

An Easy Way to War

BY HAMILTON BUTLER

Recent experiments with them, such as the Jewish boycott of German goods, make this discussion of economic sanctions particularly pertinent

THE fact that boycotts, embargoes and other economic sanctions are more likely to lead to war than to peace is widely ignored by well-intentioned people, who forget that any upstanding nation, if forced to choose between being destroyed in war or being reduced to economic slavery, will take the more heroic alternative.

Americans are particularly prone to this form of oversight. The success, if it may be called such, which has attended their efforts to maintain peace by embargo among warring factions in this hemisphere, appears to many of them sufficient warrant for applying the same deterrent to conflicts farther afield. A good many Americans, too, are victims of a pacific ideal wholly unadulterated by realism. They carry on their crusade for arms embargoes and commercial and financial boycotts, season in and season out, without taking the slightest heed of the possible and probable consequences, at home and abroad, which the adoption of their programme would have. They are dangerous because they are both sincere and impractical.

The efforts of the Stimson-Hoover Administration to obtain from Congress

the necessary authorization for the Executive to lay an arms embargo against a nation he deemed to be the aggressor in an international conflict, although they were not successful, afforded a startling revelation of how far forward our militant pacifists have pushed their assault on reason and experience. Congress, if it had given up the power asked of it, would have surrendered a very real protection for an intangible something, very problematical at best. Undoubtedly Secretary Stimson was sincere when he assured members of the House and Senate that the Administration had no intention of using the authority it sought against Japan: yet no one who realizes how tremendous the pressure is that organized minorities can bring to bear on the White House, will believe for a moment that our own peace or the peace of the world would have been advanced by taking the war-making power out of the hands of Congress, where the Constitution has placed it.

The resolution was jammed through the House under a rule which permitted no amendment of it. After it had been reported out in the Senate, Senator Bingham obtained its recall. The au-

thority to discriminate between belligerents was taken out of it before it was finally acted upon. The power it conferred must be employed impartially and neutrally. One objectionable element was thus eliminated. A general embargo upon arms and munitions to all belligerents alike ought to satisfy those persons whose objection to providing others with the means of slaughtering each other is solely humanitarian. Any arms embargo is bound to act unequally and is therefore open to the charge of unneutrality: for no two belligerents are ever in exactly the same need of external aid and comfort of this nature. At an early stage of the World War the Central Powers raised a pertinent point. They alleged that, after the Allied blockade had cut off their supply of munitions from America, they were penalized by our continuing to furnish war material to their enemies. A resolution was offered in the Senate to stop the exportation of munitions to both sides. One reason why it was promptly killed was that the prospects of a profitable business with the Allies were then brightening. The embargo on arms shipments to the Far East, which the British Government imposed last spring, was protested by the Nanking authorities on the ground that it hit China far harder than it did Japan, which is now equipped to supply all the war material required for such an adventure as it was engaged in at the time. Although there is something to be said from that point of view, an embargo against all belligerents stands on solid moral and legal ground than one which presumes to pick the aggressor and then to penalize him. As Judge John Bassett Moore has pointed out, a government that discriminates between nations in this matter "intervenes in the

conflict in a military sense and makes itself a party to the war." That is not the way to peace.

THE steps by which we have progressed from the wide-open sale of arms and ammunition to all and any who had the money to pay for them to our present situation are clearly marked by a long series of resolutions introduced in Congress during the past twenty years or more. The first of these was the Joint Resolution of March 14, 1912, which provided that

when the President shall find that in any American country conditions of domestic violence exist which are promoted by the use of arms or munitions of war procured from the United States, and shall make proclamation thereof, it shall be unlawful to export, except under such limitations and exceptions as the President shall prescribe, any arms or munitions of war from any place in the United States to such a country unless otherwise ordered by the President or by Congress.

