

IV. THE U.S.A. AND THE U.S.S.R. — GOOD NEIGHBORS

THE realities of international relations are so obscured for Americans by special-interest propaganda, which seems to have right-of-way in our newspapers and other periodicals of wide circulation, that the task of contributing to clarification in this field requires extreme patience and frequent reference to basic facts of sufficiently wide acceptance to escape the suspicion of propagandistic bias. These requirements are particularly incumbent upon myself since the charge has been made, even before Congressional committee hearings, that I represent a variety of special pleading for alien interests, even the accusation that my views are a variety of "war-mongering from the left" designed to entangle the United States in other people's quarrels. Without evading these charges, and the prejudices which they have created, it will be my purpose to answer them only by the intrinsic merits of the arguments in support of my fundamental thesis.

The main idea which I am defending in the field of foreign policy is that of ever closer collaboration between the United States and the Soviet Union, as the major factor in the organization of world peace, as the chief protection of the world against the flood of fascist barbarism, for the maintenance of an ordered civilization in a large part of the world.

It is impossible to dismiss this question as of secondary importance since the two countries in question are the strongest in the world, economically, militarily, and in a strategic geographical position. If the two strongest nations can work together, then the prospects for organization of world peace are bright; otherwise they are very dark.

What are the obstacles to such co-operation? Is there any conflict of interest between the United States and the Soviet Union, in any area of international relations, which shuts the door to such co-operation? It is our contention that there is no conflict of interest, that on the contrary the interests of the two countries are parallel, with many and growing areas of complete harmony.

In the Far East, the Pacific area, those parallel interests are so obvious and fundamental that even the Harding Republican administration, in 1920, dominated as it was by a fixed and obstinate hostility to the Soviet regime that was never relaxed for twelve years under Coolidge and Hoover, was yet forced by the inexorable logic of even the narrowest conception of American national interests to put pressure upon Japan, in the Washington Conference, to evacuate the Soviet Far Eastern Maritime Provinces after the Red Army had cleared them out of the Baikal region.

How much more, then, are these common interests of emphatic importance, since Japanese militarism has run amok in China, has embarked upon such an ambitious adventure of conquest that it openly proclaims its intention of transforming all Eastern Asia into its closed preserve and reducing its hundreds of millions of population to instruments of an all-conquering military empire; while, through its association in the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo triangle, it has become an active force in Latin American life against the United States. The Soviet Union, by its active assistance to China, has made possible the marvelously heroic and successful resistance of the Chinese people against Japanese conquest. It is a matter worthy of deep thought on the part of all Americans that this role of the Soviet Union has been at the same time most profoundly favorable to the interests of the United States. The fundamental interests of China, the Soviet Union, and the United States are in profound harmony; the co-operative protection and advancement of these common interests furnish the only possible foundation for the stable organization of peace in the Pacific.

Turn now to Europe. Less than a year ago, Chamberlain proclaimed "peace for our time" as the fruits of the Munich pact, which excluded the Soviet Union from the "European family of nations" while sur-

rendering Czechoslovakia and Southeastern Europe to the mercies of the axis powers. But already the fiasco of Munich and its catastrophic consequences are openly acknowledged by the very participants in the Munich Conference. Last October it was only the Communists who were possessed of sufficient clarity and courage to openly denounce the Munich betrayal. Americans might then have been excused for their confusion on the question, since they are so largely non-communist and even anti-communist, and only the Communists told them the truth. But the awful consequences that flowed so immediately and catastrophically from Munich are so obvious that Americans can learn part of the truth from conservative, reactionary, and anti-communist sources, and therefore no longer have an excuse for refusing to see the facts. Peace in Europe is impossible without the active collaboration of the Soviet Union, which now, as always, is ready and anxious to participate in the organization of peace. Even Neville Chamberlain is forced to acknowledge this fundamental fact, though he seems to cling most stubbornly to the disastrous policy of surrender to the axis powers.

