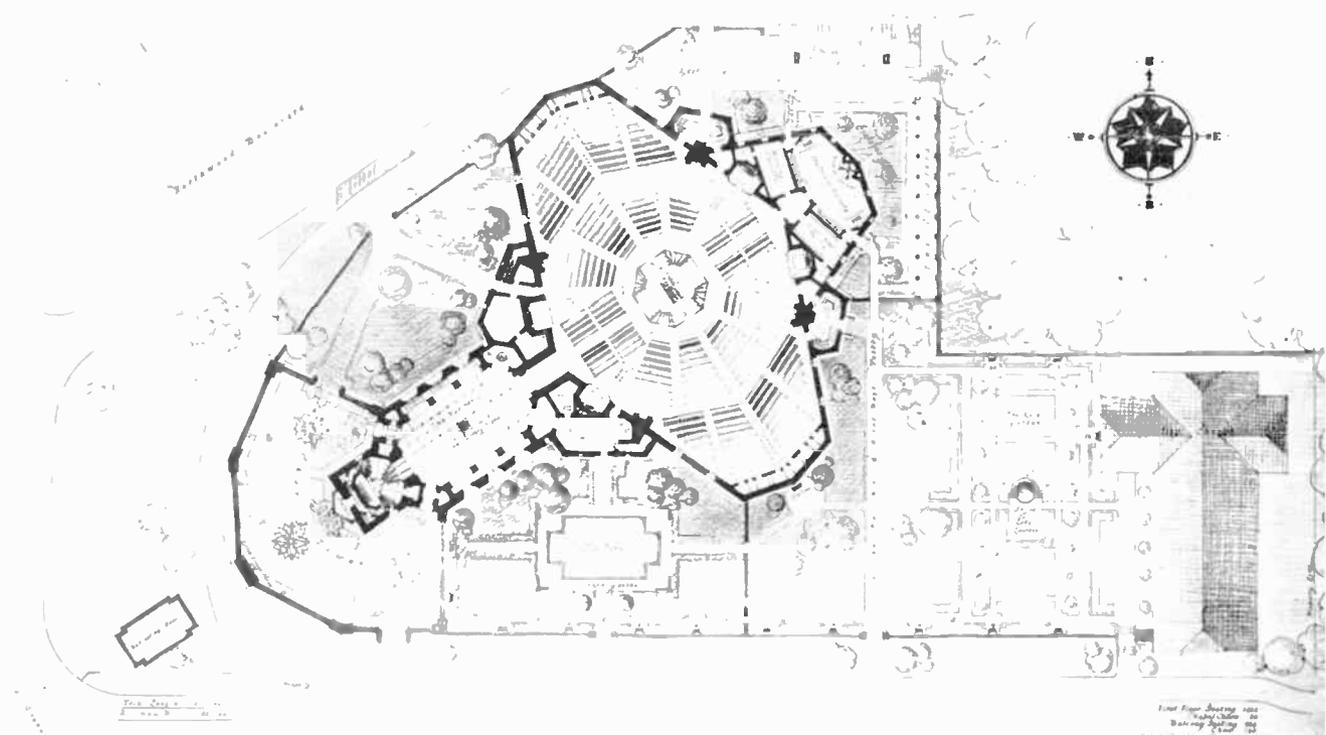
So I come to the conclusion of this season's broadcasts. It is only fitting that I pause to pay my meed of thanks to you, my many loyal friends. Thanks for your moral and financial support. Thanks from my heart. I do not count myself important. Nor do I entertain any ideas concerning my own welfare. My doctrine, however, is of importance—of vast importance—and so is your welfare. I know that you join with me in paying tribute to the twenty-seven efficient radio stations which have carried these presentations into your homes and places of gathering.

Of old, St. Paul said, "Faith cometh through hearing"—a hearing modernly made possible through God's magnificent gift of this vehicle of communication. Into prisons and hospitals, into homes, Catholic and Protestant and Jew, have gone my words, which were spoken, I trust, without bigotry.

Freedom of speech; freedom to express the truths that too long were hidden behind the walls of vested interests; freedom through the means of radio has been born into our midst. Here in radio we found a means of perfect expression of opinion, uncolored by editorial comment. Here in radio there can be no deceiving headline, no misquotation, no false emphasis. To all is accorded equal opportunity,—opportunity to speak; opportunity to answer with the public receiving the message as given, openly and above board and not hidden in the dark recesses of inside columns. Modern news journals and modern radio work hand in hand, neither in jealousy nor in antagonism.

"Faith cometh through hearing." I hope that I am worthy to continue my work at a later day.

One word more—and of greatest importance. "Pray for me, lest whilst I preach to others, I myself may become a castaway," as St. Paul himself feared. Pray for our President! God guide him and strengthen him in his noble effort to restore America to Americans!



INTERIOR PLAN—*Shrine of the Little Flower*



PART VIII—ACCOMPLISHMENT  
AND INTERPRETATION



## *Good Works*

### I

**B**ELIEVE for the very work's sake!" As the days of the public life of Christ drew to a close, his doctrine had been taught almost in its entirety. The apparent results were limited. Christ appealed to men to believe, not necessarily because of their understanding of the doctrine, not necessarily because He was the Messiah, nor Divinity itself, but, if none of these things affected them, still they were to believe "for the very work's sake."

Long before He had sent to John the Baptist the signs of His identity, "the blind see, the lame walk, the leper is cleansed, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." At the end of His public career He was to repeat the pragmatic sanction, the practical evidence of divinity, by pointing to His very works, namely, the miracles.

The man of faith is not necessarily impressed by a miracle. The man of reason must be. The man of faith knows miracles are performed all over the world. The man of reason can go to a Lourdes or a Ste. Anne de Beauprè, and see manifested before his very senses the power of the supernatural.

In an interpretation of the life and work of Father Coughlin, in a certain sense, it isn't the doctrine that he has preached, great for the salvation of souls as that doctrine has been. In a certain sense it isn't the number of followers that listen in to his discourses that makes him important. By no quantitative standard should he be judged. Neither is it by gift of intellect, by power and beauty of speech, by compelling oratory, nor by the sheer ability to master the teaching process that he should be judged. Rather the measure of this man is found in the good works he has accomplished. This is a hidden chapter of his life. This chapter outlines very briefly Father Coughlin's work with the shut-ins, with the converts, with

the fallen-away Catholics, with the clergy of other denominations, and with God's Poor Society, a charitable organization supported by the parish of Ste. Therese of the Child Jesus and of the Holy Face. It deals likewise with responses that come from those who are most unfavorably impressed. The chapter distributes credit where it is deserved.

Both spiritual and corporal works of mercy mark the activities of Father Coughlin. By his works the ignorant are instructed; the doubtful are counselled; the sorrowful are comforted, and men are taught to bear wrongs patiently; the widow and the orphan find their protection in him, and the living and the dead have a veritable flood of prayers pouring to the throne of Almighty God for them.

He feeds the hungry; he gives drink to the thirsty; he clothes the naked; he gave his radio time to the captive Lindbergh baby. Amidst a full day's labors he is the patient, loving visitor of the sick room, and he joins, of course, with all the clergy of the world in their common duties of burying the dead.

How many thousands of men, women and children in America lie bedridden all the day long, with the loving care perhaps of mother or daughter, husband or wife, but aside from these, no thought from a cold and busy world?

Occasionally, of course, a friend drops in, if there be a friend. If the knowledge comes to others, a fraternal brother and the religious and charitable minded may call out of a cold sense of duty or a warmth of brotherly love.

Into the homes and to the hospitals, wherever the radio made it possible, the voice of one man went, Sunday after Sunday, with a word of encouragement, compassion and love.

On these occasions the mystery of pain was unfolded in language, such as this preached by Father Coughlin, to the shut-ins of God Almighty:

"The problem of pain stands in the heart of every attempt to solve the riddle of the Universe.

"A thousand attempts have been made to answer it. A thousand obstacles confront its solution. The Buddhist, at one extremity, informs us that pain and sorrow and oppression are always the result of some personal sin which was committed in some previous existence.

“It has been reserved for a modern sect to solve the riddle by absolutely denying the reality of pain’s existence. The whole thing, according to these, is an illusion.

“Here, then, the problem stands between the two extremes. We see it crying for an explanation in every innocent child who suffers in his body. We behold it asking for an interpretation in every heart that is crowned with the agony of thorns. We witness it in every God-fearing farmer or laborer whose gaunt gaze is held captive by an empty larder, by drought-stricken fields.