Ample precedent for such a resolution could be found in the many proclamations issued by Presidents, as far back as Buchanan, against filibustering in Cuba, Mexico and other countries to the south. The notable features of the instrument are those confining its employment to this hemisphere and to conditions of domestic violence, as distinguished from violence between different nations. A decade later (January 31, 1922) another resolution extended the scope of the Executive authority to "any country in which the United States exercises extraterritorial jurisdiction." China is such a country. Consequently it has been possible for the Government in Washington to intervene in the civil wars that have been going on in that unhappy land by issuing licenses for the exportation of war material only to the particular faction upon which it has be-

stowed the blessing of diplomatic recognition. At the time of his resignation, as Chinese Minister in Washington, C. C. Wu stated that he could not aid or abet this discrimination against the Canton faction, with which he sympathized. China is thus bracketed with Cuba and Nicaragua, as far as arms embargoes go.

An effort further to curtail the sale of death-dealing implements by denying them to all belligerents was made by Congressman Burton, who offered in the House on January 25, 1928, a resolution providing that

whenever the President recognizes the existence of war between foreign nations by making a proclamation of neutrality of the United States, it shall be unlawful, except by consent of Congress, to export or attempt to export any arms, munitions or implements of war from any place in the United States or any possession thereof, to the territory of either belligerent or to any place if the ultimate destination of such arms, munitions or implements of war is within the territory of either belligerent or any military or naval forces of either belligerent.

The distinctive feature of this proposal was its extension of the arms embargo idea to international wars in which the United States wished to be regarded as neutral. The thought behind it was to protect and uphold our neutrality, while we were attempting to limit hostilities by refusing the belligerents weapons with which to fight. There was no hint in it of deciding which party was the aggressor. The embargo was to be a passive gesture: certainly not an active instrument of compulsion.

A few months after Congressman Burton introduced this resolution the Pact of Paris was signed, virtually pledging the entire family of nations to renounce war as an instrument of

national policy. This event has since shaped our approach to the question of economic sanctions. The Kellogg-Briand multilateral treaty was a gentlemen's agreement, with no other teeth in it than the obligation of nations to keep their word. The Soviet Union, first, and then Japan found themselves in dispute with China. Secretary Stimson sprang the Pact of Paris on them. The authorities in Moscow had no difficulty in establishing an alibi. Japan has taken refuge in the right of self-defense, which the signatories of that celebrated document were given to understand was implicit in it. At the same time Japan and China have been conducting a series of operations which, if it had not been for the advantage to be gained under the Covenant of the League of Nations by calling them something else, would long since have passed into the records as the second Chino-Japanese War.

All this has been very distressing to many people in this country, who really believed that the World War ended war and who are therefore unable to understand why nations go on fighting. They want the Pact of Paris fitted out with effective teeth. Among them is Senator Capper, who offered in the Senate on February 11, 1929, a resolution requiring that

whenever the President determines and by proclamation declares that any country has violated the multilateral treaty for the renunciation of war, it shall be unlawful, unless otherwise provided by act of Congress or by proclamation of the President, to export to such country arms, ammunitions, implements of war, or other articles for use in war, until the President shall by proclamation declare such violation no longer continues.

The adoption of this resolution would have marked a tremendous expansion in our national attitude toward

economic sanctions. Without consulting any other signatory, we should have had decided for us in Washington whether or not an apparent violation of the Pact of Paris was a violation of it in fact, and if the violation were real and contumacious, we should have found ourselves faced with a virtual cessation of trade with the offending nation—since there are few articles of commerce which do not come into use in war. Scarcely had this proposal been disposed of, when trouble broke out in Manchuria. Japan set out to remedy it by armed force. Whether this was war or merely, at first, a case of vicarious enforcement, was lost sight of in Secretary Stimson's haste to imply by notes to Tokyo and Nanking that he regarded it as a violation of the Kellogg-Briand pact. Senator Capper was equally prompt in attempting to give this implication the support of Congressional action. The purpose of the resolution he introduced in the Senate on April 6, 1932, was to implement Secretary Stimson's note of January 8, 1932. After quoting from the note the resolution continued:

Sec. 2. That in case other nations, not parties to a dispute, have in open conference decided that any nation has committed a breach of the Pact of Paris by resort to other than pacific means, and have further decided not to aid or abet the violator by the shipment to it of arms or other supplies of war, or to furnish it financial assistance in the violation; and in case the President determines and by proclamation declares that a breach of the Pact of Paris has in fact been committed; it shall be unlawful, unless otherwise provided by act of Congress or by proclamation of the President, and until the President shall, by proclamation, declare such violation no longer continues, to export to the violating country arms, ammunitions, implements of war, or other articles for use in war, or make any such trade or financial arrangement with the violating country or its nationals as in the judg-

ment of the President may be used to strengthen or maintain the violation.

