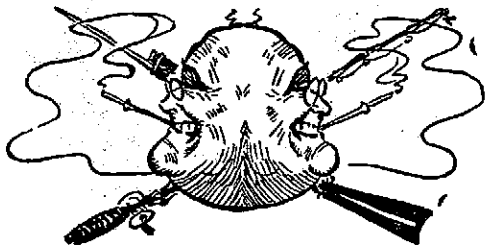


Why We Are In the War

THE SNIDE CRITICISM of President Roosevelt for sending soldiers outside the Western hemisphere in spite of his very recent solemn pledge not to do so, indicates a naive belief that political acts or promises are based on ethical standards. There never was, there never will be a politician whose acts can be measured by the ethics of the contractual man. That is, not while he is in office or acting in official capacity. For the very nature of politics is expediency, and what may be the expedient thing to do today may be quite inexpedient tomorrow. Any politician who circumscribes his course with principles is not likely to last long in office or accomplish anything while there.

This habit of entrusting our fate to politicians, arising as it does from faith in their honesty of purpose as well as their adherence to a philosophy, is



the tragedy of our political system. Broken platform promises and repudiated international agreements attest with sickening regularity the unprincipled character of the political word and the political act. Yet we keep on believing, trusting. Maybe it's because we lack understanding of principles or forces which act without direction once a given set of circumstances comes into play.

We are at war because our international economy forced us into war, not because Mr. Roosevelt willed a war. Our soldiers will be in other foreign places than Iceland, and Mr. Roosevelt cannot keep his promise to prevent it, whether he wishes to do so or not. Our conscripts will be kept in arms for much longer than the contractual year of the law, because we are at war. And because of the war our ensuing economy will be a State-regulated economy, with bureaucracy, secret enforcing agencies, an army caste system, and all the social components of totalitarianism. We are sliding down the banister and nothing can stop us until we hit bottom; politicians can only speed our descent with grease.

There is only one way by which the direction of

politico-economic trends can be or ever was influenced—and that is by the social knowledge and conscience of the people. What we know and how our behavior is influenced by that knowledge determines the conditions under which we live. We, not our political leaders, make our environment, and unless we are familiar with basic principles our architecture will be faulty.

There is only one way to achieve a free society—and that is by understanding the principles of a free society. In education, not in politics, is our hope.