“I suppose that this riddle of suffering would always remain cloaked in misunderstanding were it not for the revelation of our Christian faith. Only when we turn to the crucified Christ knowing Who He is and What He is do we catch a vagrant ray of understanding.

“Turn your eyes upon Him as He hangs upon the cross. It is not only a Man who is transfixed there. It is the guiltless God-Man. That He really suffered is certain when He exclaimed: ‘My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me!’

“That cry of His dispels the sophistry of those who tell us that pain is only an illusion; that it is necessarily the penalty of personal sin. That piercing, anguished cry cheers us with the thought that pain is not to be attributed to a careless Providence or that it is a mark of social inferiority. Was it not Christ Who uttered it—Christ, the Son of God?

“Looking deeper into this problem, there is a clearer light cast upon its complexity by the inspired words taken from St. Paul’s letter to the Colossians. ‘I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ,’ wrote he.

“In other words; the suffering baby, the sorrowing mother, the tubercular maiden, the worried father—every bed in every hospital ward, every cell in an insane institute, every honest tear and ravaging pain are nothing more than the extended pains of Christ Crucified.

“How tremendous, then, is the sufferer! With what dignity is the sufferer’s soul surrounded! Those who are oppressed, those who are victims of injustice, those whose bodies feel the stripes of the lash of cowardice, whose brows are circled with the thorns of worry, whose hands are pierced with the nails of poverty, whose hearts are opened with the spear of calumny—they are living crucifixes who stand clear of the wrangling world about them!

“We see in them not merely separate human beings that twist in agony, but souls that mirror the tragedy of Calvary throughout the ages. The rose may reflect the beauty of God; the thunder and tossing ocean, His power. All nature is but His mirror. But it is left to the shut-in, to the sufferer, to the heart-broken, pain-stricken fellow citizen of ours to reflect our God as He hangs on Calvary expiating the sins of the world.

“My dear shut-ins and sufferers, I greet you this evening in the name of this vast radio-audience as those whom God loves best. I pledge you not our worthless sympathy, but I promise you our prayers. In return may I ask of you who suffer so, to remember us as Christ once remembered the thief who was crucified at His side. Remember us, the less worthy, as you suffer in the Gethsemane of your heartache, in the Pilate’s Hall of your poverty, or on the Calvary of your bed of pain.”

So spoke Father Coughlin extemporaneously, in a broadcast that suggests the content, the spirit, and the Christian charity that marked the early broadcasting.

In like vein he continued for many years as he brought his messages of love, kindness, thoughtfulness and comfort into the homes of the afflicted. His work did not stop with the shut-ins.

## II

He has become America’s unquestioned leader in the propagation of the faith. Out of a population of approximately 130,000,000, the Catholic Church in America boasts some 21,000,000 adherents.

There is work to be done in the home missions of the nation, not only among the Negroes and the Indians, but among at least the 62 percent of our population that claim no religious affiliation. Father Coughlin invites every man to return to the faith of his childhood. He does this on the elemental principle, not that one religion is as good as another, but that a religion is better than no religion.

He frequently meditates upon the change that has come over the world in the preaching of the gospel since St. Mark used these words, “And they going forth preached everywhere.” Today there is need for the preaching of the gospel in the public square of the city, on the soap box in the market place, on the street corner

and wherever men congregate. Father Coughlin would love to see the modern missionary follow the example of the greatest of all missionaries, St. Francis Xavier, and go into public places in order to preach to men the doctrines of Jesus Christ.

So enthusiastic is he on this subject that I heard him offer one night \$5,000 to the provincial of a great religious order to send two missionaries to take up their work, not in some far off pagan land, but rather on a soap box in Cadillac Square in Detroit, next to the communist. The religion of Christ could then be preached in contradistinction to the atheistic doctrine that was being spread.

The radio enables this priest of one little parish "to preach everywhere" today. This "preaching everywhere" wins souls to Christ. Every year approximately 5,000 people write to Father Coughlin to tell him, in one way or another, that they have become converts, or are about to become converts in the Catholic Church.

Typical of these letters is that of the mother who wonders "If it is all worth while"—a mother who has had five babies, two of whom had died, and one who lay in a plaster cast. Most unusual is the letter of the Protestant wife married to the Catholic husband with unbaptized children, who asked the intercession of Father Coughlin to bring the Catholic husband back to the Church and who will follow him in. A letter is reproduced from one who apologizes for her grammar. It seems almost a classic.

*Dear Father:*

My reason for writing may not be worth while but I would like you to know that we enjoy your talks and wait every Sunday for them and they mean a lot to us.

I don't know just how to begin this. I am not a writer. I am just an everyday mother with a terrible ache in my heart.

I am just twenty-eight years old and I have had five babies. Sometimes I wonder if it is all worth while—then I think how much worse everything could be.

It is just over a year that God took my little five year old baby from us and the next week our year and a half old baby. The oldest a girl and the other a boy. They were both healthy two weeks before. The boy went with us when we laid our little girl to rest and the next Saturday he followed. Only God can know the ache in my heart. I miss them so.

We now have a baby boy. Naturally, we love him too but there is still a dreadful lonely feeling for the other two. We also have a girl eleven and a boy nine.

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The boy that is nine is in a plaster cast. He was hit by an automobile and has a broken leg. However, he is getting along fine and soon will be able to walk again.

Now Father do you wonder that I feel as I do? It almost seems as though it doesn't pay to try to do right.

I don't believe it would be worth while if it weren't for my husband. I just can't begin to tell you how loyal and good he is. The children and I just wait all day for him to come home, we love him so. I have heard of hearts of gold and I think he has one of those. He never visits anywhere without us and is not addicted to drink.

My family are being raised Catholic. I am a convert and just love the faith.

When I read this over it almost seems like an imposition to send it. But Father I did want to know if you thought it was worth while trying to raise a family and attempting to lead a good life in spite of all the hardships and heartaches.

You asked for encouragement so that was what I intended when I started this letter. I didn't mean to burden you with my story and ask your forgiveness.

Wishing you and your dear shut-ins all of the blessings of God to help you carry on—

*Dear Father:*

You are a visitor in my home every Sunday, and I wish to thank you for the wonderful help you have been to me and my husband. It's a long story, one I'm sure you are too busy to listen to.

My husband was a convert but fell away due to hearing too much religion preached and not practiced, my family being very bitter toward the Protestant religion. Finally he quit going to church, although he was from a good Christian family.

Twenty years have passed and we have struggled to raise a family of thirteen children, all raised Protestant.

Our eldest, a lovely girl of eighteen, my companion, my darling little pal was killed this last summer. I never minded staying home with my little ones, for she was ever at my side with her cheery smile, loved by every one who knew her, young and old alike.

She has gone and I thought everything worth while went with her going. Can you blame me for this lonely feeling Father when I tell you that after her God sent me eight lovely boys and then four little girls. We dearly love them, one and all, but, of course, I miss her because of that mother and daughter love we had for one another.

I sat here one Sunday afternoon. I can't tell how many Sundays ago. You came into our home with your lovely kind fatherly voice, talking about the Holy Family.

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My husband heard you; that is, he heard some of your words as his hearing is affected. He sent for your sermon the next Sunday and every Sunday since he has strained to hear you.

Now may I tell you that by your kindness in asking the Protestant people to join you in prayer, your welcoming his people into your fold, that he has gone back to church. Also through the goodness of our local parish priests my seven sons will receive their first Holy Communion Easter Sunday. The oldest lad went a few months ago.

And now dear Father Coughlin I wonder if you will find the tiniest part of a second to pray for me, for courage to bear this dreadful lonely feeling at losing my only companion. Life seems so empty without her.

Thank you for all you have done for me with your kind voice and your understanding.

---

*Dear Radio Father:*

Listening to you this afternoon has stirred me so I am going to impose on you kind father with my troubles.

Five years ago I married one of the finest men I know, or have ever met. He was raised a Catholic, but drifted away from his church years ago.

I am a Protestant. We were married by a Protestant minister.

Now we have two beautiful daughters, one four and the other two years old and they have never been baptized. It is almost time for my four year old daughter to attend school but before she goes I want her baptized in some religion.

This is my problem Father. I want my husband to go back to his church. I am willing to be converted so there will never be any discontent in my home, but he will not accede to my wishes. I do so want my little ones baptized.