The effect of such a resolution, if adopted, would have been to bind us morally and by implication to follow the League of Nations in any punitive course it might have taken in the Far East. After the way the League has bungled the whole affair, any thoughtful person must be grateful that this country escaped any such commitment.

A NOBLE motive lies behind all these efforts to prevent or limit the ravages of war. A similarly noble motive underlay the recent attempt to remove the abuse of alcoholic beverages by Constitutional amendment. The two objectives are also alike in the fatuity of the methods by which it was sought to attain them. They won't work. Certain persons in Europe have been unkind enough to suggest that if we were in a position to lose as much by arms embargoes as some European countries are, we should hear less agitation for them. What is obviously true is that an arms embargo laid by one country against a nation like Japan is impotent to affect its decisions, as long as other arms-exporting nations continue to aid it in equipping its army and navy. What appears to be equally futile to expect is that all of the arms-exporting countries, with their widely different interests in different parts of the world, will agree voluntarily to take the same action at the same time against the same alleged violator of the Pact of Paris or the Covenant of the League of Nations.

The United States, Great Britain and France "commonly supply three-fourths of all the arms and ammunition that go to export markets." Our contribution is principally in the shape of

ammunition, while Great Britain and France go in more for the exportation of arms. Thus in 1929 we furnished 22.7 per cent of the world's export of ammunition and 9.6 per cent of its export of arms. Great Britain furnished 30.3 per cent of the arms and 36.7 per cent of the ammunition, while the corresponding figures for France were 18.5 per cent and 11.3 per cent. Any arms embargo against a belligerent could not hope to be effective unless all three of these powers were joined in its enforcement—and even then it might be evaded by other countries, which would be tempted by it to enlarge their own export trade in war materials and which could be prevented from doing so only by blockade, a step still nearer to the very war it is the object of all these sanctions to prevent or put a stop to.

An interesting sidelight on the probability of joint action by even the leading arms-exporting countries was provided by the short-lived embargo instituted last spring by the British Government on arms shipments to both Japan and China. This action was taken by the Government very suddenly—within not many hours after it had declared that such action by a single power would be futile: and to this day there has been no public announcement of the exact reason why it was taken. A special cable to the *New York Times* commented as follows:

The British Government was distinctly pleased with itself today, as it studied the world's reactions to its arms embargo against Japan and China. Part of this satisfaction is the feeling that the problem now is squarely up to the United States and off Britain's shoulders for the time being. Part of it is pleasure at Foreign Secretary Simon's adroitness in having taken some kind of moral stand without risking a single British life or jeopardizing a single munitions worker's job. . . .

The deepest secrecy is maintained as to existing contracts, but it is believed they will keep the factories busy for at least a month more before the exports of arms to Japan and China are stopped. . . . The British have the comfortable feeling that they have done something morally and ethically noble without losing anything. They are pleased to think that they have snatched moral leadership in this matter from the United States, which has talked of an arms embargo for months but has not yet taken effective action. If Congress should continue to block an embargo, the British warn they will reconsider and even withdraw their own, but they will be able to say then that it is the Americans' fault.

An attitude of that sort provides poor ground upon which to build hopes of sincere and whole-hearted coöperation of the great powers in any measure of this kind, where self-interest enters in as largely as it does in the munitions business. The British embargo was withdrawn before the existing contracts had been filled and the factories closed. Japan criticized it because it savored of a rebuke to her. The Nanking Government denounced it violently, as discriminating against China and in favor of Japan, which was in a position to turn out all the munitions it required. The State Department in Washington refused to take similar action, apparently on the ground that it did not penalize Japan as the aggressor, and that let France out, which had announced that it would take any step in which both the United States and Great Britain joined. As an excellent illustration of diplomatic buck-passing the British embargo ranks high: as a deterrent to war in the Far East it amounted to nothing.

