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For Speedy Victory

The

Second Front

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By **WILLIAM Z. FOSTER**

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FOR SPEEDY VICTORY— The Second Front NOW

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

WHAT is needed now to win the war quickly and with the least casualties is a great Anglo-American second front in France. The invasion of Italy is not the second front as understood by military experts. Mr. Churchill, himself, has admitted this. There must be a full-scale invasion of France. With Hitler caught between the American and British armies in the West and the Red Army in the East, his doom would soon be sealed.

Time is the essence of the second front question. It is not a matter simply of the second front "some day" in the vague future, but *immediately*, when it will be a real blow for the winning of the war. And the propitious moment to deliver that blow is right now, when the Nazis, badly wounded, are in retreat; when the Red Army is storming ahead on the offensive, and when the United States and Great Britain have in hand ample resources to carry through a great invasion of France.

Even the worst defeatists, who are coming to believe that Hitler will eventually be licked, are willing to agree to a second front "some day," when the situation suits them. These people have not a win-the-war, but a lose-the-peace conception of the second front. Their idea is that the two Anglo-Saxon powers should stand aside and thus compel the U.S.S.R. to bear the main burden of the war. They hope this will bleed the Russians white and eliminate them as a potent factor in Europe. But if, nevertheless, the Russians are able to smash the great Nazi war machine, or seem about

to do so, the reactionaries would then have Great Britain and the United States quickly launch the second front.

Indeed, in such event, they probably would want to form a dozen second fronts, not to smash Germany, but to hold the victorious Red Army in check. This defeatist aim is pretty obvious from the statements and activities of various reactionaries. It explains the sudden, almost panicky conversion of Mr. Hanson Baldwin, ultra-conservative *New York Times* military expert, to an immediate second front advocate last winter, just as the Red Army was driving the Nazis before it and things looked as though the Germans' southern armies were about to suffer a crushing disaster. And now, in the same spirit, as the Red Army again drives ahead victoriously, Mr. E. L. James, *New York Times*, August 15, 1943, puts the lose-the-peace idea of the second front as a maneuver against the U.S.S.R. quite clearly, as follows:

"The success of the Red Armies puts a new complexion on considerations for the invasion of Europe. In other words, to put it bluntly, *a second front may appear desirable to Washington and London for reasons in addition to the purpose of taking some of the pressure off the Eastern Front when Hitler is fighting.*" (Italics mine—W.Z.F.)

The great flaw in Mr. Winston Churchill's post-Quebec speech not long since was precisely that, in discussing the second front, he did not indicate that it would be organized now, when it is so urgently needed, but left the whole thing in the realm of the vague "some day." The British Prime Minister put the second front question this way (*New York Herald Tribune*, Sept. 1):

"I look forward to the day when British and American liberating armies will cross the Channel in full force and come to close quarters with the German invaders of France. You would certainly not wish me to tell you when that is likely to happen or whether it be near or far."

It is not surprising that the opponents of an immediate second front received Mr. Churchill's speech so complacently (they are afraid only of a second front now, not one in the dim future) and that win-the-war elements were so disappointed with it. The latter elements were not impressed by Mr. Churchill's implication that the second front is such a great military secret that he could not be more definite about it. For while the exact day or week

when the big blow is finally to be struck may well be a closely guarded secret, the general preparations for a great second front could hardly be kept from the enemy's knowledge.

At this late date, too, it sounds pretty hollow to ascribe to unreadiness and inadequacy of armed forces the failure of Great Britain and the United States so far to establish the cross-Channel second front. Especially in view of their vast superiority in sea and air power, their great munitions production, far outstripping that of the Axis, and their three or four million highly trained and equipped troops now in the British Isles. Even the traditional main (but never sound) argument against the second front, namely, the shortage of shipping, has obviously collapsed through the tremendous output of American shipyards, the decline of the submarine menace, and the saving in shipping mileage due to the opening up of the Mediterranean. From these causes United Nations shipping has increased by no less than 4,000,000 tons during the past several months.

