

Foreword

IN THIS book are gathered articles, speeches, and reports, which were published in the period of February 2, 1938, and February 27, 1939, all dealing with the question of American foreign policy, or with other and related questions from the angle of foreign policy. A few items were written many weeks before publication, for example, the first in the book was written in December, 1937, for the *New Republic*, but was published only on February 2, 1938.

The date of each article or speech is important. It is important to ask of those who would pass judgment on questions of foreign policy, what was their attitude on each question at the moment of decision. It is relatively an easy matter to assess a critical decision six months or a year after it has been made, particularly in these days when history moves with seven-league-boots. Even the architect of the Munich Pact, Neville Chamberlain himself, is forced in March, 1939, to admit the catastrophic consequences of the decisions of the end of September, 1938. The real test of fundamental understanding of history in the process of making, is to inquire what was said of the Munich Pact and the policy which it expressed, in September and October of last year.

I would ask the readers of this book to test the soundness of the policies which it advocates from this viewpoint: were the proposals made in time to have avoided the catastrophes which occurred, had they been studied, adopted and acted upon when they were made? Read the brief article published in the *New Masses* for September 27 entitled "Stop the Sell-Out," written a week earlier, in the days between Chamberlain's visits to Berchtesgaden and Godesburg. Then read the two cables from

Paris, published, in the *Daily Worker* October 5 and 8; and the article written in Paris October 11, appraising the results of Munich, especially as they affect America. The fact that events have confirmed these articles up to the hilt, is the best proof that the Communists, alone among all organized political groups or parties, understood events while they were taking place and could offer sound counsel. Those articles and cables reflected the course pursued by the Communists, unitedly, all over the world; every other political party or grouping spoke for surrender, or was divided and thereby canceled itself as an influence, or was silent.

Now, considerably less than a year later, all the illusions around the Munich Pact which had paralyzed the parliamentary democracies have been dispelled as completely as last year's fogs. Britain, which had been sold on Munich as "peace for our time," has turned so completely and energetically toward the establishment of a "peace front" to halt further aggression that even Chamberlain has been forced to at least pretend that he accepts the new direction of policy. But Chamberlain's tricky and dilatory maneuvers during the last weeks reveal the sharp danger that the old fox still dreams of repeating Munich, and on a grander scale. Let us never forget that last September he even mobilized the British fleet, but all the time Hitler knew that Chamberlain would come to Munich without conditions. British attempts to set the stage for a new Munich have crashed on the rocks of Soviet vigilance, which stands as the protecting fortress for peace-loving peoples of the whole world.

It is of great historic significance to place on record the words of some outstanding European conservative spokesmen on this question. Thus "Pertinax," prominent "right-wing" publicist of France, remarks in an article for American newspapers early in June:

Last September, Chamberlain knew how to move more quickly when Hitler had to be placated. He still fails to understand... that the fate of the continent depends upon what they (the Soviet Union) will do or not do... There is irony in the fact that Chamberlain, having started with outspoken antagonism to anything like co-operation with Russia, should now be compelled to bring it into existence undiluted and unguarded. Such is the ransom for Munich and for what followed Munich.

The forces which are driving Mr. Chamberlain, unwilling as he still is, upon the course of organization of the peace front, are described by Mr. Winston Churchill, prominent Conservative and traditional enemy of the Soviet Union, in the following words:

It is astonishing how swiftly and decisively opinion in Great Britain and France has consolidated itself upon a triple alliance with Soviet Russia. The well-known objections have simply ceased to count with enormous numbers of people with whom abhorrence of Communism is still a first principle. But it should not be supposed that this change arises out of any desperate strait or panic fear. It is due to the realization of the very real harmony of interests which unites the foreign policy of the three countries... *Their common interest is peace.* (My emphasis.—E.B.)

If this is true—and it is, most profoundly—how much more should it be true also of the United States, where the special interests and commitments that distort French and British policy are either absent or much weaker! These words are a dramatic confirmation of the policy advocated from beginning to end of this book for the United States.

In the current diplomatic negotiations (middle of June), as this book is going to press, the Soviet Union is fighting not at all for any special interest of its own, but equally in the interests of the British and French peoples, and not least for the interests of America. For this view also we have the unequivocal declaration of Mr. Churchill, who wrote:

Personally, not having changed my views about Communism or past history in any respect, I have from the beginning preferred the Russian proposals to either the British or French alternatives. They are simple, they are logical and they conform to the main groupings of common interest.

It is no temporary or accidental conjuncture of circumstances which gave birth to the current negotiations for a peace front. The alignment arises inevitably from the interests of great populations, product of generations of historical development, which cannot be changed to fit the ideological fashions of the day even to please the "omnipotent" rulers of the world of finance capital, of monopoly. For this view also we have the supporting testimony of Mr. Churchill, who declared:

There is a real and honorable basis of equal and rightful interest existing in external affairs between the Soviets and the parliamentary democracies. It is this that has invested the triple peace design with vitality. Matters have now gone so far that it is inconceivable that any of the three governments could take the responsibility of depriving the hundreds of millions of working people involved of this joint security for their life and progress. Agreement is driven forward by irresistible forces overriding and shearing away serious obstacles and valid prejudices as if they were but straws.