We have a very happy home and we never disagree over religion. It is just because I am tired of being a pagan that I want to go to church.

Father, if you will just give me a little more encouragement I will persist in my effort to bring God back into our hearts.

I hope you will overlook my grammar as I have only had seven years of schooling. I hope by the time you return to the air I can write and say we have been converted.

I shall miss your sermons every Sunday. Thank you so much.

### III

“Preaching everywhere” brings other results than conversions.

One of the most difficult tasks confronting the Catholic Church is to redeem her own sons and daughters who have wandered from the fold.

“Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

The ordinary means of communication are denied the priests, except as they are called to the deathbed of the repentant sinner, except as they conduct the missions and induce some thousands every year to return to the faith, and except, of course, in those instances where poverty puts a St. Vincent de Paul worker in touch spiritually as well as temporally with the fallen-away.

Father Coughlin through radio—the man with the proper method—has approached nearly all the fallen-away Catholics of America and has invited them to return to the faith of their childhood.

There is no record of the number that returned, nor of the number of course that persevered after they returned, but this much must be said: Thousands upon thousands every year answer the invitation. Some tell frankly that they have been away from the sacraments anywhere from five to forty-five years, and simply say that they have returned, without specifying that Father Coughlin was the reason, much less the sole reason.

The mere addressing of Father Coughlin with such an announcement could be broadly interpreted as inferring that he had something to do with the recapturing of the lost soul to the faith.

Nothing is so convincing to the mind of man than the honest and true testimonial. Far dearer to the heart of Father Coughlin is one of these letters which follows than all the praise he could receive from the distinguished in high places.

---

*Dear Father:*

I was baptized in the Church and had been out of it for thirty-four years.

After hearing your sermons by radio I have received the sacraments and I intend to keep up my faith until my death.

Please send me one of your crucifixes as I am not ashamed to carry the Cross of Christ.

Please pray for me. I thank you and may God bless you.

---

*Dear Father:*

We have just listened to your talk today in which you asked your listeners who should belong to the true faith to come back.

Father, my husband and I have listened each Sunday to your discourses

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over the air. We should belong to the Catholic faith but have drifted away carelessly. We both were baptized, made our first Holy Communion, and have been confirmed in the Church.

But sorry to say Father we were married by a Judge in the city of Chicago, and this is why. It was our intention to be married in the rectory of the Catholic Church. We went to the Church, but the priest refused to marry us without baptismal certificates. As it would have taken a few days for us to get these, we decided to be married according to state laws, and always intended to have it rectified when we returned to our home town. Instead, we just got careless and remained so.

We have three children, a boy seven and two girls, five and four, all of whom I have had baptized in the Catholic Church. Having been married outside of the Church, Father, did I do right?

Now Father, it has come to the time when we must look to the religious training of our children. I want my boy to be instructed in the truths of the Catholic religion.

I want you to know Father that you have done someone good by your broadcasts. You are calling our little family back to the true fold. Will you answer me please Father and tell me how we should proceed to have our union blessed.

I have a wonderful husband, a good father to his children, a very good provider and hard worker. We are comfortably situated. Thank God for that. He has been more than generous for what we have given him in return.

Father, can we attend any Catholic Church in the city or are we obliged to attend the church in the parish to which we belong?

Would appreciate just a few lines from you with the answer to my questions. I know you are very busy Father but can you write us before you leave on your vacation?

Pray for us and we will remember you also in our prayers.

---

*Dear Father Coughlin:*

I have just listened to your wonderful sermon. Each word of which I felt was intended for myself.

Seven years ago I married a young man without benefit of the clergy, just ran down to the City Hall. My parents, devout Catholics, disapproved strongly of the match. Of course, I lied and said I was married by a priest.

I thought I was in love with this individual, who not long afterwards proved a total loss. Foolishly I thought I could throw my religion to the winds and still be happy. Less than a year afterwards I left him and came home.

Instead of falling on my knees and begging Christ's forgiveness, thank-

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ing Him for wonderful parents, whose hearts I had broken, I actually had the unmitigated nerve to blame God for the mess I made of life.

I scoffed at faith, declared that heaven and hell is right on this earth; that no priest has a right to fill any intelligent person's mind with these so-called spiritual fairy tales of the hereafter.

I ran to parties, drank bootleg liquor, laughed at life and scoffed at God.

Now, I found myself at twenty-eight, a bored, unhappy and restless young woman.

It is unusual for me to remain home on Sunday, but strange to say, I had no desire to go out today. I glanced over the radio program, and thought I would please mother, who had suffered from my unhappy mood of this afternoon, by turning the dial to your broadcast.

Father I listened too, and I knew before you had gone very far in the sermon, the real reason for my unhappiness, for my restlessness. The truth dawned on me. I tried to dispense with God, was totally deaf to the tiny voice of conscience. I was the most miserable being on earth. How stupid of me to believe that what one calls "good times" would help me to forget, that wines could offer a medicine for my frayed nerves.

I missed conversing with God, my God. I wouldn't go to confession—why? because I was a coward, and I didn't have courage enough to admit it even to myself. I thought I'd have smooth sailing without a captain for my craft. Now I realize what a perfect fool I've been. As I am writing this letter to you Father, I am really happy.

I am going to say my prayers tonight. "God forgive me for I am a sinner." I am going to attend mass tomorrow, and I'll whisper my prayer of childhood, "Jesus, Mary and Joseph help me to be a good girl."

Father, you have returned to me the most precious of gifts—faith in Jesus Christ. How many of us poor mortals have so foolishly thrown it away yet which one of us has ever found a substitute for it?

Father, please pray for me, and kindly send me the picture of the Most Sacred Heart, and a copy of your beautiful sermon, which has helped me to seek admittance unto the fold.

*Dear Father:*

I have listened to several of your discourses over the radio so that's the why for, of this letter to you.

Frankly, I am an ex-convict. In \_\_\_\_\_ I was released from Sing Sing Prison. I was determined to go straight and to try and rehabilitate myself insofar as possible. Although of the Catholic faith, I had strayed far from the fold and in my plan of self-reformation I had the effrontery to believe I could go on without God or the Church.

In November of \_\_\_\_\_ I married a good girl. I told her of my past and she loved me well enough to take a chance on my making good.

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We went out West to live. I secured employment. For about eight years I was fairly successful despite my lack of religion. Then my past caught up with me and I was practically black-listed.

For two years I was unable to secure work and my savings account dwindled finally to nothing. I tried to get work but the depression was on.

I was snowed under with debts and the time came when my wife and daughter needed food. I borrowed a gun and went out and robbed a bank at the point of a pistol. (The gun was empty.)

Some months later I repeated the performance. I wasn't careful and left a finger print. The police arrested me and it looked like a life sentence for me.

My former employers decided it would be bad publicity for them to have me tell the Judge the truth so they secured a lawyer for me. I pleaded guilty and the Judge gave me ten years probation, the first year to be spent in jail.

My wife loyally stood by me and as she seemed to think her prayers to God were responsible for my release I commenced to wonder.

I was released in August and for three months tried to get a job. My wife was working but only earning enough to support herself and the girl.

One Sunday I heard you speak over the radio. From that time on I listened and yesterday I made my Easter duty. It was the first time I had been to church in twenty years.

A few weeks ago I fell and fractured my hands and wrist. They are just out of the splints and I am taking free treatment at the City Hospital to get them back in shape.

My wife and girl are still in the West.

Most men take a chance with their money every day in the week, but they refuse to take a chance on one of their fellowmen, who after all is their brother before Christ.

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*Dear Reverend Father:*

My greatest pleasure is to tune in on your period of broadcasting. I know you are so sincere in your plea to us sinners that sometimes you bring tears to my eyes. I have been raised a Catholic, and I understand the appeal behind your words.

I have not been to church in many years but would like to go to confession and Communion and make my Easter duty this year. But Father I have done so many sinful things in that time. I make my living *hard* or *easy*. Depends upon the way you look at it. But frankly Father I am a Mary Magdalen, only I go on and on. I can't get out from under, just yet, although I am trying. Now you understand, don't you? But you won't cry "unclean"?

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I would like to get that set of prayers for the novena you were speaking of and I am going to confession.