Further delay in launching the second front can only be understood as the American and British governments yielding to defeatist political pressure. It brings with it a whole series of evil consequences. It needlessly prolongs the war with all its bloodshed and destruction, it increases the casualty list that we and all our allies must finally pay; it gives Germany and Japan a chance to develop and perfect their defensive strategy; it plays into the hands of those whose conception of a second front is to lose-the-peace by isolating the U.S.S.R. and saving what they can of fascism; it increases the danger of stalemate in the war and a negotiated peace with the fascists. Every consideration of sound military strategy and of genuinely democratic political policy demands that the second front be established *now*.

WOULD THE SECOND FRONT COST UNDUE WAR CASUALTIES?

One by one the arguments of the Hearst-Wheeler-McCormick-Berle-Pegler opponents of the second front have collapsed in face of the growing military might of Great Britain and the United States.

The presence of at least 3,000,000 highly-armed British, Ca-

nadian and American soldiers in the British Isles effectively disposes of the defeatist contention that we lack sufficient available troops to overcome Hitler's Western European garrison of not more than 600,000 men and to compel him to draw 50 or 60 divisions from the East; the demonstrated Allied superiority in the air knocks on the head, too, the contention that we do not have enough planes to cover a land invasion into France; the gigantic munitions output of the United States has also killed the assertion that we are without the necessary guns and other war weapons; and the tremendous production of American shipyards, plus the checking of the submarine campaign, plus the great mobilization of 3,000 ships for the invasion of Italy, have laid to rest the excuse that it is a shortage of shipping that is holding up the Anglo-American second front.

With the above arguments shattered, the defeatists are at present focussing their hopes of halting the second front upon the pretext that to invade Europe now from across the English Channel would entail a terrific and needless loss of life upon our armed forces. Thus, we see fascist-minded men who have never troubled their heads a particle over the evils befalling the American people, now developing a crocodile-like solicitude for the welfare of our boys in uniform. They paint a horrendous picture of the immeasurable strength of Hitler's fortifications and armies in Western Europe, asserting that vast numbers would die in overcoming them, and demanding, therefore, that the allied Anglo-Saxon powers hold up the second front until the going gets a whole lot easier.

They want an invasion practically without casualties, presumably something like a parade to Berlin.

Although these people speak of the British and American air bombings as softening up the Nazis before invasion, the real thing they are planning is for the Russians to continue to do the main battling and dying in the war, until Hitler is about licked, when, they hope, the Anglo-American forces will cross the Channel and, with their strong and fresh armies, take charge of Europe. Obviously, also many reactionaries expect that eventually the Nazis, defeated in the East by the Red Army, will virtually open Europe's locked doors to the American and British armies in the West, in order to save themselves from the victorious Russians.

The defeatists' position that we can protect ourselves from casualties by standing idle while the Russians do the hard fighting is both contemptible and fallacious.

It is contemptible because it is an insult to the national dignity and honor, as well as the fighting spirit, of the American and British peoples.

For the past many months the masses of these two nations have realized, with great concern, that the Russians have been doing the vast bulk of the fighting in this joint war, and at a horrible cost to themselves in human life. They know full well, also, that the Russian losses are incomparably greater than the British and American combined. While dearly loving their own boys and wishing to shield their lives and limbs by every means possible, the two Anglo-Saxon peoples are warm-hearted enough to understand that the Russians also love their young men and shrink from their mass slaughter. Our soldiers, too, are brave and willing, want nothing better than to come to grips with the enemy.

The determination of Britons and Americans to hold up their own end in the war, at whatever sacrifice, has been a potent reason, together with the realization that only through the second front can the war be won, why the peoples of Great Britain and the United States have hailed every indication that their respective governments were finally going to live up to their pledges to the U.S.S.R. and open up a major front in Western Europe.

The defeatists' argument that we should save our skins while the Russians do the fighting is fallacious because it tends to prolong the war indefinitely, with a mounting list of casualties. The way to win the war with a minimum of casualties, for ourselves as well as for our allies, is to bring the war to the speediest possible conclusion by an overwhelming smash at the Hitler war machine from the West, through the second front.

The defeatists' shameful position is further fallacious, because hardly anything could be more fatal in the conduct of a war by a coalition of states than a situation where one nation deliberately sacrificed another's men on the field of battle and unfairly shielded its own.

