

The Jingoos Capture the Senate

Willkie's testimony exposes the election trickery of both parties. Anti-Soviet aims. The people begin to speak. Their meeting April 5-6 will challenge the warmakers. An editorial.

THE debate over the lease-lend bill has now shifted to the Senate. The measure has already passed the House by a vote of 260 to 165. Despite the great opposition evident throughout the country, administration strategists are so arrogant that they regard the Senate vote as a mere formality. But whatever the bill's fate, the past few weeks have brought into sharp focus certain harsh realities that help clarify the problems of the immediate future.

The hearings on HR 1776 have proved what NEW MASSES asserted from the beginning: that it is both a *war* bill and a *dictatorship* measure. Except for the fact that Englishmen will—for the present—do all the fighting and bloodletting, the full economic and military resources of the United States will be in the war against Germany and Italy if the bill is passed. Moreover, one man, the President of the United States, will be given new and unprecedented power to utilize these resources at his discretion for the purpose of waging undeclared war whenever and whenever he pleases. And under the guise of generously giving away all kinds of arms and raw materials, this bill will enable American imperialism to acquire decisive control over Britain's course in the war and larger influence over her economic and political life. In a very great degree the English become the Hessians of American imperialism, just as the Italians fighting in Greece and Africa are the Hessians of German imperialism.

THE AMENDMENTS TO HR 1776.—The bill, as passed by the House and as reported to the Senate, carries a number of amendments. All of them are concerned with technicalities and do not alter or modify the basic character of the measure. The chief amendments are:

1. A provision limiting to \$1,300,000,000 the value of material that can be disposed of from existing military or naval equipment or from that which will be purchased with funds already appropriated. But this does not limit any *new* appropriations that the President may request.

2. A provision under which the powers conferred on the President automatically expire June 30, 1943, unless terminated sooner through a concurrent resolution by both houses of Congress. This limitation is more apparent than real. Two years is of course a long time—long enough to send a sizable AEF to fight in foreign lands. And will the Congress which surrenders its powers to the President in 1941 refuse to surrender them again in 1943 for the asking? As for a concurrent resolution which would not require the President's signature, apart from the fact that it is of doubtful constitutionality, one

would have to be incredibly naive to believe that the same Congress which votes this bill is going to reverse itself despite the opposition of the President.

3. A statement that "Nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize or to permit the authorization of conveying vessels by naval vessels of the United States." This is unadulterated fake. For all its practical effect it might just as well have read: "Nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize the President to take a shave." Moreover, it is claimed—whether rightly or wrongly we are not in a position to say—that as commander-in-chief of the navy the President already has the power to convoy vessels. Once start the flow of munitions to Britain under this act, and unless the people rise in overwhelming protest, the President will eventually use convoys even though Secretary of the Navy Knox himself admitted that this would be an act of war.

Note that the tricky language of this provision merely states that the act does not authorize convoys, but it does not expressly *forbid* them. In fact, both the House and Senate foreign affairs committees rejected an outright ban, just as the Senate committee turned down a ban on an AEF. These rejections are far more eloquent than any of the amendments accepted.

WILLKIE'S TESTIMONY.—There is a special significance in the fact that the chief rebuttal witness for the Roosevelt administration was FDR's erstwhile opponent in the election, Wendell Willkie. It merely proves how completely the voters of this country were duped when they were offered two names for one policy. What a travesty these two gentlemen and their parties made of our democracy and "free elections." And if anything were needed to underscore this fraud, Willkie supplied it in his testimony. This man who repeatedly appealed for votes on the ground that President Roosevelt would lead the country into war blandly told the Senate committee that all this was merely "campaign oratory." And it is this testimony which leads Raymond Clapper, Scripps-Howard writer, to conclude that Willkie is "utterly sincere and open"! What a commentary on the moral level of a social order which measures sincerity in this coin. The deception of millions becomes an act of virtue and patriotism! It is enough to turn a castiron stomach.

There were many other things in Willkie's testimony that exposed not only his own character, but the plans and objectives of all those, Democrats and Republicans, who stand behind HR 1776. Out of the interplay of question and answer there emerged two facts of vast significance:

1. Among the war aims of Britain and the United States is the "liberation" (that is, subjection to their own control) not only of Czechoslovakia, Belgium, France, Holland, Norway, and Denmark, but Finland and Soviet Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. This came out in the course of questioning by Senator Reynolds. It is evident that those who only a year ago were talking about switching the war have not abandoned their plan to settle scores with socialism as soon as they have brought into line their capitalist rivals in Germany and Italy. Appeasers like Lindbergh and Joseph P. Kennedy have no monopoly on anti-Soviet dreams.

2. The lease-lend bill and the whole aid-to-Britain program will enable the United States to dictate the post-war world. As Willkie put it: "If America gives effective aid to Britain, America will dominate what happens afterward." And a little later he told Senator Reynolds: "And I think if we give her [Britain] that effective aid, then, gentlemen such as you, Senator, will determine whether or not these enslaved democracies survive." And who, pray, is this Senator Reynolds who, if Willkie and Roosevelt have their way, is going to determine whether or not other countries will survive? He is the notorious "tar-heel fuehrer" of North Carolina, organizer of a fascist anti-Semitic outfit called the Vindicators, who prior to the war was the most persistent eulogist of Hitler and Mussolini in the Senate.

THE OPPOSITION.—The hearings on HR 1776 and the debate in Congress have highlighted the bankruptcy of the official opposition composed largely of Republicans. These gentlemen have waged their fight by adopting the position of their opponents that America should help one side in the imperialist war, Britain. They thereby accepted the principle of HR 1776 and reduced the issue to one of method and degree. Is it any wonder that they have been caught on the horns of their self-created dilemma and have proved so ineffectual? This official opposition's bankruptcy is perhaps best epitomized by Thomas E. Dewey, who on the day the lease-lend bill was introduced denounced it as "an attempt to abolish free government in the United States," and on Lincoln's birthday made a speech endorsing it. What the conflict between the administration and this spurious opposition actually expressed were differences among various sections of big business, all of whom seek profits, not peace, domination rather than democracy.

But the real opposition, that of the people, despite all obstacles, also made itself heard. Joseph Curran, president of the National

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BOMBARDMENT

DEFENDERS OF SPANISH DEMOCRACY

Two paintings from William Gropper's current exhibition at the ACA Gallery in New York

