



A Letter to Americans

By Charles A. Lindbergh

Charles A. Lindbergh, Lone Eagle of the transatlantic flight, asks searching questions in this eloquent article. Although Collier's does not agree with Mr. Lindbergh about the wisdom of aiding Britain, we take pleasure in presenting his powerful statement of the isolationists' position

Editor, Collier's

In California, a Lockheed bomber starts its trip to England—part of the "all aid short of war" that Mr. Lindbergh opposes

I ADDRESS this letter to every man and woman in America who is opposed to our country's entry into the European war. I write because we are being led toward that war with ever-increasing rapidity, and by every conceivable subterfuge. While our leaders have shouted for peace, they have constantly directed us toward war, until even now we are seriously involved.

I write to ask your immediate aid in maintaining the independent American destiny our forefathers established. I write to warn you that the men who entice us on to war have no more idea of how that war can be won than the governments of France and England had when they declared war on Germany. The interventionists call on us to fight, and then their responsibility ends. They offer no feasible plan for victory.

The situation in America today is alarmingly similar to that of France and England in the years prior to this war. There, as here, people let their emotions get the better of their judgment; and

they had the same unwillingness to face realities. Both countries had refused to take part in a European readjustment while there was still time to make it peacefully. Both had refused to make the sacrifice that was essential for adequate rearmament. They, too, had cultivated the philosophy that it was necessary to defend someone else in order to defend themselves. How they could defend anyone else if they were unable to defend themselves, they apparently did not consider any more than we are considering today.

Their failure is now obvious, and stands out clearly before us. The imposition of "sanctions" did not save Abyssinia; but it threw Italy into the arms of Germany and sowed the seeds for the Axis. The threat of war by England and France did not save Poland; but it forced Germany and Russia into an alliance and precipitated a disastrous war. Adjustments that should have been made in peace and moderation were finally brought by war and resulted in

immoderation. The failure to face realities in peace brought the curse of war on Europe. The failure to face the realities of war brought defeat to France and devastation to England.

WHEN the last war ended, the victorious Allies had two courses open to them. They could either have assisted Germany back onto her feet as a self-respecting nation, or they could have kept her in a weakened condition by the use of military force. But they followed neither of these policies. England and France wavered back and forth between the two, while the United States withdrew her armies and her politics to the Western Hemisphere—avowedly forever.

During the years immediately succeeding the last war, Germany was held down with an iron heel. The terms of Versailles were the terms of a military victory, and when Germany defaulted on her payment of reparations, French troops occupied the Ruhr. But during

the following two decades, England decided to disarm, while France allowed the equipment of her army to become obsolete for modern warfare. Then Germany broke the terms of Versailles, re-armed and marched her troops back into the Rhineland. When this happened, a few men in France and England, with greater vision than the rest, cried out that Germany must be stopped then, or that it would be forever too late. Their statements were met with popular indifference.

During the most active years of German rearmament, France and England exerted relatively little effort to compete. It seemed impossible for them to realize what was taking place in Central Europe. But later, after Germany had trained her armies, built her air force and constructed the Siegfried Line, the demand grew in France and England for military action—a demand which culminated in the declaration of war of 1939, and which has already caused the defeat of France and the devastation of

England. While there was still time to fight, populace and politician refused to let the armies move. When the time to fight had passed, the armies were forced into a hopeless battle.

I sat in England, one afternoon in 1938, listening to the man who had charge of co-ordinating defense for the British government. I had pleaded with him to take additional steps to safeguard the British position in aviation. I had told him that if this were not done Germany would soon become as supreme in the air as England was at sea. He listened courteously, and then replied that if the wars in Spain and China had demonstrated one thing, it was that the danger of air bombardment, and the damage which could be inflicted by bombing planes, had been grossly exaggerated. He said that the British aviation program was being "adequately expanded."

A FEW months later, at the time of the Munich crisis, I went to see one of the foremost leaders of England. I went at the request of other English leaders, to tell him my belief that the strength of German aviation was underestimated in England, and that the strength of Russian aviation was almost as much overestimated. He did not agree with me, although he admitted that the situation was serious. While I was there, however, he showed me an official report concerning British anti-aircraft units. The report stated that not enough anti-aircraft guns existed in all England to form an adequate defense for the city of London alone. Yet that man at that moment, was advocating war.