I don't know what kind of a penance the priest will give me and I feel as if I ought not to go because I know the day after it will be the same thing again. So, therefore, I hesitate. Perhaps you can help me. I am not "hard-boiled" in that I laugh at everything holy and divine, nor perhaps in any other sense of the word. I think I could change in a day. Aren't there always "circumstances to alter conditions." That phrase is over worked too. Is it not?

Sometimes Father shall we say when I am out head-hunting or in search of the elusive dollar the lights shine so brightly, and there is always some man who will go along with a person like me and has money to pay for his entertainment, I weep in silent misery because I think of that Lonely One waiting in the Tabernacle and I could tear my hair or break down and get on my knees. I wish and pray for better things and promise to do better, but it is always the same.

What then? I go along and smile and pretend and do my part as best I can, hoping that in that way I am doing good, praying everyday Pater Nosters and Ave Marias for the poor souls, for the dead soldiers, for my dead mother, but isn't it all in vain! The above may be, because I am in a state of mortal sin. But let me say this, everything I *ever prayed* for and desired since I grew up, has been given me. Perhaps I have a strong determination, but I think it is prayer; that God does answer our prayers, because it has been proven to me.

Well dear Father I am taking up a lot of your time but I do want that set of prayers for the novena, and wish you would send me some nice medals if you have them to spare. I once had two beautiful gold ones but I lost them. They were given to me with a priest's blessing when I was a little girl.

Father, you must have been persistent in your prayers for me because I am beginning to feel the effects.

### IV

Not alone does Father Coughlin minister to those thousands of shut-ins who suffer throughout their lives in pain, nor to a goodly proportion of the millions who have no faith, nor to the fallen-away Catholics of his own faith, but likewise his charity proves a bond that draws closer into one fold the ministers of other denominations.

The most remarkable single tribute to toleration in America is the attitude of the ministers of many denominations toward Father Coughlin and his work. Their letters are lively evidences that

toleration and charity strike responsive chords in the hearts of men. Their letters bring us back to St. Luke as he records the comments made by those who had heard our Lord. "Was not our heart burning within us whilst he spoke in the way and opened to us the Scriptures."

The deep respect, the sympathy, the admiration of courage, coming from a great number of denominations and represented by sincere men, who differ widely in dogma, prove a graciousness and brotherly love amazing to those who know only the narrowness of bigotry.

Lest a false impression be recorded, I have injected an occasional example to show that all ministers do not agree. The following are direct quotations:

*Methodist Episcopal*—"It is a pleasure for me to express my sincere admiration for one who has so eloquently, forcibly and accurately placed before the people the conditions of our country and the causes thereto, in all of which I heartily agree. That you have emulated the Great Sower, in feeding the hungry, in clothing the poor, by using your talents, is to me, one of the most splendid example of the Master's saying, 'And ye shall be a witness for me.' My dear brother, may you be long spared to preach and to be an inspiration, not only to the country at large, but to us who are striving in our humble way to lead others to the foot of the cross."

*Salvation Army Captain*—"I have listened with respect and help to your Gospel afternoon sermons from Royal Oak and have been so impressed that I cannot but help in writing you of their profound influence over me. I sincerely trust that God will abundantly bless you in your activities."

*Trinity Lutheran*—"I listened with interest to your fearless and challenging message this afternoon. It was certainly a thoughtful as well as thought provoking discourse. Praying that God's richest blessing may rest on your labors, I remain with best wishes."

*A. M. E. Church*—"Appreciation for spiritual joy and gladness brought to my heart through your sermon today. I have never before heard a message so beautifully pictured and delivered. I would to God we had more men like you who are willing to fight sin. God help you and keep you in my prayers."

*Traveling Mission*—"I judge the Catholic Church by you, Father Coughlin, as well as by many Catholic buddies in the army. My respect is, therefore, very high."

*Evangelical Church*—"I enjoy your sermons very much and wish to express sincere appreciation."

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*The Community Church*—"Your addresses are of great benefit to all who receive them."

*The Federated Church*—"I am heartily in sympathy with you and you have many interested listeners in my congregation."

*Lutheran Church*—"May I express my deepest thanks to you."

*Episcopal Church*—"Wishing you divine blessing in your work."

*Emanuel Evangelical*—"I heard you very distinctly over the radio this afternoon and needless to say I enjoyed your service."

*Bethel Methodist Episcopal*—"I want to congratulate you on the straightforward message you put across in such a fine logical fashion. Nothing that I have heard or read strikes me as do your sermons."

*Presbyterian*—"It was a rich and genuine message, and may our Father give you the strength and vision to deliver many more like it."

*Presbyterian*—"I cannot express to you in words the great blessing we have received from your addresses. God bless you and sustain you in your splendid defense of the Church and of the American Constitution, and raise up friends to pay your expenses."

*First Evangelical*—"Accept my personal commendation of your presentation."

*Rabbi*—"I wish to convey to you my heartiest congratulations for the courage which your message evinced. With warmest fraternal greetings, and again with my profoundest felicitations."

*Presbyterian*—"I am a Presbyterian clergyman who has listened with a great deal of interest to your broadcasts. I cannot agree with you ecclesiastically or theologically, but I profit by your sermons."

*Anglican*—"Let me say God bless you and may He richly reward your zeal for Him and His holy cause."

*Methodist*—"I express appreciation and hearty approval of your timely messages. I rejoice in your good ministry. May God give us more men who have the courage of their convictions. May God bless you!"

*Evangelical Reform*—"Wishing you success and God's blessing in your work."

*Methodist Episcopal*—"Many of my parishioners listen to you every week. They like your fearlessness and I would not take away any of it, but I do not agree with you in mixing up nationalism and religion. I do not see the menace of Communism as some do."

*Methodist Episcopal*—"It has always been with a great deal of pleasure that I have listened to your sermons over the radio. It is impossible for anyone to estimate the value of your splendid work. I have always had a warm spot in my heart for the Catholic Church, for as a youth I had the desire to be a priest though raised in a Protestant home, but there being no church in my own home town, I had no one to encourage me. However, I still feel

that strong pull to the beautiful ritualistic service. This letter is to say 'God bless you in your heroic work.' "

*Church of Christ*—"May God hasten the day when we have more men like you. Even though I be a Protestant minister I believe in giving praise when we meet those doing the great work of Jesus Christ. May God bless you with richest blessings in all your work!"

*Baptist*—"I am with you and praying for the success of the Golden Hour and may all its objectives be blessed."

*Methodist*—"I come from a long line of Methodist ministers and one of my ancestors was the founder of Methodism in this country . . . but I sincerely doubt if even he were alive today could he help the cause of Christianity as well as you are doing."

*Baptist*—"Your vitriolic and short-sighted utterances to bring you into the limelight for filthy lucre only depict the inner character of your heart which shows it to be anything but Christian. 'God shall judge thee thou whited wall.' I take it that you are a true representative of the Roman paganzed so-called Catholic Church. You show the Jesuitism she has always shown. Not all the Roman hierarchy from the Pope down to the most venal Catholic ward healer combined with all the demons in earth or hell shall be able to stop the march of righteousness."

*Baptist*—"I listen nearly every Sunday to the Catholic Hour from Washington and find the speakers to be splendid Christian men, but the Reverend Mr. Coughlin is in another class and insults millions every Sunday."

In response to the sermon preached on the subject of Prohibition, hundreds of letters were received from ministers of all denominations. Two-thirds of those who wrote protested against the point of view Father took.

The following eight excerpts from letters are representative of the widely divergent comments this sermon made:

*Central M. E.*—"Come clean, sir, come clean. You are insulting your church, your flag, and my buddies. Some of my dearest friends are Catholic and a famous priest is my dear friend so you must be an outcast from your great church."

*Baptist*—"It is with deep regret that I listened to your broadcast which you yourself know was a fanatic's tirade against a constitutional law which will be on the statute books of every progressive nation in the world. You say there is a saloon on every corner. My place of business is on a corner and I want to inform you that there is no saloon here. I know other corners where liquor was not sold. I would like to talk to you personally, but I think you are an ass. Any Christian who sends you money to peddle rot is as big a nut as you yourself are."

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*Immanuel Presbyterian*—"Your speech shows a decided foreign accent. You have scarcely learned to use our American language. Your brogue is foreign. Your ideals are foreign. You remind us of a ranting, soap-box street-corner bolshevik. If you don't like American laws supported by the American Protestant clergy, pack your little grip and go back to your native country."