Our American newspapers have interpreted the difficulties in negotiating the terms of the "peace front" between the Soviet Union, France, and Great Britain as signs of Soviet reluctance to enter fully into such a front, and its wish to "drive a hard bargain" or even to come to an agreement with Hitler against the Western powers. Quite typically, even Norman Thomas has joined his voice to these stupid slanders, which are highly welcome in Berlin. Against such clouds of diplomatic poison gas, my own words would perhaps be ineffective. Allow me, therefore, to call as an expert witness the Hon. Winston Churchill, who needs no credentials from me. I select a few sentences and paragraphs from a recent article of his, syndicated among American conservative newspapers:

It is astonishing [says Mr. Churchill] how swiftly and decisively opinion in Great Britain and France has consolidated itself upon a triple alliance with Soviet Russia. The well known objections have simply ceased to count with enormous numbers of people with whom abhorrence of Communism is still a first principle. But it should not be supposed that this change arises

out of any desperate strait or panic fear. It is due to the realization of the very real harmony of interests which unites the foreign policy of the three countries. . . . Their common interest is peace.

Mr. Churchill's words contain a profound truth. The leaders of Britain and France could not see this last October, but the people have forced them to see it in the last months. The "common interest in peace," so disastrously threatened by the Munich "appeasement" and "non-intervention" policies, is an interest that is fully and completely shared by the United States. And if the tory leaders, with whom "abhorrence of Communism" is a fundamental principle of life, have learned of that "common interest" with the Soviet Union, it should not be so hard for Americans, even the most conservative, to learn the same lesson.

What is the significance for America of the differences between London and Moscow on the terms of establishment of the peace front? Is it really true, as the newspapers say, that they reflect Moscow's desire to "drive a hard bargain"? Again I turn for the answer to the hard-boiled conservative, Churchill, who cannot be suspected of prejudice in favor of the Soviet Union. He says:

Personally, not having changed my views about Communism or past history in any respect, I have from the beginning preferred the Russian proposals to either the British or French alternatives. They are simple, they are logical, and they conform to the main groupings of common interest.

If Winston Churchill can prefer the Moscow proposals to those of either Chamberlain or Daladier, what then becomes of the idea that Moscow is "driving a hard bargain"? Churchill differs from Chamberlain and Daladier in having been against Munich and the appeasement policy *before* its bitter fruits were borne, and in having driven to the heart of the question, without squirming about in a futile effort to eat the cake and have it too, à la Chamberlain.

Americans, even of the most conservative trend, should be more attracted to the Churchill approach than to that of Chamberlain, if they are guided in their views by American national interest and not by ideological ties with Hitler. For clearly, Moscow is taking a stand very

close to that which Washington would almost certainly take if our country should, in the course of development, face a similar problem of negotiating an agreement with a Chamberlain and a Daladier. Like the Soviet Union, the United States would be faced with statesmen who are being pushed, against their own will, by the overwhelming demands of their people—statesmen who, therefore, would not be directed in their proposals by the broad all-inclusive interests of peace, which are dominant for the Soviet Union and the United States, but only by their own narrow and special interests and commitments. Like the Soviet Union, the United States would also have to appeal to the people over the heads of their governments, before it would be able to force such terms as would represent the general interests of all the peoples. Winston Churchill recognized this issue, when he said:

There is a real and honorable basis of equal and rightful interest existing in external affairs between the Soviets and the parliamentary democracies. It is this that has invested the triple peace design with vitality. Matters have now gone so far that it is inconceivable that any of the three governments could take the responsibility of depriving the hundreds of millions of working people involved of this joint security for their life and progress. Agreement is driven forward by irresistible forces overriding and shearing away serious obstacles and valid prejudices as if they were but straws.

That this is also the view of realistic French conservatives, is shown by the words of Pertinax, prominent publicist of the "right wing," who remarked, anent Chamberlain's dilatory maneuvers:

Last September, Chamberlain knew how to move more quickly when Hitler had to be placated. He still fails to understand . . . that the fate of the continent depends upon what they [the Soviet Union] will do or not do. . . . There is irony in the fact that Chamberlain, having started with outspoken antagonism to anything like co-operation with Russia, should now be compelled to bring it into existence undiluted and unguarded. Such is the ransom for Munich and for what followed Munich.

I quote at length from these two typical spokesmen of British and French conservatism, because it is my firm conviction that their evolution accurately forecasts, in its general nature and direction, the fu-

ture of American policy in the growingly dangerous world situation. For the United States also, the realities of national interest are "irresistible forces" which before long will for us also be "overriding and shearing away serious obstacles and valid prejudices as if they were but straws," to repeat the words of Churchill.