Every patriotic American citizen who wants to win the war and who has a sense of realities in the world, must be shocked at the cold-blooded, cynical way that many reactionaries are accept-

ing the monster blood sacrifices of the Russians as just their "hard luck," but about which we can do nothing.

Recently the renegade Louis Fischer, on the radio, had the insolence to argue that the U.S.S.R. cannot avoid having huge losses, because the enemy is on its soil; and it must fight, regardless of casualties. But with Great Britain and the United States, declared Mr. Fischer, the enemy is not on our soil and we are therefore able to pick and choose the time to fight or not to fight him. In such an outlook there is no understanding of coalition warfare, no sense of solidarity with a loyal ally, no conception of national honor. It is the theory of letting the Russians do the fighting and we will gather the rewards of a relatively bloodless victory.

Not to be outdone by Mr. Fischer, a prominent radio commentator, a few days ago, "justified" the Russians' huge casualty list and Britain's comparatively small one by arguing that if Great Britain, having a relatively small population, were to lose 1,000,000 men (a huge exaggeration) in establishing the second front, it would be weakened so much that it would no longer constitute a first-class power. But, went on this Soviet-baiter, with Russia it is all quite different. Having a huge population it has been able to lose several millions of soldiers and now it is much stronger than ever. The logic of this is that Britain must be saved from casualties to prevent its national decline, but the more Russians die the stronger the U.S.S.R. becomes.

A nation can do its share in a desperate, coalition warfare such as ours only if it is ready for the supreme sacrifice of its young men, as the fortunes of the battle dictate. The Soviet Union realizes this harsh fact ruthlessly, and acts accordingly. No army is more careful of its soldiers' lives than the Red Army, but none knows better how to die when need be than Red Army men. No nation has done more for its youth than the Soviet Government, yet they have bravely sent their young fighters into a hell of battle such as no people in all the world's history has ever had to face.

If the Soviet nation had flinched from this iron task, Leningrad, Moscow and Stalingrad could not have been saved, nor would the Nazis now be retreating through the Ukraine. But for the limitless self-sacrifice of Soviet youth Hitler would be the master of the world.

Those defeatist croakers amongst us who are shouting about how we can win the war with relatively few casualties, while the Russians perish by tens of thousands warring to the death against our common enemy Hitler, are not only preaching a gospel of dishonor toward our allies, but are also trying to press our government into a fatal policy and to steer our nation down a toboggan slide to disaster.

SECOND FRONT LESSONS OF DIEPPE

When the defeatists, arguing against the invasion of Western Europe and the setting up of an Anglo-American second front, try to give a color of reality to their extravagant estimates of the casualties that such an invasion would involve, they never fail to cite the experience of the Commando raid against Dieppe, to bolster up their contentions. Their claim is that the heavy losses suffered in this operation, which have been officially stated at 50 per cent in killed, wounded and missing, show conclusively that an attempt to establish a broad footing in Western France would be prohibitive in its cost in soldier casualties. Actually, however, the real lesson of Dieppe is quite the opposite: namely, that the second front is possible of attainment without undue losses.

Let us see, therefore, just what happened at Dieppe. When on August 9, 1942, the 6,000 men, four-fifths of them Canadians, sailed against this French port, they confronted overwhelming odds. As the expedition was supposed to be secret, no previous air bombardment had been executed to knock out the Dieppe fortifications, which are among the strongest on the French coast. Also, the expedition, having very little air cover of its own, was exposed to the full fury of the Nazi air fighters. In addition to these terrible odds, the Dieppe Commando raiders were vastly outnumbered by the troops the Nazis were able to confront them with.

The Dieppe garrison itself probably held several times as many soldiers as the raiders numbered, and besides, the Germans, learning of the raid several hours in advance, easily brought by truck and train many thousands more troops to the threatened spot. This numerical superiority of the Germans explains why the great bulk of the Dieppe casualties were prisoners seized by the Nazis.