At the time of Munich, the Royal Air Force had only a few squadrons of modern fighters and bombers. The majority of their planes were obsolete. And all of them put together totaled a fraction of the German air force. The condition of French aviation was even more deplorable. There was not a single squadron in France equipped with modern pursuit planes, and the French government was looking forward to the time when its aircraft production would reach a total of 200 fighting planes per month.

When I returned to Paris after a flight to Russia, in the fall of 1938, I met, at his request, one of the members of the French cabinet. I gave him my estimate of the Russian and German air forces, telling him of the tremendous expansion of military aviation that had taken place in Germany, and that Russian aviation had been unable to keep pace. He replied that my estimates confirmed the worst fears of the French, and corresponded to the reports of an air mission they had recently sent to Germany. I found that aviation circles in France, at that time, freely admitted that Germany would take supremacy of the air almost as soon as a war started.

From the standpoint of logic, the aviation situation in Europe was in itself sufficient reason to prevent a declaration of war by France and England in 1939. But when one looked farther, he found that the same conditions existed in relation to the ground armies of Europe. Even the civilian population of Germany had been trained and prepared for war, while the people in France and England were not.

One of the striking differences between France and England, during the months immediately preceding this war, lay in the fact that France was alert to her danger but disorganized; while England was organized but only half awake. In France, internal conditions were so bad that I often wondered whether war or revolution would break upon the country first. In England, there was no danger of revolution, but the people of that nation had never adjusted them-

selves to the tempo of this modern era. Their minds were still attuned to the speed of sail rather than to that of aircraft. The way of life in England was ideal for times of peace, but fatal for a modern war. In Germany, on the other hand, one found a nation that had risen from the prostration of a previous defeat—a nation less tolerant, less satisfied, than its neighbors; a nation fully trained for war, and nurtured on the philosophy that right is inseparable from might.

The true facts of the European situation had been hidden from the people of England and France. They were not adequately informed either of Germany's strength or of their own weakness. Politicians and idealists harangued them about stopping aggression, about defending freedom and democracy, about maintaining their way of life, but the realities of modern warfare—the elements that spell failure or success—were seldom discussed. The orators shouted: "We must stop Hitler." The newspapers echoed: "Down with the Nazi regime." The people of France and England resigned themselves to the inevitability of war. But not a single man told how to break the Siegfried Line.

I can best illustrate the attitude in the democracies of Europe by telling you of a conversation I had one evening with a French businessman on the outskirts of Paris. He had been talking for nearly an hour about the inevitability of war, and why German aggression must be stopped. He advocated a declaration of war by France.

"What would your first move be?" I asked him.

"We must fight the Germans," he replied.

"But how?" I asked him. "Do you think the French army can break the Siegfried Line?"

He looked startled, then sank back into his chair. "Oh, I don't know about that," he answered. "That's up to the military men."

A WEEK or two later, I was having lunch with one of those military men—a general in the French army. I asked him if he felt that the Siegfried Line could be broken.

"No," he replied, "I don't think so." And then added: "But if it could, the cost would be too high."

"What's the answer then?" I asked. For the war drums were beating loudly.

He shrugged his shoulders. "If only they had let us attack when we wanted to," he said. "When we could have won, the people would not fight. And now, when we cannot win, they want war."

France waited until it was too late. England waited until it was too late. We in America have waited until it is too late; and yet we step closer and closer to the war, as though hypnotized by its bombing and its fury. Like France and England in 1939, we are unprepared today. We have not as many thoroughly modern fighting planes in our Army and Navy combined as Germany produces in a single week; and our Army is deplorably lacking in such essential items as tanks and antitank cannon. We have not made the sacrifice necessary for adequate rearmament. We, too, have cultivated the philosophy that it is essential to defend someone else in order to defend ourselves. Our politicians and idealists harangue us about defending freedom and democracy, and our way of life. They are now shouting, "We must stop Hitler." Our newspapers echo "Down with the Nazi regime." But not one feasible plan has been offered us for an invasion of the continent of Europe. With the disaster of France and England fresh before us, we are following the selfsame path.

