

These 'Subsidiary Issues' Are Cornerstones

In flatly rejecting the suggestion of Senator BREWSTER that a "truce" be called now on Congressional consideration of international economic legislation, FRED M. VINSON took the only position the Administration could take in the interest of candor and honesty.

The Senator said in a radio address, "It would be tragic indeed if strong feelings aroused in the discussion of banks, or exchange, or aviation, or traffic, or other subsidiary issues should endanger the approval of the agreements reached at San Francisco regarding a world security organization." Allowing Senator BREWSTER due credit for his obvious concern for the success of the San Francisco deliberations, his use of the word "subsidiary" in describing such legislation as approval of the Bretton Woods proposals, extension of the trade treaty agreements, and tariffs, seems to reveal a thoroughly insufficient grasp of the fact that these issues are a fundamental part of the political instrument for peace-keeping which we all prayerfully hope will be born at San Francisco.

The United States cannot be politically internationalist and economically isolationist. If Congress means to reject the Bretton Woods proposal, scrap the Trade Agreements Act with its machinery for reciprocal lowering of tariffs on specific items, we should give warning now to the representatives of the nations gathered at San Francisco that those are our intentions so that they can pack up and go home and look elsewhere for leadership in the creation of an international security organization.

We believe Senator BREWSTER would be as shocked as the rest of the nation, if any such desperate failure should overtake the hope of mankind, centered now at San Francisco, for the creation of a working organization to safeguard the peace of the world. But we cannot eat our cake and have it too. It is not enough to pass resolutions in favor of international collabora-

tion to check aggression, or to give voice to commendable sentiments about the beauties of peace. The world has once before experienced the tragic result of our righteous habit of endorsing moral objectives for the world and then running out on the ratification of our promises. This time we must either put up or shut up, and the test of our sincerity resides in the action Congress will take on the Bretton Woods proposals, and the Trade Agreements Act.

The time has come for Congress to realize that its deliberations on these subjects are followed with anxiety and concern by people all over the world, whether their representatives are at San Francisco or not. That fact should in no way inhibit reasonable and constructive debate before Congress takes action on these measures. But it ought to inhibit the kind of ignorant demagogery that passed for debate recently in the House Ways and Means Committee meeting when Secretary WALLACE was testifying for renewal of the Trade Agreements Act. The performance of certain representatives on that occasion reached a high point even for Congressional irresponsibility.

If this is to be the temper in Congress of our consideration of the great economic bases designed to support the political structure of peace, we can hardly fail to encourage in the rest of the world the practice of unilateral and nationalistic economic policies, hand in hand with unilateral and nationalistic political policies. The economic proposals are part and parcel of the whole great design, as FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT plainly stated in his message to Congress on the Bretton Woods Proposals on February 12th: "If we are to measure up to the task of peace with the same stature as we have measured up to the task of war, we must see that the institutions of peace rest firmly on the solid foundations of international political and economic cooperation. The cornerstone of international po-

litical cooperation is the Dumbarton Oaks proposal for a permanent United Nations.

"International political relations will be friendly and constructive, however, only if solutions are found to the difficult economic problems we face today. The cornerstone for international economic cooperation is the Bretton Woods proposals for an international bank for reconstruction and development.

"The proposals for an international fund and international bank are concrete evidence that the economic objectives of the United States agree with those of the United Nations. They illustrate our unity of purpose and interest in the economic field . . ."

The international economic legislation—Bretton Woods and the Trade Agreements Act—are cornerstones. They are not, as Senator BREWSTER appears to think, "subsidiary issues." If we mean to chisel them lopsided, if we mean not to lay them at all, we ought to serve notice of our intentions to the delegates at San Francisco so that the structure they are carefully and painstakingly attempting to build there will not be reared upon the rejected cornerstone of United States economic cooperation.