Under these impossible conditions, facing powerful, intact fortifications, an overwhelming enemy air force and vastly stronger

ground troops, it is no wonder that the Dieppe raiders suffered large casualties. The marvelous thing about the raid was that the heroic Canadians nevertheless succeeded in blasting their way ashore, in penetrating the country as deeply as six miles in some places, and in hanging on to their beachhead for several hours.

Later their chief, General McNaughton, stated that they actually could have stayed put in Dieppe and "the Germans would not have driven us off," if the plan had been to establish a permanent landing instead of, as it was, simply to carry out a major reconnaissance foray.

However heroic the Dieppe Commando raid may have been, it in no sense can serve as a picture of what a second front invasion would be like. An all-out British-Canadian-French-American attack upon Nazi-held France would present a totally different aspect than that of the little handful of Dieppe raiders, fighting desperately to secure a temporary toehold in the face of gigantic superiority of enemy material forces. This is obvious from even an elementary consideration of the conditions under which a second front invasion would be carried out:

The invaders would not have to face unimpaired Nazi fortifications, such as the Dieppe Commandos did. On the contrary, all along the line these would be thoroughly softened up beforehand. After seeing what the British and American air forces have done to many German and Italian cities, it is safe to assert that they could literally pulverize the Nazi coast fortifications before the major invasion took place.

The second front invaders also would have the advantage of adequate air protection, which the Dieppe raiders did not have. With allied air superiority in the West, undoubtedly the German Luftwaffe could be pretty well knocked out of the sky and the invading troops thus be spared the merciless strafing to which the Commandos were subjected at Dieppe.

The invaders would also hit Hitler's forces, not at one isolated point, as in the case of Dieppe, but at a hundred places simultaneously along the French coast. Thus the Nazis, with all these flaming spots to attend to, could not possibly bring about the overwhelming concentration of their forces which was such a decisive factor in piling up the casualty lists at Dieppe.

Finally, the Nazis would not enjoy numerical superiority, as at

Dieppe, but instead, would find themselves heavily outnumbered. For Hitler, committed up to his neck on the Eastern Front, could never mobilize a number of soldiers to match the 1,500,000 or more men that the allies could throw into France out of their present pool of at least 3,000,000 troops in the British Isles. Especially Hitler could not equal the invading forces numerically, as his garrisons throughout Western Europe would be threatened, if not actually beleaguered, and his transportation system disrupted by the rebelling, sabotaging, fighting French population.

In view of the fundamentally different, and profoundly more favorable, conditions for us under which a general allied invasion of France would be carried out, it is clear that there would be no possibility of such a casualty rate as prevailed at Dieppe.

The allies would suffer grave losses, of course, for an all-out cross-channel invasion against a powerful enemy would be a most serious military operation. But this is war, and wars cannot be won without losses. Moreover, the losses of the Germans, no doubt, would be much greater than ours.

The decisive thing is that the establishment of the second front would open the road to victory. And despite the initial cost in the lives of British, Canadian, French and American soldiers, in the long run it would cut hugely our total casualties by hastening the war to a victorious conclusion.

Considering all these plain facts, it would seem to be high time, therefore, that an end be put to the practice of trying to paralyze the striking power of the American and British governments and to scare the allied peoples away from launching the second front by menacing them with the casualty rates of Dieppe. Dieppe was almost a suicide squad affair, directed against a whole section of the great Nazi military machine; whereas a million-man allied invasion, possessed of a huge preponderance of power, would overwhelm and destroy that machine with a minimum of losses to itself.

The use of the Dieppe casualty figures as an argument against the second front, when obviously they do not apply, is part of the general strategy of the defeatists to rob the United Nations of victory, to prevent the smashing of the Axis powers, and to defeat the free peoples' program of forcing the fascist savages into unconditional surrender.

ITALY AND THE SECOND FRONT

The invasion of Italy by the Anglo-American forces presents a number of lessons of special importance with regard to the question of a second front in France. One of the most striking of these was the comparative ease with which our troops blasted their way into Sicily and onto the lower end of the Italian mainland, even before the Badoglio Government threw in the sponge. Our casualty lists for these initial operations were much less than our military experts anticipated. And, indeed, the same can be said for the whole preceding campaign in North Africa.