*Methodist Episcopal*—"It is a predominant conjecture in the minds of a great mass of your hearers and former admirers that so vehement an effort on your part to condemn the terms of our National Constitution was made to satisfy persons to whom you had pledged your exertions for a consideration of some kind. Your own standards of life are unfit for one in the position you now hold as a Christian minister."

*Second Baptist*—"When you defend the liquor traffic kindly leave the name of Jesus Christ out of the business. No doubt your propaganda is disinterested and that you do as you are doing for the love of truth only—and also pay for the printing and distribution of the 300,000 copies of your disgusting address out of your own pocket. The liquor traffic may have the right to many privileges but never that of traveling in the guise of the Christian religion. Your shameless sophistry shouldn't travel under the banner of the Cross."

*Methodist Episcopal*—"Brother Coughlin, you are a moss back, away back in the Sixteenth Century on the booze question. Wake up pinch yourself! The wagon of progress has passed you and you don't know it! You have a medieval mind on social questions. You had a lot of friends here among Protestants until you ranted on Prohibition but you'll make little progress with moral minded people."

*Evangelical Lutheran*—"Keep up the fight against prohibition, dear father. It is a noble fight for God, for righteousness, for common sense and decency. You are rendering the nation a great service by your fearless testimony."

*Non-Denominational*—"That sermon today was not only admirably delivered, but, at the same time powerfully and devastatingly convincing; and I must admit that I am not, or rather, have not been a Catholic. Your sermons have opened my eyes to the fact that at least there is one religion and one clergyman possessed of the courage to denounce injustice wherever it may be perpetrated. 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian' and a Catholic."

## V

All the foregoing material contained in this chapter concerns itself with direct results of broadcasts on the sorrowful and afflicted, on the convert to the Catholic Church, on the fallen-away Catholic and on the ministers of other denominations.

There is a further good work to be recorded. Father Coughlin never loses sight of the fact that in following Leo and Pius in his discourses on the economic, he must himself do his individual share in the work of Christian charity.

What hypocrisy might be charged were the Shrine of the Little Flower and the beautiful Crucifixion Tower to be head and center of the great principles of distributive justice and charity, if within their shadows the poor went hungry and naked?

Father Coughlin recalls St. Paul, "If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

Father Coughlin is a charitable man. His little parish consists of as self-sacrificing a group as any priest in America ever boasted of.

Coincident with the start of the depression and preparatory to the winter of 1929 and 1930, a few parishioners thrown out of employment instinctively sought aid from the Church. God's Poor Society was organized on the spur of the moment and without the cold logic of the mind. Clothing and food were solicited. Late in November the women of the parish organized.

Soon Southern Oakland County, the territory in which the Shrine of the Little Flower is located, was to be pronounced by an executive of the American Red Cross the blackest spot on the depression map in the nation.

The number of applicants increased. All in need were given food, clothing, medicine or medical attention. The parishioners brought to the Church one sensible wholesome offering of food per day. The firemen and the policemen of the local jurisdiction placed barrels in grocery stores and these were filled through the generosity of patrons who made retail food purchases. Men went North into the farm lands of Michigan and solicited or purchased large stores of vegetables.

Soon word spread far beyond the parish limits. Friends of the radio audience and of Father Coughlin personally sent gifts from distant places. A carload of beans arrived from Boston. Truckloads of flour were sent from certain mills. One wealthy man sent employees to inspect the work and became a generous patron. Blankets were purchased by the carload to be cut to size, laundered, featherstitched and distributed.

Clothing was generously donated. Children's clothes especially were designed and distributed by thousands of garments. The layette was available always. Rent was paid in cases of dire distress only. All work was departmentalized, the food, the clothing, the rent, the care of the sick, hospitalization, sewing, and, of course, finance.

One day Father Coughlin enthused over his God's Poor Society. He invited all who walked the streets of Detroit that day to come out and receive food and clothing. He now thinks everyone heard his voice. A Southern paper, the *Chattanooga News*, published the following editorial:

Turning the radio dial from programs of symphony and syncopation and vaudeville, Sunday evening, many Chattanooga no doubt heard a talk which was broadcast from a Detroit suburb. It was the voice of an Irishman, with a rich brogue—a warm and full and vibrant voice.

He spoke of a challenge to the church. The poor and struggling masses, he said, are beginning to believe that the church belongs to the moneyed classes. Let politicians prate of banks full of gold and of increasing savings bank deposits, there is many a bitter thought in the mind of the man whose body is pierced by the bleak November winds.

The silly Coué philosophy that "day by day and in every way we are getting better and better," does not take away the sting to the mother whose children cry for bread. The Springtime of Promise, of which publicans speak, means nothing to people who eat bread soaked in tears, said the Irishman.

He told "of the subterfuge and lies and propaganda" and mentioned the stories of wages being preserved at high level and then said that a small government official in Washington had issued an order cutting the wages of the scrubwomen in his building by a dollar and a half a week, in the name of "economy."

Distress brought to the poor by winter is not a political issue, he said, but it is God's issue. The church is losing the respect of the poorer classes because it caters to the slick and well-fed. In the days when Knighthood was in Flower, little hospices and chapels hidden in the far-away corners of Europe fed the poor. Nowadays, it is regarded as a governmental, not a religious problem, and the poor are challenging the church.

Rolling his R's, and speaking from the heart, the Irish radio speaker announced that his church accepted the challenge. His church is the Shrine of the Little Flower (beautiful name), a parish of fifty-four families, in ordinary circumstances, outside of Detroit. It has a debt of \$300,000, yet this week it will give \$500 to the poor. "If Jesus should come to your door

tonight," said the priest, "and if, hungry and cold, He should ask for your charity, it would be a miracle. That miracle will never happen, yet another miracle has happened, for Jesus has said, 'Whatsoever you do unto the least of these my little ones, ye do unto me.' "

Then the Irishman made a promise which seemed to us rash.

"If," he said, "those who are walking the streets of Greater Detroit tonight, hungry and cold and penniless, will come tomorrow to the Shrine of the Little Flower, we will feed and we will clothe you."

We thought of Greater Detroit's horde of 100,000 unemployed, and we pictured that horde marching, like an army terrible with banners, on the tiny Shrine of the Little Flower to feed on its scant five loaves. And we wondered how the Irishman would solve that great problem. But finally we felt confident that somehow, in some mysterious way, someone would multiply the loaves to feed the multitude.

Day after day the victims of this man-made famine journeyed to Royal Oak. The Church was opened to accommodate the throngs. Sometimes six hundred gathered in the House of God to eat at "the table the Lord had set." Here Francis of Assisi might have come to see his interpretation of Christ and the Apostles re-dramatized in our day.

Thoroughness gave way to superficial aid. The numbers lessened but the aid rendered became greater. The good women of the parish organized themselves into a "self-denial league." They sewed, they forgave themselves luxuries, they gave dinners, they attracted as high as six hundred to their entertainments. One skilled in hand and generous in heart gave thermal treatments to the sick dedicating the fees to the poor.

Prayer was not forgotten. Novena after novena was offered up for God's poor. A few weeks ago a strange thing happened. Many of these good women who were devoting their efforts to the poor heard rumors of discontent. Rumors circulated among the people to incite them against the good Father. It was the old, old story. The lying whispers of paid propagandists were seeking a scapegoat. Men hated Father Coughlin because he was exposing the bankers. Threats were repeated to the charity workers. The women feared violence. They started a novena of prayer to the Little Flower for the protection of Father Coughlin. The novena was finished on March 23, 1933.

That night a bomb was exploded in the basement of Father Coughlin's home. It was not designed to kill him. It was merely

an "intimidation bomb." It could have been placed there by someone who thought himself aggrieved.

It could have been placed there to invite charges, in the moment of excitement, against his known enemies and thus trap Father into unprovable statements. It could have been placed there merely for the purpose of building publicity to Father's discredit so that men might be led to say, "It did no damage, therefore Father must have placed it himself." But ask the officers of God's Poor Society. They will tell you that the novena alone saved Father's life. They will add the fact that hundreds of pounds of food stuffs—beans, corn-syrup, canned milk, hundreds of pounds of food in bags—stored in the basement of Father's home for God's Poor Society—food—food for the poor broke the force of the explosion and saved life or limb.

This story comes from Mrs. Robert E. O'Brien, President of God's Poor Society, who asked me, if I was writing anything, to say that the other women of the organization, and not she, were responsible for all the good work that keeps seventy families daily in food, clothing, shelter and health, while as high as fourteen thousand individuals are served in a single year. This happens in a parish of some sixty families—or a parish that is nationwide.