Much will depend, of course, upon the outcome of the 1940 elections, as to whether the United States will pay the same heavy tribute as Britain paid at Munich, before the realities of national interest are frankly faced. If the Hoover Republicans or Garner Democrats dominate the next administration in Washington, then in all likelihood our country will repeat in all its gruesome details the tortuous course over which Chamberlain has dragged Britain. But the underlying realities will inevitably bring the same general conclusion; the United States will ultimately, despite all obstacles and prejudices, find itself in co-operation with the Soviet Union to salvage peace and civilization. The only question is whether we will march ahead consciously to that end, and thereby attain its full benefits, or whether, like Britain, we will go through the swampy bypaths of appeasement of the fascist axis, and risk the catastrophes inherent in such a policy.

Many persons are still disturbed by the propaganda, unloosed in full flood last September, to the effect that the Soviet Union is too weak to be an effective ally in a world peace front. The American Lindbergh played a prominent role in making this campaign effective; shortly after, he received a decoration from Hitler, sharing that distinction with another American, Henry Ford. This propaganda campaign played an important part in sustaining Chamberlain's appeasement policy, in making the Munich pact acceptable to the masses for a few months. Its fatal weakness lay in the demonstration, not long delayed, that Hitler did not believe it, though he was happy that it found credence in the Western democracies. Hitler has been distinguished by always striking at the point which he considered that of least resistance. And after Munich he made it clear that the axis was preparing its main blows against France, Britain, and the United States, against the traditional parliamentary democracies, in which direction he saw not only panic and confused capitulation reigning, but also,

and even more important, the greatest booty to be seized. Hitler's course is the most obvious proof that he has never believed, since his own agents were exposed and eliminated in the Soviet Union, in the myth of Soviet weakness and instability; and no one doubts that Hitler is well informed of the inner conditions in every major country, including our own; it is common gossip that his answer to President Roosevelt was composed on the basis of authoritative advice from American enemies of the New Deal. No, if the Soviet Union were weak, we might assume that Hitler would know it.

It is strange indeed that the more fantastic and unreal the propaganda, the more widely it is accepted among American newspapers and their more credulous readers! Why did so many persons accept the myth of Soviet weakness? Basic facts were known and available in print, from the most authoritative sources, sufficient to explode immediately that myth for any thoughtful person. Why were these facts overlooked or forgotten so easily?

For example, all of our American newspaper editors undoubtedly have on their office shelves the Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations. By a simple twist of the wrist, they could have opened that document, and seen in universally accepted statistical tables the picture of the economic progress of the Soviet Union during the past ten years, and compared it with the course of all other major nations in the world. And they would have seen that the Soviet Union since 1928 had multiplied its national income by about 1,000 per cent, or approximately ten times. Now, since what date in history has it ever been demonstrated that a nation, multiplying its economic production by ten times in ten years, could be described as weak? What regime in history has ever lost its hold upon the people by bringing economic prosperity to the land? If Hoover's administration had brought to America, instead of economic collapse, an enormous multiplication of the national income, can anyone doubt that the "great engineer," to resurrect an almost forgotten slogan, would now be rounding out his third term as the idolized leader of the American masses, instead of giving way in 1932 to the New Deal? All these questions, and their obvious answers, were implicit in the facts, available to every news-

paper editor at least, at the moment when they were telling the American people that the Soviet Union was too weak and unstable to be relied upon in the organization of world peace. Is it stretching a point to indicate, on the basis of such evidence, that our American newspapers are more influenced by reactionary propaganda than they are by fundamental facts? And is it exaggeration to say that such propaganda, while it may serve the interests of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis, is in flagrant contradiction to the immediate and larger national interests of the United States?

If there still remains any doubt about the ability of the Soviet Union to fulfill its international obligations, in face of the military prowess of the axis powers, it is possible to take a glance at the latest defense budget of its government, adopted last month. That budget, representing about one-fourth of the national income, totaled in the neighborhood of \$8,000,000,000 in terms of American money, approaching in sum the total budget for all purposes of the United States government. Whatever judgment one might otherwise make, it is difficult indeed to interpret these figures as a sign of weakness. And for those who might be inclined to decry the diversion of such tremendous sums for military defense, it would be well to recall that the Soviet peoples have much to defend: one-sixth of the earth's surface, unexampled prosperity, and a 20 per cent rise in living standards this year alone, guaranteed in that same budget!