ARMS embargoes are merely limited boycotts. They boycott a nation in one direction and in connection with a single branch of trade. A distinction may be made on moral grounds: yet

when one comes right down to economic realism, where dollars and cents count, the only difference between them is one of degree of profit and loss. Joint action by the great trading powers to give up a profitable market in the remote hope of bringing another country to their point of view is difficult of attainment: for the insuperable reason that the cost of a given embargo or boycott is not the same for any two nations, when measured by actual sacrifices necessary to make it effective. While one country is giving up a valuable market, another country may actually be profiting, directly or indirectly, therefrom. While certain persons may derive a measure of moral satisfaction from boycotting an alleged offender against the law of nations or an alleged violator of the Pact of Paris, another class of people in the same country may have to walk the streets because of the resultant disruption of the industries upon which their livelihood depends. The burden can not be made to fall evenly on the just and the unjust alike.

Suppose, for example, that the agitators for a boycott against Japan had had their way, at the time of the Shanghai affair. Japan supplies nearly eighty-five per cent of the raw silk upon which our silk industry depends and that industry employs a quarter of a million people. They would have been added to the already sufficient roll of unemployed in this country. On the other hand, Japan is one of the largest and most dependable purchasers of American raw cotton. She took in 1931 more than 1,740,700 bales, valued at nearly \$80,000,000. As John Foster Dulles has said:

If the recent Sino-Japanese situation had been felt to call for the application of economic sanctions, involving an embargo on

cotton exports to the Far East, it would be the American cotton growers who would bear a large share of the cost. This would be evidenced by a sharp decline in the price of cotton, and other nations who were importers of cotton would be the gainers thereby.

Japan gets about forty-eight per cent of its raw cotton imports from the United States and about forty-two per cent from India. If we stopped shipping cotton to Japan and India did not, obviously India would benefit directly from our action, while the depression in price of raw cotton resulting from the stoppage of our exports to Japan would advantage the cotton manufacturers of England and the Continent. This fact, which was made clear by our experience during the early months of the World War, when the Allied embargo and blockade interrupted our trade with the Central Powers, should not be lost sight of in attempting to measure the influence of foreign encouragement to the United States to become the spearhead of the army of righteousness in strafing other go-getting nations. The complaints that flooded the State Department in 1905, when the Chinese carried out a boycott of American goods in retaliation for alleged abuses under our exclusion laws, showed how little sympathy for economic sanctions may be expected from those who grow cotton, as distinguished from those who make a business of pulling wool over the country's eyes. Another thing that has to be taken into account in this connection is the fact that Americans have something like \$450,000,000 invested in Japan and in Japanese securities. Their interests can not be lightly disregarded.

Self-interest was just as prominent in the action of the smaller members of the League of Nations in condemning Japan's course with respect to China, as

it was in the action of Great Britain in effectually blocking the application of sanctions to Japan that would have seriously cut into British trade, as well as endangered a friendship in the Far East upon which much of British policy is predicated. The little European countries, whose representatives in Geneva were so anxious to punish Japan, stood to lose nothing by embargoes or boycotts or even war, which the major powers would have had to conduct, while they thought to profit by erecting in the remote Orient precedents that might be useful to them at some future date nearer home. This country would be exceedingly ill advised to be dragged into active coöperation with any punitive movement based upon moral grounds so obviously thin and transparent.

The most dangerous fallacy that is being spread in this connection is that the aggressor in a complex situation can be divined as easily as a Connecticut farmer can discover a potential well with a crotched stick. Ambassador Bingham had hardly landed in England before he told an audience that "I do not believe there is a ten-year-old child of average intelligence anywhere in the world who could not fail in the event of war to select instantly the aggressor." Older persons find that more time is necessary to make selections that will stand the test of calm and judicial inquiry. The farther we get away from the World War the less certain our scholars are becoming that all the right was on one side and all the wrong on the other.