Of course, there are Americans to whom these views are extremely obnoxious, whether they are expressed by the Conservative, Winston Churchill, the British Labor Party, Leon Blum, or the Communists. Among those irreconcilable opponents of collaboration for peace with the Soviet Union are Herbert Hoover, Hamilton Fish, Hearst, Father Coughlin, General Moseley, Martin Dies, and Norman Thomas. Whatever differences may exist among these gentlemen and their followers, they are over-ridden and reduced to secondary position by their common fanatical, unreasoning, and irreconcilable hatred for the Soviet Union which brings them all into an

effective alliance on the most burning issues of the day. This alliance is further cemented by a second common hatred, also very intense, against Roosevelt and the New Deal.

It is a sad thing to see the Socialist Party brought into such an alignment of reactionary forces on both foreign and domestic issues, through the ineptitude and muddle-headedness typified by Norman Thomas, and through its illicit dalliance with Trotskyism. That is why that once influential party today resembles nothing so much as Lewis Carroll's famous grinning Cheshire Cat, of Alice's Wonderland, whose body gradually faded away until nothing was left of it but the grin which lingered on, suspended in mid-air, after the Cat had completely disappeared.

The Chamberlain policy of appeasement of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis, bankrupt and routed in Britain itself, still finds strong forces to defend it in the United States. It dominates the Republican and Socialist Parties, as well as the Garner-Dies wing of the Democratic Party, and controls 80 per cent of the press, including such nominal "New Deal" organs as the *New York Post*. But the current of popular opinion and sentiment is running rapidly against it, and its final collapse in the United States is as inevitable and will be as complete as in Britain.

This will be the dominant issue in the Presidential contest in 1940, when the United States must chart its course for another four years.

The present book, *Fighting For Peace*, is intended primarily as a reference book and handbook on this dominant issue, the foreign policy of the United States. It contains, in varied forms, the basic ideological and informational armament needed for the struggle to complete the winning of the American people for an active policy of peace and international order. Its starting point and fundament is the national inter-

ests of the American people. But these national interests are found, not in contradiction to, but in harmony with, the national interests of every people of the earth, not excepting those of Germany, Italy, and Japan, whose hopes of deliverance from misery and bondage depend in large degree upon world organization for peace to halt the aggressions of their rulers. Above all, we find the national interests of the American people in full harmony with those of the peoples of the Soviet Union, and with the policies of the Soviet Government.

On March 18, the Soviet peace policy was given its most adequate and authoritative statement by Joseph Stalin, in his report to the 18th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This book would be entirely inadequate for its purpose if it omitted that historic declaration, which came after this book was planned and given to the printers. It is therefore quoted here, as the most important substantiation of our main argument, the necessity and practicability of Soviet-American collaboration in world affairs as the main hope and instrument for world peace and international order. Stalin said:

The foreign policy of the Soviet Union is clear and explicit:

1. We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country.
2. We stand for peaceful, close, and friendly relations with all neighboring countries which have common frontiers with the U.S.S.R. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass, directly or indirectly, on the integrity and inviolability of the frontiers of the Soviet state.
3. We stand for the support of nations which are the victims of aggression and are fighting for the independence of their country.
4. We are not afraid of the threats of aggressors, and are ready

to deal two blows for every blow delivered by instigators of war who attempt to violate the Soviet borders.

Such is the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

Every word in Stalin's declaration harmonizes fully with the national interests of the United States. It could be taken entire as a full and correct statement of policy for the United States itself, as a definition of the policy of the "Good Neighbor."

This book, like its predecessors, represents the results, not of an isolated literary effort, but of a broad collaboration in the labor and peace movements of the United States, with my associates in the leadership of the Communist Party of the U.S.A., and with the leaders of fraternal Communist Parties, especially of Latin-America and Canada, France, Britain, Spain, China, the Philippines, and, in the first place, the Soviet Union. Without such a broad and fruitful background and basis of collective effort, such a book as this would be impossible. Having been produced, in its various parts, under the impact of day-to-day events, its lack of a well-planned literary structure must be compensated by those qualities which are produced by the heat of the political battle, in which this book was conceived, and for which it is an instrument. The author must therefore make the broadest acknowledgements, while assuming full personal responsibility for any and all mistakes, and for the particular contents of the book.

To Irene Browder is due special acknowledgment of that constant stimulus and criticism, the insistence upon ever-rising standards of work, which every writer needs above all from his closest associates, and which she has contributed to the production of this book.

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