

II. ANGLES FOR AMERICANS

The State Department's attitude toward the Soviet-Nazi conflict. Two kinds of wars. The interaction of domestic and foreign policy.

WHAT shall be said of the role of the United States at this new momentous turning point in world history? Our government, speaking through Acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles, has condemned "Hitler's treacherous attack upon Soviet Russia," and declared: "In the opinion of this government, consequently, any defense against Hitlerism, any rallying of the forces opposing Hitlerism, from whatever source these forces may spring, will hasten the eventual downfall of the present German leaders, and will therefore redound to the benefit of our own defense and security." This has been followed by President Roosevelt's pledge at his press conference to give all possible aid to the USSR.

Whatever our government's motives, those statements express not merely the feelings, but the real interests of the vast majority of the American people. The question remains, however, whether this means an end to the pernicious anti-Soviet policy pursued for so long by the Roosevelt administration—the moral embargo, the ban on the export of machine tools, the months of cold hostility and studied rebuffs. And above all, does this mean that those words will be implemented with concrete measures of assistance for the Soviet Union? This involves something quite different from the old aid-to-Britain program. The issue is no longer that of helping a reactionary government, pursuing selfish imperialist aims, but of *assisting the most progressive government the world has known, on whose fate the whole future of mankind depends.* To a program of this kind the American people can give their wholehearted, undivided support, for their own defense and security are in truth bound up with the defense and security of those 200,000,000 people who have wiped out within their vast territory the rule of privilege and reaction in any form.

Unfortunately, the Welles statement, besides giving no indication of plans for collaboration with the USSR, sought to cancel in part its positive effect by drawing an analogy between the Soviet regime and the brutal Nazi dictatorship which is its complete antithesis. Only if the Roosevelt administration shows by acts—by freeing machine tools, by opening the benefits of the lend-lease law to the USSR, and by other measures—its readiness to aid the Soviet Union, will it be possible to place any credence in its professed opposition to Hitlerism.

It is quite evident that the motives which impel the dominant big business circles of this country are quite different from those that actuate the common folk who wish a clean-cut, speedy victory for Soviet arms. The overlords of finance and industry want to *use the Soviet Union in order to secure for Anglo-*

American imperialism the advantage over their German rival. All the expressions of horror at the Nazi attack, mingled with ill-concealed joy, cannot obscure this central aim. Arthur Krock in the *New York Times* of June 24 speaks of "aiding Moscow to serve the ends of the United States." But the ends of the American people are quite different from those of the Wall Street monopolists who for nearly two years have been the major influence in Washington. What these fascist-minded monopolists seek in regard to the Soviet Union is a policy analogous to that now being pursued toward the struggle of the Chinese people. They want to help China enough to bog down Japan, but not enough to enable the Chinese to win a complete victory. By combining limited aid to China with appeasement of Japan—looking toward an ultimate compromise of the Sino-Japanese war—American imperialism seeks to become the determining force in the Far East. The fact that the principal conclusion drawn from the Nazi attack by Walter Lippmann, one of the leading spokesmen for those capitalist groups that are behind the Roosevelt foreign policy, is that "this is the time to make a satisfactory settlement with Japan," shows the character of big business thinking on this whole question. While America's economic royalists may be compelled for the present to relegate to the background their anti-Soviet aims, this is not for the purpose of smashing fascism, but of reducing German power to such proportions that an agreement on terms favorable to the rulers of America and England will be possible. Such an agreement would be at the expense not only of the Soviet Union, but of the peoples of the conquered and beligerent countries.

A somewhat different tactic has been

adopted by Roosevelt's friendly opponents, the big business non-interventionists, whose chief pressure lobby is the America First Committee. This group includes, whether formally affiliated or not, both Nazi sympathizers like Colonel Lindbergh, William Randolph Hearst, and Henry Ford, and men like Ger Hugh Johnson, Joseph P. Kennedy, and Alfred M. Landon, who, while favoring aid to Britain, fear the social disasters that might result from full American involvement in prolonged war and have therefore regarded an agreement with Hitler as a lesser evil.