The significance of all this is that Hitler was unable to spare sufficient men and material from the Eastern Front or elsewhere to defend North Africa effectively and to prevent our first crucial landings upon European soil. It has been repeatedly stated that in the long battle of the British across North Africa, which ended in the capture of the Axis forces in Tunisia, the Germans had only three divisions of troops in the field, nor did they have more in Sicily and in the lower tip of Italy. This was not because Hitler did not value North Africa, Sicily and lower Italy, for they all have very great strategic value. What a great victory it would have been for him could he have defeated our first landing attempts in Sicily and lower Italy! The fierce fight being made to repel us at Salerno (at present writing) demonstrates that Hitler does not propose to give up Italy without a struggle. But obviously he is suffering from a shortage of soldiers, due to his gigantic losses on the Eastern Front. The Russians have recently stated (Sept. 15) that he lacks sufficient men successfully to defend Italy in the face of a determined thrust by the Anglo-American forces, and their judgment has been borne out by events.

The meaning of all this for a second front is clear. Unquestionably Hitler's forces in France are much weaker than we have been led to believe, and they will be able to make far less resistance than Anglo-American leaders commonly suppose. Of course France is not Italy—Hitler attaches more strategic importance to France, he has it better fortified and has many more troops there. But on the other hand, the Americans and British have, in the British Isles, an incomparably more powerful military base than in North Africa, from which they are attacking Italy. They have

many times more soldiers, a vastly superior air force, and their transportation problem is only a fraction as serious. Altogether, from England, the allied powers would be able to throw vastly greater forces against Hitler than from Africa.

To establish bridgeheads across the English Channel will, of course, be more difficult than it was in Italy; but the very inability of Hitler to prevent the invasion of Italy is an unmistakable sign that his resistance in France will crumble under a mighty Anglo-American attack. When the assault upon the French coast finally comes, the world will be surprised at how much less formidable the Nazi resistance is than has been anticipated. It will then be seen how foolish it was to calculate our probable casualty lists upon the basis of the suicide squad Commando raid upon Dieppe.

Another important lesson, vital for the question of the second front, shown by the Italian invasion, is the danger of delay in striking the military blow once the situation is ripe. When Mussolini fell, that was the strategic moment to move into Italy with everything we had, establishing contact with the democratic forces. But six precious weeks were allowed to slip by, until we finally wangled an "unconditional surrender" out of Badoglio. Meanwhile the Nazis were feverishly regrouping their troops and generally preparing their defense. In consequence, we now find them in a far stronger position than they otherwise would have been had our troops gone into action in Italy earlier.

This delay in Italy, which must translate itself into needless casualty lists for ourselves and our allies, emphasizes afresh the danger in the delay that is now occurring in launching a second front in France. Germany is thus being given the opportunity to transform its whole military set-up from an offensive to a defensive basis.

Hitler, in his latest speech, boasted that by new defensive measures the Nazis will be able to stop the bombing of their cities. This was mere propaganda designed to whip up the flagging morale of the German people; but that Nazi Germany will be able to make a longer and harder fight if allowed the time to build its defenses and revamp its strategy and tactics, needs no proof. Thus, if the Nazi-held side of the Channel coast now bristles with fortifications, it is because of the time Hitler has been given by our slowness in launching the second front.

A third major lesson, bearing upon the second front problem, is emphasized by the catastrophic collapse of the Mussolini Government once the Anglo-American forces hit it a solid blow by invading Sicily. This was because the Italian fascist state, besides being undermined by its huge military losses in the U.S.S.R. and Africa, was politically rotten. It did not have the backing of the great masses of the Italian people. Mussolini's boasted regime proved to be so hollow that it crashed at the first real shock.

Hitler's Nazi regime is also rotten, it has also suffered terrific military losses in its defeats by the Red Army, and it too will blow up once Great Britain and the United States decide to put their full pressure upon it by a great second front in France.

