

The Active Search for Peace

By Representatives Byron N. Scott and Jerry J. O'Connell

THIS week a small group of congressmen, including ourselves, met to discuss America's foreign policy. Five of us had already introduced into Congress bills which either amend the present Neutrality Act or provide for non-recognition of aggressor nations. All of us subscribe to the principle that peace is to be achieved only in consultation with other democratic and peace-seeking nations, and that such consultations presuppose a distinction between aggressors and the victims of aggression, between treaty violators and nations which respect treaty obligations.

As a result of our meeting a congressional group is, at long last, actively engaged in the search for peace.

In the face of a grave international situation and of irresponsible rumors about America's foreign policy, our concern was wholly with the problem of peace, peace for the United States, peace for all the world as the only guarantee against America's involvement in war. Seldom have legislators met with so little pride of authorship, so little paternal partiality for their own legislative children. The Scott, Maas, Lewis, Biermann, and O'Connell resolutions were before us. But there was no trace of rivalry in our discussion of these measures. It was our sole aim to bring out of these independent efforts a joint effort which, drawing on the best that was in each of them, would supersede them all and offer to the Congress and the people an effective instrument for peace.

So firmly united in our objective, we readily agreed on a program of action. We decided to petition the House Foreign Affairs Committee for immediate hearings on all five bills, to be considered jointly. We believe that from these hearings one bill will emerge to which we can give our united support. A petition for hearings has already been drafted and will be circulated for signatures at once.

We attach great importance to an inevitable by-product of these hearings. We believe that from them will come a more satisfactory answer to the question, "What is America's foreign policy?" than has been elicited by inquiries in Congress. Under our Constitution the President, the State Department, and the Senate are jointly charged with the conduct of foreign affairs. But they are subject to the greatest of all checks and balances which operate in our democracy—they are subject to the will of the American people. What is the foreign policy of the people, of the workers and farmers, small businessmen, mothers and sons of America? Nobody knows. Perhaps



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the people themselves do not yet know. We can be certain of only one thing—all of our people want peace. But there is among them today no unanimity on the all-important question of how peace is to be achieved.

A great nation like ours does not swing overnight from the isolationism of the past eighteen years to a program of concerted effort for peace. But neither does it cling forever to an outworn illusion whose dangers are each day more brutally exposed. American foreign policy is in flux. Not only individuals, but organizations representing millions of individuals, are awakening from the isolationist dream of safety. Some, like the recent Conference on the Cause and Cure of War, have taken the road to collective action and the preservation of peace through economic sanctions against the war-makers. Others are still rubbing the sleep from their eyes, uncertain which way to turn.

What is needed is frank and open discussion. The Ludlow referendum, which gave the people the sole right to declare war, was defeated in the House. But the decision in favor of peace must not be put off until the moment when a formal declaration of war is already on the agenda. Now is the time to decide—now, before it is too late.

We believe that one nation, even a nation so strong and so geographically protected as our own, cannot achieve peace alone. In the modern world it takes only one to make a war. It takes many to make peace. In the task of securing peace it is madness to seek the help of those whose purpose it is to plunge the world into war. In the task of preserving international order and international decency we can look for help only from those who, like ourselves, respect decency and order. Therefore we propose consultations with the great democracies of the world, from which the fascist aggressors are excluded. In the Non-Inter-

vention Committee the democracies of Europe "consulted" with the invaders of Spain. With what result is well known. If Nyon was a more fruitful conference, the reason must be found in Italy's absence.

Consultation with like-minded nations is not synonymous with military alliance, in spite of those who try to make it seem so. Consultation among the signatories to treaties outlawing war as an instrument of national policy is the logical, and peaceful, means of penalizing the treaty violators. None of the bills referred to above advocate military action against aggressor nations, or military alliances for "policing" the world. The hoped-for result of consultations is joint economic action—the simple refusal to do business with international gangsters. We believe that the world's democracies can without danger to themselves or their people decline to exchange the social amenities of recognition with puppet states; decline to sell the instruments of murder to murderers; decline to provide, either through loans, credits, or trade exchange, the blood money without which war cannot be waged. We believe that this kind of concerted economic boycott of war is the way to starve the war-makers into submission to a world-wide will for peace.

Do the American people agree with us? Many do, but their voice is stilled in the press and their newly evolved policy of peace not yet vocal and organized. Many do not—how many is by no means certain. Still others are in doubt—they have the right to more information about the alternatives before they make up their minds.

Public hearings on America's peace policy will clarify the issues. The testimony of competent witnesses will, we feel sure, bring out with new emphasis the extent to which isolationism means armaments and, in the end, war. Fuller discussion than has yet been possible will also explode the myth that collective action and economic penalties mean war.

If they do nothing more than provide the American people with a forum for thoroughly airing their views on foreign policy, hearings before the House Foreign Affairs Committee will have been worth while. We hope that they will do much more—that they will result in legislative proposals which will remove the fear of war from our hearts by bringing nearer the realization of our desire for peace.

A group of congressmen has enlisted in the active search for peace. We urge the American people to join us, that the search may attain its goal.