These appeasers, who dare to pose as lovers of peace, have expressed with the utmost cynicism their desire for war against the Soviet Union. And they are now bitterly attacking all proposals for assistance to the USSR. Their wishful thinking was revealed in an editorial in the *New York World-Telegram* of June 20 which began "It's too bad all this talk of war between Germany and Russia seems to be nothing more than rumor so far." And just one day before the Nazi attack, General Johnson, in the Scripps-Howard press, gave an exhibition of anticipatory licking of the chops that must revolt anyone with a spark of humanity and decency. "But boy," he wrote, "is this Russian business a break for us if news reports are true? Perhaps Hitler can take the wheatfields of the Ukraine. He needs them. Most military men believe he can grab the oil fields of what the old British army called 'Messpot' (Iraq). He needs them also. And so might he control a self-contained inland empire. But, speaking entirely selfishly, is that so bad for us?"

When the Nazis actually launched their legions against the peoples of the USSR, Lindbergh and Landon found it expedient to go into communion with their souls, but other isolationist leaders like Senator Wheeler and John P. Flynn, chairman of the New York chapter of the America First Committee, could hardly conceal their satisfaction behind a mask of indifference as to the outcome of this titanic struggle between the shining outpost of world freedom and democracy and the vanguard of capitalist barbarism and decay. Nor was there any lack of open apologetics for fascist aggression. Hearst in his column in the June 23 issue of his newspapers, delivered himself of a lengthy defense of Germany's action which virtually paraphrased Hitler's proclamation about the war. "Let us hope," concluded the aged fuhrer of San Simeon, "that Occidental peace can still be made and Europe united against the expansion of Asiatic Communism." And Spencer Williams, former "liberal" American journalist in Moscow—who exceedingly friendly with certain Hitler



Rodney Frederick



The Scrap Iron Chancellor May 14, 1940



September 12, 1939

MEMO TO CITY DESKS

With all the palaver about "flip-flops" last week, we invite you to glance at the New Masses cartoons on this page—and note the dates on which they were published.

The Editors.



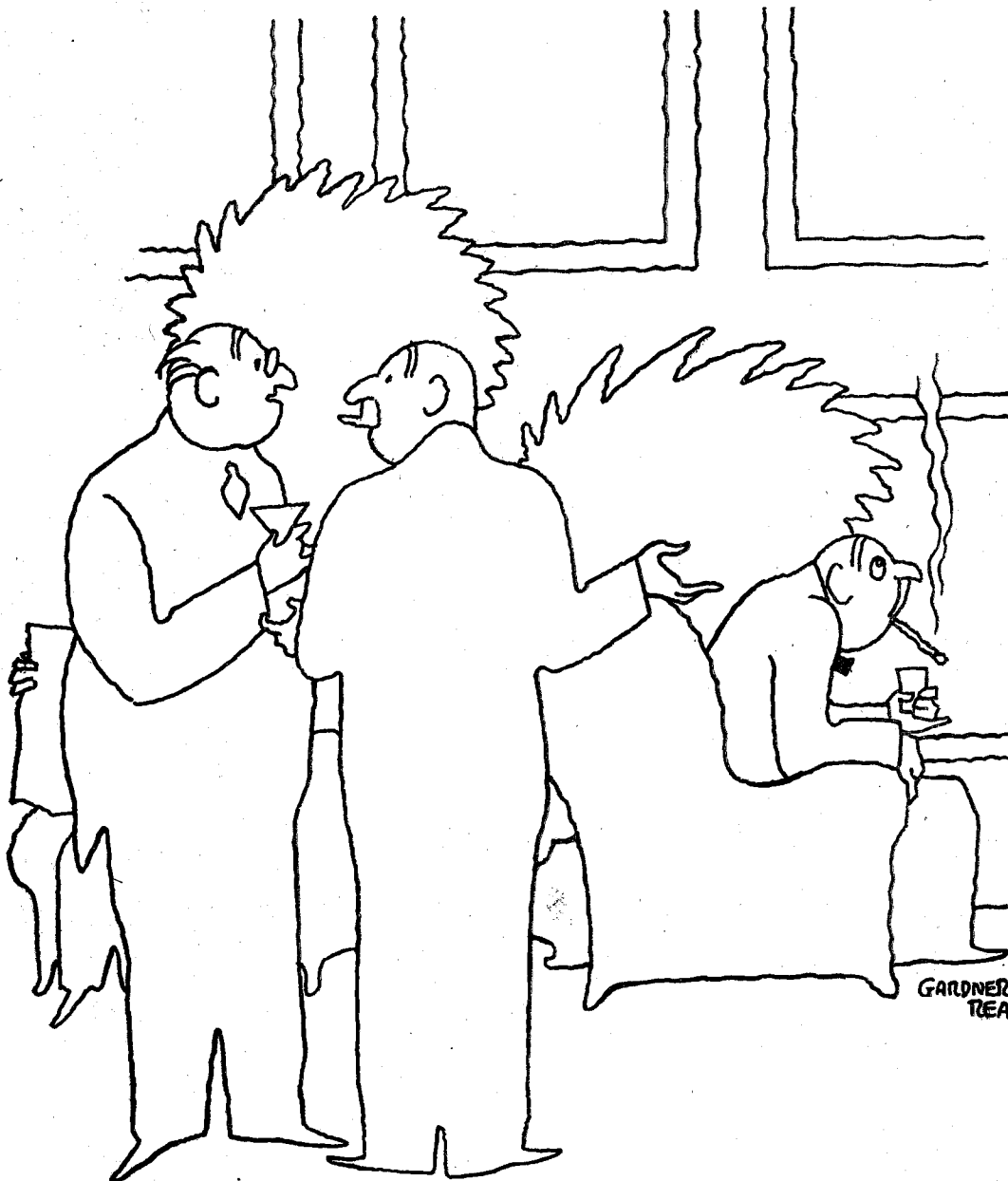
"I see one of our boys is making good in America."