Nazi Germany is, of course, vastly more powerful materially and has a stronger grip on its people than fascist Italy, and it can and will make a far more resolute struggle. But the military defeats and political rottenness that caused Mussolini's downfall are also hastening Hitler to his fall. When Great Britain and the United States, by throwing a million or two soldiers into France, set up a great nutcracker with the powerful Red Army in the East, and the Nazi army in between, Hitler will then be rapidly on his way out.

And his exit doubtless will be helped by unexpectedly large and militant mass movements in Germany itself. When the Hitler Government is smashed, undoubtedly the world will be amazed, even more so than in the case of Mussolini, at how much that regime, built on terror and demagogy, lacked the backing of the German people, and also how much more undermined it is now than it appears upon the surface to be.

ITALY'S SURRENDER A HEAVY BLOW TO JAPAN

In this war American defeatist elements, in their determination to prevent, if possible, a decisive victory of the democratic peoples over fascism, have done very considerable harm to the military effort of this country and the whole United Nations. They have undermined our national unity, hindered our munitions output, upset our economic stabilization, sabotaged our cooperative relations with our allies, and, most important of all, it

has been their reactionary influence, together with that of similar circles in Great Britain, that has up until now prevented the establishment of an Anglo-American second front in Europe.

One thing, however, fortunately the defeatists have not been able to accomplish, despite all their efforts. This was to reverse the United Nations' general war plan, which singles out the European theater of war as the most important and signalizes Nazi Germany as the chief enemy, against whom the main immediate blows must be struck. The advocates of the United Nations' war plan have always argued that the only way the war can be won is by smashing Germany, and that it can not be won by attempting to defeat Japan first. They have correctly contended that in defeating Germany the ground was also being torn out from beneath Japan and the basis laid for the latter's downfall.

What with Nazi Germany's vastly greater industrial and military strength and with her more advantageous strategical position, it would seem that the United Nations' war plan is so obviously sound that all must understand it. But this in no way deterred the defeatists from assailing and trying to destroy this plan. The Hearst-McCormick-Howard papers, for many months past, have bitterly condemned the whole theory that Nazi Germany is the main enemy. With every trick and lie they have pictured Japan as our chief foe and insisted that to fail to strike our heaviest blows against her means to betray our most precious national interests. These "Japan firsters" are so strong that, as we have seen, only a few months ago Senator Chandler of Kentucky rose in the Senate and formally demanded that the whole United Nations' war plan be so changed that our chief forces should be directed against Japan. Senator Bridges still continues to argue along the same line in radio addresses.

That this dangerous agitation has not been without results was evidenced by a remark by President Roosevelt several months ago to the effect that at that time the bulk of the United States armed forces then in action were operating in the Pacific; that is, against Japan. And the main business of the Quebec Conference seems to have been to intensify the war against that country. Nevertheless, the United Nations' war plan has remained intact and, by and large, the main concentration has continued against the Nazis and their European allies. This is the chief reason for the favor-

able turn of military events all over the world for the United Nations.

The surrender of Italy, under the concerted blows of Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States, gave a dramatic proof of the correctness of the United Nations' war theory—that waging war in the European theater against Hitler and his allies at the same time undermines the position of Japan. It did this in two general respects, at least. The first was the consequent opening of the Mediterranean to the free passage of Allied merchant shipping. This cuts off several thousand miles from the sea journey to the Far East and it has the effect of adding a couple of million more tons to available Allied shipping. Which means that there are a far greater number of ships on hand wherewith to transport men and munitions to wage war against the Japanese. In a very real sense this result constituted a solid blow against Japan.

The second great disadvantage to Japan of Italy's downfall comes from the fact that the bulk of the Italian navy has been surrendered to the United Nations. The significance of this is that the huge section of the British navy hitherto engaged in holding the Italian navy locked in port is now free for action in other seas. Which means in the Far East; for Hitler's fleet is already bottled up in Northern European ports. Moreover, many of the Italian ships will probably be lined up for active service in the United Nations' fleets. This, too, further increases the headaches for Japan.