Thus is wealth redistributed and Christian charity practiced through God's Poor Society. Thus are the spiritual and corporal works of mercy practiced to the credit of Father Coughlin. But lest this recital of good works become vain-glorious, it should be understood that not all the doctrine, the principle, the judgments or the good works of Father Coughlin are appreciated by those that write to him.

#### IV

There is a technical phrase in the radio world known as "crank mail." It does not mean that the writers are at all unbalanced or devoid of any rational power. It simply means that they disagree, more or less violently, with the expressions of the radio speaker.

I glanced through a single folder of "crank mail" to find personally engraved stationery, business stationery, letters from ministers, professional men, and those generally regarded in high esteem by our people.

The following excerpts are a small contribution to "Ameri-

cana." "If you want your liquor go to Canada." "You sound to me as though you were always full of liquor." "Regarding the liquor question you're full of your subject." "Why do you white-wash Al Capone?" "Raskob pays your bill." "You tell us to get gloriously drunk for Christ's sake."

These few quotations are selected at random from answers that came in following the reply to Clarence True Wilson's attack on the American Legion.

On nationality there seems to be a little confusion. I quote verbatim, "Go back home to your Italy." "Go back home to your Russia." "Go back home to your Ireland." "Go back home to your Germany." Father, having been born in Canada, of American parents, with three generations of progenitors in the United States, has his birth credited to many lands.

Other little dignity-chasers appear, "You're a liar before God and man." "I would like to see you use your powers for the right in an honest effort to raise man above the brute." "When you quote the Congressional Record you should quote the whole Record." "You're a traitor to God and man." "You blaspheme." "You're a bigot." "In spite of the devil, the Jew and the Catholic hierarchy, prohibition is in the Constitution to stay." "You desecrate the Sabbath by speaking your foul language over the air." "You make deliberate attacks on the Holy Name of Jesus." "You have the mind of a degenerate." "Please do not forward a copy of your material. A home where there are children is too sacred for your stuff." "You pray like a jackass." "You tell us Christ spent his time on earth in riotous living." "You're a Communist." "You're a Socialist." "If I listen to you I will lose my Catholic faith." "Why don't you study the Constitution?" "You have the mawkish mouth of a hypocrite."

## V

However, on the gracious side of life there is testimony of good will.

Let us follow from another sheaf of letters the thoughts that float back to Father Coughlin covering the span of life from childhood to old age. As we read them, let us consider them as merely symbolic and illustrative of the millions who write in annually.

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

*My dear Reverend Father:*

Will you please tell us something about Heaven as I have a very dear little brother there, twelve months this coming Sunday, January 20.

I would just love to know what he and all the other dear little angels are doing. Do they ever cry or miss their mamma.

I have asked mamma lots of times to tell me and I can't ask her any more because she cries and says she will tell me some other time.

Of course, we all miss him very much. He was just two years old when he died. I have two more little baby sisters and still miss him, so please dear Father won't you tell me something about him in your Sunday talks.

I will certainly enjoy listening to you like we did when you told us that lovely Christmas story about our dear Baby Jesus.

---

*Dear Father Coughlin:*

You said over the radio that Santa wouldn't miss any little boys or girls.

Now do you suppose he knows about us? We are Mary 12, Jean 10 and Lois 7 and then my brother Billy 4.

We don't want any toys, just something good to eat for Christmas and we'll all be so grateful.

Daddy isn't working so we can't have any Christmas this year. But I thought maybe Santa would bring us something to eat and if he can spare it a pair of shoes for Jean and a pair for Billy as their soles fell off their shoes.

We have been fairly good children this year so hope Santa will bring us something little.

Father, I thank you for taking care of this and wish you a Merry Christmas and a lot of good health all next year.

We like to listen to you on the radio. We are not Catholics, but Jean and I would love to be. We live right beside a Catholic church and daddy says when we get fourteen years old we can be Catholic. Right now we go to Methodist Sunday School but we don't like it so well.

You see our mother was a Catholic but she isn't now cause she married out of church.

Best wishes.

---

*Reverend and dear Father:*

In listening to your lectures every Sunday, and especially the one on Sunday, December 14, I was very much impressed as I am a veteran of the Civil War serving four years. I am now ninety-three years of age.

I was very much delighted with your speech for indeed when I came home, after being badly wounded, there was not very much thought of us.

I wish to subscribe the enclosed amount (\$5.00) and please send me a copy.

I wish to say to you that a wonderful miracle was performed on me by

## GOOD WORKS

the Little Flower. I fought a disease for over fifty years, spent hundreds of dollars. I obtained relief but no cure and the relic of The Little Flower cured me entirely in a short time. That was two years ago. Now I can run, jump, etc., and am enjoying very good health.

Wishing you the best of success in your wonderful work.

*Dear Father Coughlin:*

My assistant is instructing two men and he hopes to have them ready for baptism at Easter time. Both are converts of yours as they told me that your radio sermons impressed them. I never knew the men but from what I can learn they are good citizens and are thoroughly respected in this community. You should know this reaction to your work and it is a pleasure for me to tell you.

It seems to me that any priest who is brave enough to do what you have been doing should have the support of his brother priests. This may hearten you and help you to continue in the work that has been so good for our faith. The local men who are coming into the church I scarcely know. I have no way to reach them as my work is entirely parochial. You have taught them that our church is holy and beautiful and divine and I am perfectly sure that pastors like myself could never reach men of this type on account of the isolation of our work.

I wish you God speed and the best of good fortune in your work. I am sure you will be able to do great things in the future as you have in the past.

Lest this work become a silly glorification of a living priest, it is interesting to know that the good Father takes little, if any, credit to himself.

He is thankful before God for his parents, their simplicity, their humility, their precept, and their example.

He is conscious that no priest in the world could do what he has done if he relied upon his own talents and capacities and forgot to invoke, in season and out of season, a Divine blessing on work he conscientiously performs.

Father Coughlin continually prays to the Holy Ghost to enlighten his mind, and prays to his cherished patroness, the Little Flower, to continue to spend her time in heaven doing good upon this earth.

Full credit is always given his Excellency, the Most Reverend Michael James Gallagher, D.D., Bishop of Detroit, for his cooperation, his active help, his endless aid, and particularly his charity of thought and his breadth of mind, in encouraging, in

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

permitting, and in approving the good Father's work. Father Coughlin frequently said that he knew no diocese in America where his work could be carried on with the same degree of co-operation between Bishop and priest as exists between his Bishop and himself.

Father goes to a great extent in placing his appreciation directly with his vast audience whose prayers he sincerely believes have been the root cause of his success. He is not unmindful of their gifts which have enabled him to bear the financial burden.

He frequently remarks that he could not continue without such services as are rendered by four secretaries, brilliant, experienced, capable, and untiring in their efforts.

*Success*



IT would be vain to boast of success were there not in the accomplishing of that success, a deep and true Christian humility. It is simple honesty to record, however, that during the last two years Father Charles E. Coughlin has recommended the adoption of so many principles in the field of the economic and social life of America and has found these principles today either adopted or in process of adoption, that no record of his work would be complete did it not review his unusual success.

He refuses absolutely to take the credit. His program of reconstruction is successful because millions of honest souls throughout the length and breadth of America have prayed for its success. These millions of souls prayed for his guidance before he even constructed a program of economic and social regeneration.

He placed himself under the patronage of the Little Flower and steadfastly refuses to admit that his is a personal success.

He goes further: He states that all the principles enunciated came, not from him, but from the sound schools of economic thought and the inspired words of two Sovereign Pontiffs, Leo XIII and Pius XI.

Freedom of speech over the radio has been established. Communism is at least delayed. The Mellon regime and the principle of Ogden Mills enthrone property rights are discarded. We have in President Roosevelt a "new deal." We have supplanted the "Lame Duck Congress" with a Congress of action.

The repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment is in process and beer is here. The international banker is in disrepute the length and breadth of the nation. J. P. Morgan is on the witness stand with disclosures that rock the country. A Securities Act is passed for the protection of the people. Veteran legislation is passed that supplants racketeering with justice. The "Bonus" is still before

Congress and constitutes one method of getting the new money to the people.