March 18, 1941

July 1, 1941



February 4, 1941



"Poor Astorbilt, he can't figure out why they're not in Moscow yet."

that figured in the Moscow trials—over the Columbia Broadcasting System described the Soviet people as praying for Hitler to deliver them. Immediately after the broadcast, CBS was flooded with indignant telephone calls. *There is no doubt where the sympathies of the American people lie in this new war.*

The Nazi guns that are belching horror and devastation upon innocent men, women and children in the Soviet land have inflicted one important casualty on this side of the ocean. They have smashed to bits the gargantuan lie of a Nazi-Soviet alliance with which the press and radio in the United States and England have sought to poison the minds of millions. What now is left of the vicious sniping about "Communazis"? Where now are all those canards so sedulously spread by reactionaries and renegade liberals that Communists and Nazis were co-operating to sabotage the Roosevelt arms program? What pit of shame can now be dug for that recent totalitarian philippic of Dorothy Thompson calling for the outlawing of the Communist Party, the jailing of its leaders, and the banning of the anti-war

press on the ground that Moscow and Berlin are joined in an "international revolutionary conspiracy" against the United States?

Marxists are not pacifists, and our opposition to the aid-to-Britain program has not been based on pacifism or isolationism. It is necessary to draw a sharp distinction between just and unjust wars. The war of the Chinese people against Japan is a just, historically progressive war for national liberation, and NEW MASSES has given it unswerving support. The war of Germany and Italy on one side and Britain and the United States on the other has been a reactionary war in behalf of the ambitions of a tiny minority of wealthy men in each of those countries. That is why we have steadfastly opposed it. Now a new war bursts upon the world, that of Nazi Germany against the Soviet Union. For all who love democracy and freedom there can be no hesitation: we must support with every ounce of our strength the defense of the USSR and insist that our own government act in the same spirit. There is all the more reason to do so in view of the fact that the Soviet Union represents not promise, but fulfill-

ment, the organized freedom of 200,000,000 people whose struggle against the brutal Nazi regime will give a tremendous impetus to the liberating forces in Europe, Asia, and in every corner of the globe.