There can no longer be the slightest doubt in the mind of anyone who wishes to know and face the facts. The Soviet Union is second only to the United States among world powers economically, and is second to none in defensive power and strategical position, as well as in moral and political unity of the people.

The only question still to be decided is whether the American national interests can best be served by conscious collaboration with this second greatest world power, on the basis of recognized common interests, or by isolation from it and going alone or with only the less powerful and less reliable friendly nations.

The position which I am defending is that the American national interests, the interests of the overwhelming majority of the American

people, are best served by an active and conscious collaboration between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Such collaboration would quickly become the most effective conceivable organizing center for the stabilization of the world which is so dangerously unstable at present. It would provide the most effective conceivable protection of American national interests in the Far East and in Latin America. It would be the most effective conceivable guarantee of world peace, which is an American national interest just as it is a national interest of the Soviet Union.

Congressman Dies, on behalf of the anti-New Deal Democrats and the Republicans, has been working overtime in the effort to create the appearance of a great Red Peril in the United States, directed from Moscow through the Communist Party of the United States, the party for which I speak. This Red scare is brought forth in the newspapers as one of the big reasons why co-operation between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. is impossible or undesirable. I would be less than frank if I did not answer the issue thus raised.

Allow me to declare to you, that which is a matter of public record before the Supreme Court of the United States and other official tribunals, that the Communist Party of the U.S.A. is composed of American citizens, makes its own decisions and stands entirely upon its own feet, and is subject to no orders from abroad, from Moscow or any other place, but only to its own conventions held publicly in the United States. We consider that our country has much to learn from the Soviet Union, as that land has learned much from America, and to substantiate this we point to the tenfold increase in the national income of the Soviet Union, which we believe could be emulated by our country to its own benefit. The preamble to our constitution, which is binding upon every member, contains our basic beliefs, with which all our daily activities are in harmony. Despite the possible disagreements which some may have with it, it is clearly within that circle of questions upon which American democracy has traditionally tolerated disagreement. Our preamble states:

The Communist Party of the United States of America is a working-class political party carrying forward today the traditions of Jefferson, Paine,

Jackson, and Lincoln, and of the Declaration of Independence; it upholds the achievements of democracy, the right of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," and defends the United States Constitution against its reactionary enemies who would destroy democracy and all popular liberties; it is devoted to defense of the immediate interests of workers, farmers, and all toilers against capitalist exploitation, and to preparation of the working class for its historic mission to unite and lead the American people to extend these democratic principles to their necessary and logical conclusions.

To make this general declaration even more specific, our party constitution directly repudiates the charges made against the Communists that we wish or intend to subvert American democracy, by another section which says:

The Communist Party of the U.S.A. upholds the democratic achievements of the American people. It opposes with all its power any clique, group, circle, faction, or party which conspires or acts to subvert, undermine, weaken, or overthrow any or all institutions of American democracy whereby the majority of the American people have obtained power to determine their own destiny in any degree. The Communist Party of the U.S.A., standing unqualifiedly for the right of the majority to direct the destinies of our country, will fight with all its strength against any and every effort, whether it comes from abroad or from within, to impose upon our people the arbitrary will of any selfish minority group or party or clique or conspiracy.

Having said these things, something more important remains to be observed about the Red scare and especially about the Dies committee's work in 1938. The Red scare is directed, primarily, not against the still weak and unpretentious Communist Party, which is modestly taking its place as a sector of the broadest democratic front of the majority of the people. No, its primary purpose is to smear "Red" over the simplest progressive measures of the New Deal and over the New Deal leadership. The purpose of the Red-baiters is to frighten as many as possible of the overwhelmingly non-communist majority of the American people into the belief that the New Deal is the opening wedge of a full-fledged socialist program, and on that ground to defeat

and scatter the New Deal majority in the country, thereby returning the reactionary forces to power in the country in 1940.