The latest figures on the number of Italian ships surrendered (September 13) total 43, including four battleships, seven cruisers, eight destroyers and fourteen submarines. Multiply this list by at least two and one gets an idea of the naval strength newly available to fight Japan. The surrender of the Italian fleet was perhaps as great a blow to Japan, by increasing its enemies' strength, as Pearl Harbor was to the American navy, by cutting down its power. And it was all accomplished without our firing a single shot directly at the Japanese. It shifted the balance of naval power against Japan far more drastically than all our naval fighting in the Pacific since Pearl Harbor has done.

New and still heavier blows of a similar character are in store for Japan with the progress of the fighting in the European theater of war. Once the United States and Great Britain decide to throw

their vast armed forces now in the British Isles against Hitler via a great Western Front, then they, together with the U.S.S.R., will soon knock out Nazi Germany. Germany's downfall will prove no less than a major disaster for Japan, by still more radically shifting the relation of forces against that country. Then there will be endless merchant shipping for Allied transport service, gigantic veteran armies to draw upon, a vast body of fighting airplanes available for the Far East, a war munitions production towering high over that of Japan, and the entire American and British navies free to concentrate virtually their whole strength against Japan. That is what the defeat of Nazi Germany will mean to Japan. It will leave that country right up against a patently hopeless situation.

With the great increase in Anglo-American armed strength—in ships, men, planes, guns, and everything else, more and more of this growing power can and must be thrown against Japan. Every possible blow must be dealt that ruthless aggressor. But absolutely no concession should be made to the defeatist elements now trying to get us to pull our punches against Hitler under the guise of beating Japan first. Their line, which would free Hitler of his two powerful American and British enemies, is simply treason to the United States. The clear lesson of this war is that, instead of slackening up now on Hitler, our main forces must be concentrated against him more completely than ever before by opening up a great Anglo-American second front. The road to the defeat of Japan, as well as to that of Nazi Germany, runs through Berlin.

THE HEAVY PRICE OF DELAY IN OPENING THE SECOND FRONT

The Hearst-McCormick defeatists are now hypocritically telling our people that the way for us to avoid excessive war casualties is to postpone indefinitely the second front. They would have us wait, and keep on waiting, nursing illusions that the Hitler regime will be destroyed by air bombing alone, or that it will collapse of its own weight from internal strains, whereupon we can win a virtually bloodless war. But behind the lying propaganda of these fascist-minded elements stands their real purpose—to kill the

second front plan altogether, to betray our Soviet ally and to make it bleed itself white in our common struggle, and to prevent our nation from scoring a decisive victory over Germany and Japan.

Delay in opening the second front, through whatever pretext, can only prolong the war, make the achievement of victory harder for us, and raise the blood price that we will have to pay to win the war. In his Quebec speech President Roosevelt said we are seeking "victory in the shortest possible time." This is the correct path by which to insure a real victory and at the same time to spare to the utmost the lives of our soldiers. The President's stated objective of a quick victory can be realized only through the prompt opening of the second front.

There are two basic reasons, one military and the other political, why dragging out the war will make us, in the long run, pay more dearly for victory with the lives of our youth. Let us first take a look at the military reason:

By failing to establish the second front we are prolonging the war, and enabling hard-pressed Germany, our main enemy, to develop a new defensive policy. Germany started out in this war upon a purely offensive basis; it relied almost solely upon attack and had no effective program of defensive action. But now, due principally to the great fight of the Red Army, Nazi Germany's offensive strategy has been wrecked and that country forced onto the defensive. The Nazis are, therefore, feverishly changing over their whole war machine from an offensive to a defensive basis. They are building vast fortifications all around the borders of Europe, constructing thousands of fighter planes instead of bombers, dotting their cities ever more thickly with anti-aircraft guns, producing millions of land mines to cover up their growing retreats, etc. The increasing toll of Allied bombers lost over Germany show the deadliness of some of these new defensive weapons.

Our strong enemy in the Pacific, Japan, whose offensive has also been checked, is likewise industriously taking full advantage of our slowness in opening a second front by digging itself in, building its defenses, and energetically striving to exploit its new great resources.

Two things should, therefore, be very obvious: (a) the more Germany and Japan succeed in developing their defensive weapons the harder it will be for us to defeat them and the more American

soldiers will have to die in the task, and (b) the way to prevent this needless sacrifice of our forces is for Great Britain and the United States, through the second front, to deal the mortal blow to Nazi Germany as quickly as possible.