Relief from overburdening taxes is progressing. The Economy Act is passed. State confiscation of land for delinquent taxes is in many instances halted. The incident of taxation is being shifted from real estate to more equitable forms. A sales tax is proposed by the Senate; high income taxes by the House of Representatives.

Debt relief has been given. Foreclosure sales on small homes and on farms are halted. The power to recall interest-bearing gold bonds of the United States and redeem them in currency has been given the President. All debts are payable in "lawful money." The public debts of municipalities are awaiting an orderly process of the Bankruptcy Law to defer payment. These debts likewise await pending legislation which will scale down principal and interest to a point within the capacity of the people to pay.

Banking progress is encouraging. The United States has established the National Bank of Detroit, the first Government owned banking institution in our history. The greatest affiliate banking corporation in America is divorced from its parent institution. Charles E. Mitchell is under indictment. Eugene Meyer has resigned from the Federal Reserve Board.

The monetary system of the United States is radically changed. There is an embargo on gold. The gold bullion and coin of America have been called in by the Federal Government. We have definitely repudiated the gold standard. Silver has been reintroduced into our basic monetary system. The President is given the power to reevaluate gold.

As respects labor, the machine is facing a system of legislative control. The agriculturist is blessed by farm relief legislation. One hundred million dollars has been appropriated to finance small home building. Two hundred million dollars has been granted for reforestation plans to put labor to work. The Tennessee Valley and Muscle Shoals program has passed. The thirty hour week for labor is proposed in the Industrial Recovery Act. A living and just wage is incorporated in the provisions of this Industrial Recovery Act. Reconstruction Finance Corporation loans are being directed to channels of production rather than to the "rat-holes" of debt. Federal aid is feeding a portion of the 17,000,000 in the

breadlines of the cities. The rights of labor are everywhere gaining recognition.

On the all-important subject of control, the President of the United States in his Inaugural Address declares that the money-changers must be driven from the temple of finance and the ancient truths restored. The redistribution of wealth is in progress through the Farm Relief Act, the Industrial Recovery Act, the proposed shifting of the incident of taxation and the money and the banking reforms. The principles of distributive justice and Christian charity are proclaimed by Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Such is the roll call of principles advocated by Father Coughlin.

Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Herbert Spencer and T. R. Malthus had ruled the industrial world for over a century and a half.

Truth came with Pope Leo XIII forty-two years ago. Truth came again with Pope Pius XI in 1931.

Neither Leo nor Pius had written in vain. Father Coughlin spoke their principles. The American people responded. The people still rule. Through them the philosophy of the Manchester school is discarded. Through them distributive justice and Christian charity are enthroned. Through them the new industrial revolution is recorded. The "new deal" marks another revolution, bloodless, peaceful, tremendous in its consequences.

Let us forsake history and for a moment undertake that most gratuitous form of error, prophecy. Let us look into the future with Father Coughlin.

*America of the Future*

**A**SKED Father Coughlin whether in all his economic study his mind did not project itself frequently into the future of our country. The ideas he expressed were based upon his knowledge of history, upon the principles of political economy, and upon a keen observation and interpretation of the events that are happening around us. So great is his faith in President Roosevelt that he believes as long as the President adheres to his present policies this nation will be saved from communism.

He realizes keenly, however, that men do not change their natures because a new legislative program is in effect; that the international banker is still the international banker, without patriotism, without loyalty, without a purpose in life except to increase through usury his accumulation of mere wealth.

He believes that Wall Street is still the same Wall Street ready and waiting to batten off the American people in any golden opportunity offered.

He believes that the entire industrial system must be re-organized if a right and just distribution of earnings will accomplish any permanent good. He believes the philosophy of the Manchester school must be rooted out and in its place the principles of Leo XIII and Pius XI established.

With all the credit in the world for what has been accomplished, as covered by the preceding chapter, certain conditions about us make our place in the family of nations precarious to say the least.

When the man-made depression will have lifted; when men are put back to labor at a living wage; when starvation disappears; when the policies that brought on the suffering have been changed; when financial rights are dethroned and human rights enthroned; when the wrong of the Treaty of Versailles is undone;

when the evils of capitalism are abolished—then men will be ready to face the problem of a new nationalism building out of the wreck of past mistakes the America of the future.

## I

Father Coughlin takes a simple example out of economic history to illustrate the economic position of this nation today.

During the Crimean War, America sent abroad manufactured goods, guns, clothing, shoes and munitions, all represented by finished manufactures, on which the profit on the raw materials, on semi-manufactures, on finished manufactures and on transportation had accrued to this country.

Thirty years later, the money-changers of the world were deeply engaged in financing another war—the Boer War—and again America was called upon for goods. We sent some finished manufactures, some rifles, clothing and shoes, but the records show that we were furnishing also semi-manufactures and raw materials.

Sixteen years later the World War began, and at first, necessarily, there were some finished manufactures shipped to the Allies, but we were soon sending our raw materials, our cotton, iron, steel and a wealth of other materials to be fabricated abroad. The manufacturing profit was taken by other nations. At this time we commenced to export machinery.

The end of the World War came, and Congress passed an immigration law shutting off, in large part, the source of our labor market. Following this, American industry began to Americanize Europe industrially.

We went abroad with our branches and our assembly plants. We raised tariffs to asinine proportions and then we shipped abroad our textile machinery, our shoe machinery, our automotive machinery, so that in a few weeks' time the greatest single industrialist in America shipped out of Detroit, Michigan, \$31,000,000 worth of automotive machinery to reproduce his American plants in Europe.

Expatriated capital in the form of plant machinery was not enough to send abroad. Nor was the sending of labor over there. Plan, blue print and working-drawing followed the factory and the machine. Not content with this, the brains of America were

expatriated, the industrial brains that would engineer the vast power plants of a Russia, that would supervise the construction of the great automobile plants of Germany, Russia, England and Ireland, plants that were designed in the architect's offices of America.

The basic American crops, in the meantime, had been reproduced in every great nation of the world; the cotton, the wheat, the tobacco and the live-stock were common to the world markets, and all were being produced on lower standards of living. With lower wages paid for their production, they continued to break the world price, which excluded the American product generally, but left us victims of a world-market price.

In the great textile factories of Liverpool the spindles were long. Today they are in many instances short. This means that America has lost her English cotton market and that the very machinery of the English mill is adapted to take the Egyptian cotton, to the partial exclusion of our product.

Every honest man will admit the present loss of the European market for the United States.

The great American industrial cities will never in this generation regain their former position. Detroit, Akron and Pittsburgh—children of the automotive industry—have a capacity in automobile production of nine to fifteen million cars a year. The highest productive year experienced by the industry was 4,500,000 cars and 1933 will be fortunate if there is sold at retail two million.

## II

America must develop new markets if she will face the future with hope.

For years the American policy has been one of snobbish isolation. We never cultivated the nations of South America, and one of the contributing factors was the religion of these people. We never cultivated China but looked down upon her as a pagan nation. We never cultivated India with its tremendous numbers of Mohammedans. We must open our minds and our hearts to the peoples of the entire world if we expect a world market for our goods.

If we desire to improve our position, it will be because we will enter a new international trade through the "Silver Door." Going

in by the "Silver Door" we will have to bargain with the outcast.

We must recognize fully that England, France and Germany have stolen the march in South America. They have done this by sending Catholic ambassadors to Catholic nations.

In India we have a great advantage, not because we have done anything to deserve it, but because of the imperialistic policy of England with the reaction that imperialism and oppression always bring. We can go with clean hands to India.

In the case of China, we have at least an even break with the other nations of the world. They have partitioned China, and our only great crime there was participation in the Boxer Rebellion with the levying of an indemnity, which the school books explain was handed back to China for education, but which we know was devoted to proselyting among the Chinese.

Both England and France have invested heavily in China in textiles. They have put the coolie to work at five cents a day. They have cleared China of German industrialism; they have monopolized the commerce of this great people. If we care to go, we must go through the "Silver Door." We can reevaluate the gold ounce to save ourselves, but we must remonetize silver if we are to introduce ourselves in the world market.

From a purely practical point of view this is the American situation.

After the opportunity for unchallenged leadership was given us we stultified our own growth. We shut off the immigrant, who was the source of labor. We expatriated capital and invested in the futures of all the governments and industries of the world. We followed the expatriation of capital by a new and unparalleled expansion of our industrial system in Europe. Not content to build factories there, we sent over the machinery to equip the factories. The plan, blue print and working-drawing were sent to be certain that Europe received the full heritage of our engineering genius.