England and American Security

By Theodore Draper

BIG BILL THOMPSON used to run away with the Chicago elections by daring King George III (1738-1820) to stand up like a man and fight it out to a finish. Since there were relatively few Redcoats in town at election time, Big Bill never risked anything but a hoarse throat. It was a looney show while it lasted; and the depression made it look silly, at least in retrospect.

Big Bill won his elections but failed to keep his promise, failed miserably. The Redcoats are back. The second British invasion has begun. The enemy has gained a salient in the corridors of Capitol Hill. They are threatening our national interest. They are dragging us into war. Their agent in the White House sends naval appropriation bills to Congress that were practically written by the British admiralty. An American naval officer, sent over to consult with his superiors in London, gave them a mortgage on the fleet.

The whole show has a familiar and melancholy ring. Big Bill is gone, and a professor who ought to know better has replaced him. The new fight is over congressional votes on a navy bill, but Benedict Arnold is still a set-up and King George's minions still hypnotize their not-quite bright American cousins into handing over the marbles.

The bitter truth is that the debate on the most portentous issue before the nation today has degenerated into a Big Bill Thompson extravaganza. Professor Charles A. Beard is a lot more solemn, and Senator Hiram Johnson changes his mind more frequently, but their combined bluster is no sounder than Big Bill's thunderous challenges to King George. They have jumbled the British bogy and the naval appropriation into a big, buzzing confusion. The problem now is to disentangle these issues for independent analysis before putting them all back into some intelligible order and meaning.

First, the Anglo-American problem.

It is an undeniable fact that underlying the historical relationship between the two countries has been a profound, basic clash of interest. The Anglophobia of the Beard-Thompson school of politics has its roots in this fundamental reality as well as in the sediment of anti-British sentiment inherited from the first American revolution. The idea that the British have strenuously tried to form an alliance with the United States, especially in respect to the Far East, is folly. The British have been most reluctant, at least until now, to enter into any bloc with the United States. It is hard, if not impossible, to point to a single instance where the British proposed joint action with the United States in the

Far East. It is easy to point to several where the United States tried to get British coöperation but was rudely rebuffed.

Former Secretary of State Stimson has written the story of his determined attempt to get joint action with Great Britain against Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931. Mr. Stimson, after feeling his way following the opening of hostilities at Mukden on September 18, finally decided to invoke the Nine-Power Treaty. This was at a conference with President Hoover on February 8, 1932, almost five months after the first bombardment. Mr. Hoover agreed and Secretary Stimson conveyed his intentions to the British ambassador on the following day. In order to hasten matters, Mr. Stimson actually telephoned to London on February 11. The then British Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, happened to be in Geneva, but Mr. Stimson persisted and succeeded in giving him a personal statement of the American plan. Mr. Stimson proposed that both powers issue a joint statement invoking the Nine-Power Treaty.

Sir John refused. The British were then in no mood for coöperation with the United States, preferring their unofficial alliance with Japan instead. Mr. Stimson later wrote that he felt "deeply discouraged" at this point in his career.

Here, then, is a case, now fully documented, of British reluctance to enter into a compact with the United States, though urged to do so in most emphatic fashion. Mr. Stimson has been accused of being a secret Anglophile. That may be so, though I do not think that this accounts for his actions. In any event, this completely muffs the issue: England, not America, was wooed and coyly refused. The current isolationist version has it reversed.

The Brussels Conference of last November is a similar and more recent case. At that

conference, England, not yet ready to break with Japan, refused the proffered hand of the United States. The British delegation, in fact, outraged the Americans by openly intriguing with the Japanese over a division of the Chinese spoils.

Here are two pertinent incidents, one under a Republican administration, the other under the present Democratic New Deal. The Anglophobe isolationists misread history when they look upon England as the ardent suitor. Of course, in any given situation, the British seek to use other powers to their advantage. This *Realpolitik* was not invented by and is not limited to England; it was long ago nationalized in the United States. Merely to reiterate that the British try to get the best of any bargain is to be content with a very unprofitable truism.

If it is true that Anglo-American relations have been more cordial in the recent past than ever before, the explanation lies in Japan's thrust against China.

The immediate British stake in China, figured in cold cash, is immeasurably greater than that of the United States. The British do not like to switch their official affection from Japan to the United States; but they have no other alternative when Japan persists in aiming at monopoly power in eastern Asia as a prelude to the world domination which her Premier Tanaka envisioned. As for America, she has never failed to resist to the utmost any attempt to close the markets of China. When, until 1905, czarist Russia was the main threat to the "open door" to American goods, the United States assisted Japan as a counterweight against imperial Russia. After Japan disposed of czarist Russia and appropriated the latter's pretensions as well as some of her territory, American sympathy for Japan cooled. During and after the World War, it became frigid.

THIS brings us to a broader consideration. The isolationists may soon get tired of the British bogy as their main talking point. If so, their next horror story will be directed against Soviet-American coöperation. During the Coolidge and Hoover administrations especially, the United States treated the Soviet republic most miserably. But a change was inevitable for two general reasons. First, the peace of the United States is integrally bound up with world peace. As the aggressions pile up and as the fascist bloc coalesces, the United States, for its own safety and security, must find some common ground with all nations likewise committed to peace. This may be a process of slow education for some people, but it is an inevitable process never-