The truth is that neither the Covenant of the League of Nations nor the Pact of Paris provides an infallible guide to the detection of real, as distinguished from apparent, aggression by one nation or government against an-

other. The machinery of propaganda is so highly developed today that those who control it can whitewash offenders or attach the stigma of aggression to innocent parties, with deceiving facility. Snap judgments are as likely to be wrong as to be right, when they are dictated by controlled public opinion. The United States was condemned by the man in the street in London, as it was by the man in the street in Paris, Berlin, Rome and every other Continental capital, as the aggressor, a wanton aggressor, when it attacked Spain in 1898. Similarly, American opinion was strongly against Great Britain in the Boer War. What we did have in 1898 was that "drawing-room sentiment" of London upon which John Hay placed so much stock that later he obtained for England the official support of the Administration in Washington in the South African War. That proved nothing regarding "the latent idealism of the common people." Aided by the censorship on news out of India today, a vast number of Americans appear to be convinced that Gandhi and his followers ought to be strung up for twisting the tail of British paramountcy. Yet Professor Harold J. Laski, an Englishman, says of the situation in India:

I should be prepared to have Great Britain state her case in relation to India before the League of Nations with an entire confidence in the result such as, being an Englishman, I do not have when I am told by Englishmen that we are in India for the benefit of India, and by Indians that we are in India for the benefit of Great Britain. I find a certain margin of difference between those statements that leaves me with a sense of moral discomfort.

At the time of the Shanghai incident of 1932, a large and articulate element in this country, swept off its feet by

Chinese propaganda, demanded that the great American people go to the succor of the still greater Chinese people. College professors petitioned the Government. An American Boycott Association was created in New York, which is still trying to induce Americans not to buy Japanese goods or lend the Japanese any money. Agitation reached the point where the least misadventure in Shanghai would have produced another *Maine* and war with Japan would have been unavoidable. Although the atmosphere was anything but conducive to calm judgments, Secretary Stimson picked his aggressor and Senator Capper drafted his resolution to enable economic pressure to be brought upon Stimson's selection. The effects of the lies then told and the propaganda that flooded the country are still active, although it long ago became clear that the clash between the Chinese 19th Route Army and the Japanese landing party was deliberately incited by the Cantonese faction that had just been thrown out of the Nanking Government, as a means of embroiling Chiang K'ai-shek with Japan, or, if that failed, as it did, to enable the malcontents to denounce his lack of "patriotism" to a populace infused with a new nationalism based on acute anti-foreignism.

THE present is a high-strung era. The art of stirring up popular feeling in one country against another has been so refined that it is particularly necessary, if nations would avoid war, to be on guard against foreign influences behind national judgments. Above all else is it necessary to disabuse our minds of the idea that nations have given up war as a means of protecting what they regard as vital interests or will quietly submit to "pacific" starvation. It may be useful

to take a thought from Lord Percy:

There is a good deal of pharisaism in the current talk about a "change of spirit" in international affairs. This talk seems to be based on the dangerously smug assumption that the wars of the past have been caused wantonly by the ambitions of statesmen. This assumption is quite mistaken, as every historian knows. At the root of every great war there has been a real conflict of interests and usually also a real conflict of belief about right or wrong.

The days of territorial expansion may have largely passed. The battles of the future apparently are to be for the possession of what Sir Thomas Holland calls the earth's "strategic minerals." These are the basis of our industrial development, as well as of national defense. Americans, who are self-sustaining except for nickel, tin and rubber, among the essential raw materials of peace and war, are likely to forget the constant terror under which nations not so favored live. Japan's efforts to obtain economic independence by obtaining control of dependable sources of raw materials have led it into Manchuria. And every time an agitation is started abroad to restrain it by economic sanctions, Japan merely takes up another hole in the belt of its determination. The same desire to secure economic independence was behind German and French colonial activities. Great Britain has gone into many corners of the earth over which its flag does not fly to make sure of an oil supply that will not fail it in war. American rubber consumers are still seeking to free themselves of dependence on alien rubber supplies. All up-and-doing peoples are looking to the future in this respect. The acquisitive instinct is as keen today as it ever was. The significance of this fact has been admirably stated by a thoughtful English publicist:

Similar suspicions may be aroused by the most ordinary and innocent operations of commerce. The acquisition of a wolfram mine in Bolivia by a Canadian or American firm becomes a move in the war control of materials for munitions: a shipping merger in the West African trade is judged according to whether its management will be centered in London or Paris. Such apprehensions may well have a more unsettling effect on international good-feeling than even competition in armaments, and in a future war carefully organized control by belligerents over their own exports may be more damaging to neutral trade than the most lawless action by contending navies.

As these lines are written, Japan is debating the largest peace-time naval and military budget in its history. The Japanese are not an aggressive people, as peoples the world over go. They have merely come to the conclusion expressed by the late Marshal Muto in these words: "I repeat that neither the League of Nations nor any other power can change our determination to pursue our established aims in Manchuria." They are alive to their own paucity of industrial raw material and are convinced that their national salvation depends upon obtaining from abroad what they can not produce at home. They are

in this respect much like other nations, which have the power to take what they want. They believe there is a higher law than the Covenant of the League of Nations or the Pact of Paris: the law of self-preservation.

All this doubtless is disquieting to good people who believe that, after the United States has acquired all the territory it desires—and some which it would like to get rid of—the *status quo* should be crystallized: that there should be no more alterations of boundaries or sovereignties. Unfortunately the day when that happens, is still far in advance of the present generation. And to attempt to hasten it by means of economic sanctions, with the idea that they will be accepted by the nations to which they are applied as anything but an invitation to war, appears to be about as costly a method of stirring up the embers of conflict as could be devised. If we want to provoke war, we can do it by continuing along the line mapped out by our pacifists with embargoes and boycotts until we clash with Japan or another nation. If we really wish to avoid war, the less said about such things the better.



The Neglected Hypochondriac

BY MARIAN TYLER

Who suggests a method of dealing with him based on the assumption that he is merely a person of sensitive nerves and physiological idiosyncrasies

I KNOW a man who feels ill about half the time. He has spent in the last five years at least one whole year's income on medical attention. One of the best hospitals in the country, after analyzing and X-raying him from head to foot, gave him a clean bill of health; yet an evening party, a short trip by train or motor, a sandwich at the wrong hour, a cocktail or a glass of beer at any hour, spoils the next two days for him. He and his friends reluctantly concluded that he was a hypochondriac, but his wife had another theory, one which contains a wise suggestion for every one of dubious health, and perhaps even for the learned profession of medicine. She got a notebook and made a record, day by day for three months, of everything he ate, and of every fluctuation in his health. She finally worked out a régime which will keep him in normal condition as long as he follows it. It is severe enough so that he breaks it from time to time, hence the vestiges of his ill health.

Of the doctors who examined him at such vast expense, about half pronounced every part of him healthy, without saying much about the way the parts functioned together. The other

half suspected, in fact accused him, of almost every disease from acidosis to syphilis, and spoiled his confidence in their more encouraging colleagues. His collection of diagnoses alone might have sufficed to turn any one less intelligent into a nervous wreck.

No reputable doctor likes to waste time on a hypochondriac. How is he, sympathetic as he may be, to remove an organic cause that can't be found? We smile indulgently or impatiently, depending on the closeness of our connection, at the professional invalid, or even the man who fills his medicine cupboard with too large an assortment of remedies and antiseptics. But give us one little pain which the doctor can not locate, and we are hypochondriacs ourselves. I venture to say that everybody with a normal imagination becomes a candidate for bread pills at least once in his life, probably far oftener.

The line between hypochondria and a genuine functional disorder is also shadowy at best. Think of the sufferers from recurrent indigestion (induced by worry) the persons who forever have a little cough (purely nervous) the martyrs to inexplicable blinding headaches. The physical distress which these