Not content with this, we exported brains, the technicians of the nation. We permitted Europe to profit not only by inheriting our technical skill but we eliminated any chance of error by duplicating the proven products of American genius.

If in reconstructing our own social and economic order, we change our monetary system, we reevaluate gold, we reorganize

our banking, withdraw our bonds and put money in the hands of the people, if we meet squarely and fairly our debt situation, and relieve a burdened people of the threat of the impossible—only in these things do we start, even if we limit the machine.

We will find progressive nations all over the face of the earth ready to reproduce the American system—ready to build vast roads throughout the empires, to produce motor cars and furniture and clothing, to adopt the American system of extensive agriculture, with tool and machine and powered implement—all far cheaper than we can ever produce these things if we adhere to the American standard of living.

After showing the world the way, we will have become victims of our own absurdities.

### III

The way out ultimately will be to propagate abroad the one important thing, the philosophy of the living wage. Following this we should send throughout the world the Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." Unless the principles of distributive justice and Christian charity are established throughout the world America cannot stand, even with her reconstruction program.

Unless the fatherhood of God be retaught—unless the brotherhood of man be preached to the nations—unless we strive for the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ, and extend that Kingdom to the uttermost parts of the world—all is in vain.

March, April, May, June and July, 1933, represent the greatest months of progress in the history of the American nation, for Christian principles are being written day after day in the statutes of this country.

This is the great step forward, but after this must come "Christ in the market place," where he is so sorely needed.

Then America will have started well on her destiny, but that destiny is the establishment of those principles of justice and charity throughout the world that will remove the economic and social obstacles in the way of men.

In a definite and practical way there must be redramatized the Pentecostal mission. The apostles of justice and charity must be sent again "to the uttermost bounds of the earth."

## [ CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX ]

### *Conclusion*

"Mourn not the dead that in the cold earth lie,  
But rather mourn the apathetic throng,  
The cowed, the meek,  
Who see a world's great suffering and its wrong,  
And dare not speak."



EVEREND CHARLES E. COUGHLIN saw this world in suffering and dire misery. He spoke. As a result, America is passing through a revolution, bloodless, but as determinative as were the French or American Revolutions. Whence came this power to one man? We have read his story and it explains nothing of the source of his power.

We learn that his progenitors came from Ireland and have been in the United States for three generations. But there are 17,000,000 descendants of the Irish in America and only one Father Coughlin.

His training was in the parochial school system. But there are over 2,100,000 pupils in these schools today. This system has given us only one Charles E. Coughlin.

He was trained by college and university, but there are 750,000 students passing through their courses in higher education at a time. A Roosevelt, a Moley and a Coughlin carry to the public the "new deal" opposed to the "rugged individualism" of the last centuries.

He studied for the priesthood and was ordained. But there are over 29,000 priests in the United States, and aside from Dr. John A. Ryan, Dr. Joseph Husslein, Father Millar and a few others, little has been done by the clergy. Not one has the influence of this man.

He is a parish priest, but so are seven thousand others. Yet the Shrine of the Little Flower, his church, is known throughout the nation.

The task that confronted him was the same task that confronts the clergy of the world, and the instructions to the priests of the Universal Church are the same. Yet alone Father Coughlin has done more to solve the problems of the economic and social order than any other living man by bringing the programs of Leo XIII and Pius XI into the homes of the people.

The method he used was available at all times to all leaders who cared to accept it. Yet aside from the splendid "Catholic Hour," there is little or no use made of radio facilities on behalf of the Catholic Church of America.

The frightful threat of the red terror, communism, was before all men. Dr. Edmund A. Walsh made remarkable studies, but Father Charles E. Coughlin brought the subject into the homes of the millions.

The encyclical of Leo XIII, the *Rerum Novarum*, was addressed to every prelate, archbishop, bishop and priest of the world. For forty years it remained largely in academic circles. One priest and one priest alone popularized its doctrines.

Prohibition was before us and needed destruction. At tremendous personal sacrifices one man and one man only exposed its origins and its hypocrisies.

The encyclical of Pius XI, the *Quadragesimo Anno*, was published as Father Coughlin was well launched into his normal economic doctrines.

Economic and social conditions this nation over were disgraceful; wealth was concentrated in the hands of a few; dire and abject poverty was the lot of the millions; the doctrines of distributive justice and Christian charity were generally unknown; gold was our master; the money-changers were in the temple; taxation was overburdening; debt was stupendous; the farm and the home of the laborer were being confiscated; usury was rampant; legislation protected the few; non-productive bonds bled the nation's resources; capitalism had collected its barnacles; the monetary system was unjust; the banking system was immoral; the Mellon regime was all-powerful; Ogden Mills was backing principles that would permanently enslave a nation; Congress was lethargic; Hoover had his old philosophy concerning securities, "Money is not lost. It simply passes into productive hands from the pockets of the idiots who invest it." J. Pierpont Morgan was in high re-

## CONCLUSION

pute; Charles E. Mitchell was our distinguished leader. Sam Insull was the honored patron of civic righteousness; Eugene Meyer stood unrevealed; the Detroit Bankers were as Cæsar's wife, above suspicion; the veteran was neglected; the investor was universally deceived; the laborer's wage was less than a living wage; unemployment affected six, nine, twelve, fifteen millions of our people; ultimately, seventeen millions were sustained by charity; the machine was unharnessed and was destroying all chance of prosperity. In the midst of plenty a nation starved.

Hundreds knew all these conditions but one alone addressed the nation on these subjects.

The results of Father Coughlin's ministry are published in the preceding chapters.

What is the source of the power of this one man? Not universal popularity. A Cardinal-Prince set out to undermine his position. Fellow priests let envy burn in their hearts and attacked him viciously. A metropolitan newspaper used the full powers of calumny, libel and deceit to destroy this one priest.

Perhaps his strength lay in the deep spirituality that is evidenced by his love for the passion of Christ. Perhaps his strength lay in prayer, for he is a man of prayer. Perhaps in the endless hours of labor, for he is indefatigable. Perhaps his strength lies in his good works, for he is most charitable. Perhaps his strength lies in the sublimity of his doctrine. But his doctrine is as old as Christ and the Prophets, as old as the Fathers and the Popes. Sublimity of doctrine without the supernatural avails little.

After the weeks of study of the man personally and of his works, I prefer to think, however, that this man's source of strength is from above; that a Divine Providence directing the destiny of this nation of ours has chosen him, Father Coughlin, to do certain work. I prefer to think that his gifts are truly the gifts of the Holy Ghost—wisdom, understanding, fortitude, counsel, piety, knowledge and fear of the Lord. But even these are gifts given all who are confirmed in the Faith of our Fathers. I believe that he has used these gifts freely, openly and honestly, that he has let his light shine before men and that men have seen his good works and many have glorified God.

As a result, he is a man blessed today. To him, because he has used his supernatural gifts, have been given the fruits that dis-

FATHER CHARLES E. COUGHLIN

tinguish him! Charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, and chastity. These are the fruits of the Holy Ghost.

His charity is known to all men. His joy is to be among the children of men. He preaches peace, not as the world gives it, but as Christ gives it. He is so patient that he was the most surprised man in America when the results of his discourses found their way immediately or rapidly into legislative enactment. He is benign and gracious. He is good. His modesty is known to all men. He has the vow of chastity. But above all things, he has faith,—faith in the supernatural, in the Divine Providence that watches over the affairs of men and that will ultimately lead us out even of our own stupid mistakes. From these gifts and fruits, I believe, comes the power of Father Coughlin. Granted this be true I repeat his request from his last discourse of April 16, 1933, "I ask the prayers of those who hear these words, lest while I preach to others I myself become a castaway."

## ERRATA

On page 261, paragraph 7, line 2, the publishers take no responsibility for the broad statement that "Father Coughlin also exposed E. D. Stair, president of the Detroit Bankers Company, the only one person on whom responsibility must be placed for the wreckage of the great banking institutions held by this 'hide-out' holding company."

The publishers hereby go on record stating that this line here referred to should read: "Father Coughlin also exposed E. D. Stair, president of the Detroit Bankers Company, one person on whom responsibility must be placed for the wreckage of the great banking institutions held by this 'hide-out' holding company."

On page 112, paragraph 3, line 4, the date 1783 should read 1873.

*Signed:* TOWER PUBLICATIONS, INCORPORATED.