Consider the facts calmly and dispassionately. Do you really think that men who will call such a person as Felix Frankfurter before them and solemnly demand his answer to the question: "Are you a member of the Communist Party?," are primarily interested in fighting the Communist Party? The very fact that Justice Frankfurter was seriously suspected of being a Communist, broadcast from the Senate and the Dies committee rooms, was a tremendous political boost for the Communist Party before millions of people who knew nothing about us. Do you think it is a blow against the Communist Party, when the Dies committee broadcasts the irresponsible charge that Governor Olson of California is under its direction and that Lieutenant Governor Patterson is even formally a member? That is another big boost for the Communist Party among the millions of voters who elected them. Do you think it makes the Communist Party unrespectable and unpopular to have the President and his very popular wife openly referred to as "Reds" and friends of the Communists? I assure you, and I know what I am talking about, that nothing the Communist Party has done or could do has spread our influence among such broad masses as has this "anti-Red" campaign which found its highest expression in the Dies committee during the 1938 elections, despite the lies and slanders which accompanied it. Why, we were even handed the delectable Shirley Temple as a Communist Party asset! The Communist Party couldn't have purchased such a volume of publicity (on the whole favorable for us, because it linked us with the most popular causes) for \$20,000,000, but Martin Dies gave it to us for nothing!

But we refuse any thanks to Mr. Dies for his gifts, for we know his reactionary and wrecking purpose. He and his kind are prepared to risk promoting the Communist Party's popularity, *if only thereby they can frighten away enough people from the New Deal to insure a reactionary victory in the 1940 elections.* They are working upon exactly the same strategy as the group of wealthy Republicans who,

in 1936, offered a contribution of \$250,000 to the Communist Party on the sole condition that we withdraw our Presidential candidate and endorse Roosevelt.

The purveyors of the Red scare will surely fail in their objective, as they have always failed in critical moments of American history. The reactionary Federalist Party used the Red scare against Thomas Jefferson, because he was the firm and understanding friend of the French Revolution, as well as the leader and organizer of American democracy. But Jefferson came to power, and directed the destinies of our country for a generation, while the Federalist Party degenerated to treasonable negotiations with foreign powers against their own land, and vanished into shameful oblivion, together with their infamous Alien and Sedition Laws which reactionaries are trying to resurrect in the present Congress.

The same old Red scare was trotted out against Andrew Jackson, especially when he broke the political power of Anthony Biddle and the Bank of the United States, but Jackson's memory grows ever more green, while his enemies find no one so poor as to do them honor. Again, the Red scare was one of the principal weapons wielded against Abraham Lincoln, but that did not prevent him from performing his historical tasks and becoming immortal as the personification of the American democratic tradition. Now the same old trickery is trotted out for active duty against Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal policies, but history will write the same sort of finish to this as to former efforts to scare the American people away from the path of progress by the cry of "Red." Reality and the true issues facing the people have a way of emerging out of the fog of demagogy and misrepresentation, especially in the days of a national and international crisis such as we are living through now.

So it is also with the Communist Party. The Red-baiters have spread innumerable falsehoods and slanders against us, which are immediately damaging and force us to spend much time and effort refuting them. But these falsehoods, because they are false, lose their effect, while what remains with the masses of the people forever is the fact that

the Communist Party was identified with the cause of the people, and was attacked by those who prove they are the enemies of the people. In the long run we gain from these crude attempts to create a bogymen out of the Communist Party.

The reactionaries charge that the Communists cannot be sincere in our declared purpose of defending the social and national security of the United States because we are internationalists, and are associated with the Communists of other lands through the Communist International. But it is becoming clear to millions that, for example, the Communists were able to point out sharply and clearly the destructive effects upon American national interests of the Munich betrayal, last September and October, in the heat of events and not six or eight months after, *precisely because we are internationalists*. It is becoming clear, to take another example, that the Communists have become the most effective carriers throughout Latin America of the idea of the "good neighbor" and of Pan-American democratic unity against the invasions of fascism—surely a work in the national interest of the United States—precisely because we are internationalists, and no one suspects us of a narrow nationalist jingoism that could be contrary to their own national interests. We profoundly believe that the true national interests of our own and every other people are not in contradiction, that they are harmonious, and that one can be protected in reality only by policies and measures which conduce to the protection and security of all.

We also know that similar views guide the policy of the men and the party who direct the destinies of the Soviet Union. That is one of the reasons we are able, with full confidence, to champion the cause of the full collaboration of the United States and the Soviet Union in world affairs, in the cause of peace and orderly international relations, while basing ourselves entirely upon the defense of the national interests of the American people.

In the present world crisis, all true defenders of democracy and peace must find the way to work together, to unite their forces against the threatening flood of reaction. This is true within our country and

it is equally true between nations, on a world scale. The Communists pledge their full strength toward such unity for peace and progress.

An address delivered at the Institute of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, July 5, 1939.