The role which the United States will play is also closely related to domestic issues. Our government has turned over the key posts of power to the American counterparts of the fascist capitalists of Germany. It is helping them loot the people through vast profiteering and the imposition of unequal tax burdens. It has jailed Earl Browder, used troops against strikers in Nazi style, it is trying to deport Harry Bridges and persecuting the foreign-born, fostering discrimination against Negroes, encouraging the Gestapo activities of the Dies committee, the Rapp-Coudert committee and the FBI, seeking to club labor into submission with "work or fight" orders and repressive legislation. This kind of government cannot be trusted to follow in the foreign sphere policies that will truly serve the people. While every effort needs to be made to shift the President and Congress in a completely different direction, clearly, here, as in England, a people's government—a Farmer-Labor administration—is required to assure government of, by, and for the people, and a constructive search for an anti-fascist, anti-imperialist peace. Only this kind of government will be the firm friend of the Soviet Union and the Chinese people—the friend of freedom everywhere.

The American people are faced with a supreme opportunity. The Roosevelt administration has sought to involve us in imperialist war under the pretense of fighting fascism. The common folk of this country can now salvage our peace and help win a democratic peace for the entire world by supporting a genuine struggle against fascism now raging on a 2,000-mile battlefront. American workers, the working people of the entire western hemisphere, have a particularly vital stake in this struggle. For it is the working class in power, the only workers' government that has been challenged; it is the largest trade union movement in the world that is threatened, it is the historic social gains of those who were the first to begin the liberation of mankind from capitalist tyranny that are being assaulted by the desperate savagery of a system condemned to death. Our own trade unions, our own social gains are menaced by this criminal attack. And the American people can strike additional blows at Hitlerism here and abroad by building a powerful, militant labor movement, by opposing every manner of discrimination against Negroes and Jews, by safeguarding and expanding civil liberties. Let us take heart, for the world, though terrible to look upon, can be made a thing of beauty and abundance for all. Let us make certain that the evil cloud which seeks to blot out the great socialist sun that has risen in the east will itself be driven out of the sky. Our united effort, our unshakable faith assure the victory of democracy in Europe, in Asia, and in our own land.

III. THE RED ARMY: MANPOWER AND MORALE

The Soviets' soldiers are supported by a mighty economy as well as all the machines of modern warfare. Testimony by experts. Why socialism makes for the best fighting men.

If we don't want any accidents to take our people by surprise—we must keep our powder dry and not be sparing of the means of production assigned to the output of airplanes, tanks, armaments, naval vessels, and munitions.—Soviet State Planning Commission.

It is a truism by now to say that the strong army of the twentieth century is more than a large aggregation of warlike men. The world has learned that military might is a reflection of economic strength. But Marxists knew half a century ago what military wiseacres today accept as axiomatic. Frederick Engels, pioneer in the field of modern military science, wrote in his famous work *Anti-Duhring*: "Nothing is more dependent on economic pre-conditions than the army and navy. Their armaments, composition, organization, tactics and strategy depend above all on the stage reached at the time in production and communications." And Engels' writings on military science are today army textbooks for

the privates as well as the commanders of the Red Army.

Perhaps it is because of this fact—that no army can be considered apart from the economic strength of its country—that the publicists of capitalism have been so reluctant to speak frankly of the Soviet Army. For to admit that the USSR is powerful militarily is to admit it is powerful economically, something which the Philistines have taken great pains to deny. There is evidence aplenty, however, that GHQ knows much more than it is willing to say, although many a brass-hat of the Colonel Blimp category has indulged in wishful thinking and has refused to face the fact.

The fact, bitter as it may be to the militarists of the world, is that the Red Army is a mighty power—in most respects the strongest in the world. Max Werner, certainly no friend of the USSR, is among the military experts who have noted "the tremendous military progress of the Soviet Union"—(*Military*

Strength of the Powers). His analysis is buttressed by the testimony of numerous military observers such as Colonel von Bulow, Gandenberg von Moisy, General Debeney, General Loizeau, Henri de Kerillis, Captain Liddell Hart, and many others. Their testimony piles up into irrefutable argument, an argument carefully kept from the average man whose scant and misleading information comes from the commercial press which has rendered the Red Army a dark, mysterious enigma.

Naturally no army offers gratuitous information upon its strength, but conclusions concerning the strength of the Red Army can be drawn from a number of sources: the official Soviet military reports which give the picture of the growth of armaments in percentages, and the reports appearing in the foreign military journals, particularly the German. And, if one is an honest, objective observer, one can also judge from the actual military encounters in which the Soviet Army has en-