We, in America, are being led to war by a group of interventionists, and for-

FOR THOMAS

Charles A. Lindbergh

eign interests, against the will of a majority of our people. Every poll of public opinion has shown that from 80 per cent to 95 per cent of Americans are opposed to entering this war. Both the Republican and Democratic parties were forced to incorporate antiwar planks in their platforms. Both presidential candidates were compelled to take a stand against our intervention. Yet today, although no one has made an attempt to attack us, we already have one foot in the war. We have even now entangled "our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor and caprice."

WHAT has happened to us? How was this condition brought about? The procedure has not been dissimilar to that which took us into the last war. When hostilities in Europe began, it was fully realized by the foreign interests and interventionists in this country that the great majority of Americans stood firmly opposed to entering the conflict.

These interventionists knew that it was useless for them to advocate openly a declaration of war by America. They therefore adopted a more subtle plan. They believed that while the people of the United States would not agree to a declaration of war, we could be beguiled into supporting steps that would inevitably lead to war. Consequently, instead of advocating war, they advocated steps which they called "short of war"—steps which have already entangled us, and which will leave us no alternative to war if we continue to take them. The policy of the interventionists has been, from the beginning, to support every movement that would lead us in the direction of war, and to oppose every movement that would not—always under their mask of "aid short of war." I have listened more than once to interventionists in America discuss the question of what steps "short of war" would take us into war most quickly.

To be specific, soon after war was

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Informally Yours

By Henry L. Jackson

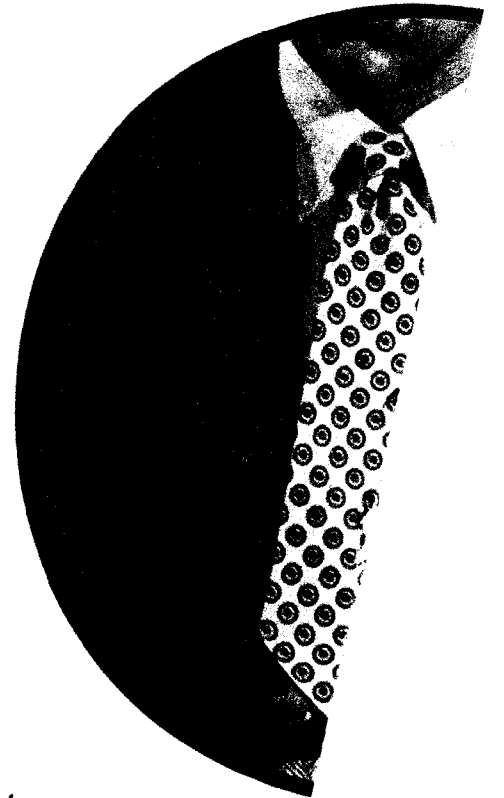
THE people who Emilypost men's cloaks and suits say it's all right now to wear your country week-end clothes to business. Within reason, of course. No play suits, no flannel shirts, no knit ties, no rope-sole shoes. But lightweight tweeds and gabardines—okay.

Informal flannel and covert suits become citified when you dignify them with the right accessories, dressy business shirts and regular town hats. There's one concession you can make, however, to the flora and fauna of East Milkstop: neckwear may be gay, colorful.

Keep the coat and pants in the same family. The odd jacket is an acceptable uniform for a station wagon, but on the hard city sidewalks, uh-uh!

The single-breasted suit is best for this semisports, double-action use. Try a Glen Urquhart pattern, with a bright overplaid, or a striped flannel. An easy-fitting suit in solid colors will give variety to your summer wardrobe.

For the cool of the evening, a covert topcoat will keep you comfortable in town or country, but be sure it's a loose, casual model—not form-fitting. And if the country air is a few degrees cooler than the city, blend a sweater into your ensemble.



For pampering pigeons or any other informal town activity—the office, for instance—you won't go wrong with semisports clothes. The covert topcoat at the left is casual, easy-fitting. So is the suit at the right, a lightweight worsted flannel. The inset photographs show the effects achieved by various color combinations: No. 1, blue-and-white striped broadcloth shirt, electric blue foulard tie with a white overall pattern, blue-gray chalk-stripe suit, all set off by the olive drab of the topcoat. No. 2, pale yellow broadcloth shirt with navy-spotted, corn-color tie, blue-bordered handkerchief and gray-blue suit



PHOTOGRAPHS FOR COLLIER'S
BY IFOR THOMAS