The second great reason, the political one, why prolonging the war would be costly in "blood, sweat and tears" for us is, that the more we delay in smashing Nazi Germany the greater will be the danger of stalemating the war and thereby opening the way for a negotiated peace with Hitler, or some fascist successor to him. Such a termination to the war would be a major disaster to humanity, inevitably resulting in chaos and fresh wars, which would eventually mean violent death to myriads of American youth.

In the United States there are many rich and powerful reactionaries who, dreading the democratic consequences of an "unconditional surrender" victory over Hitler, are bending every effort to slow down our national war effort, to prevent our taking decisive military action through the second front, to throw the war into a long-drawn-out struggle of attrition, in the hope of forcing a war-weary people into a slave peace with Hitlerism.

The way to defeat these Copperhead traitors, as well as to prevent Nazi Germany and Japan from developing their defensive weapon and strategy, is precisely to bring the war to a speedy and victorious conclusion by the launching of the Anglo-American second front.

Last winter, when the Nazis were in full retreat after their crushing defeat at Stalingrad, there was a splendid opportunity to deal Hitler's armies the death blow by catching them in the nutcracker of a two-front war. The Russians, seeing the opportunity, called insistently for the second front; but the British and American governments, although they had repeatedly pledged themselves to a second front, procrastinated and did not act.

Now there is another perfect situation in which to smash Hitler's Wehrmacht and to end the war in 1943, victoriously. Again the Nazis are in retreat, Mussolini has been overthrown, the German people are deeply shaken by the wholesale bombing of their cities, and Great Britain and the United States have all the available men, ships, planes and guns necessary for a successful offensive to crush Hitler. What will we do this time? Let us not

permit this opportunity to slip away as we did that of last winter, drugging ourselves the while with illusions that we can win this great war without paying heavily for it in casualties.

Organized labor at this critical moment of the war should raise its voice militantly for an all-out, second front policy by our government. The voice of the labor movement is of vast importance in the second front issue, which is as much of a political as a military nature.

THE SOVIETS AND THE SECOND FRONT

One of the most stupid arguments of the defeatists in this war is to the effect that the second front is proposed only to help the Russians, the implication being that the United States and Great Britain have no real interest in it. This completely ignores the global character of the war. The reality is that the second front is as vital to us as to the Russians. It is the very keystone to a coalition victory policy.

For the past two years Soviet military leaders have been persistently stressing the necessity and the practicability of the Anglo-American forces establishing an immediate second front in Western Europe, insisting that a two-front war would quickly crush the Hitler military machine. British and American political and military leaders, while agreeing in principle that a second front would be highly advantageous strategically, and having repeatedly pledged themselves for it, nevertheless always balk at steps for its immediate establishment, taking refuge in various allegations of unreadiness. They often charge the Russians with underestimating the gigantic task of transporting the required armies from the British Isles to the Continent.

The advocates of delay, and ever more delay, in opening up the Anglo-American attack from the West, claim that the Soviet leaders, having only to do with a land army in a vast country, know little or nothing of the problems of sea transport which, they assert, are still the fundamental obstacles to the realization of the second front. But the makers of such arguments conveniently ignore the fact that the U.S.S.R. itself is a great maritime country. It has thousands of miles of sea coast, along the Pacific and Arctic oceans and the Baltic and Black Seas. It also has a big merchant

fleet, and its Red Navy has dealt the Nazis many heavy blows in this war. The U.S.S.R. has, moreover, carried out a number of important, large-scale amphibious operations in this war. The Russians are, therefore, quite conscious of and familiar with the problems of water transport involved in a big invasion drive across the English Channel, and they are fully competent to pass judgment upon them.

Those who always want to postpone the second front use another argument in the cynical assertion that the Soviet leaders approach the second front question from a narrow, nationalistic standpoint. This argument has it that the Russians need the second front so badly, in order to take some of the Nazis' weight off the Red Army, that they want an Anglo-American invasion, even though they realize that it would fail to set up a substantial second front. These people say that the Russians are working on the assumption that even an abortive second front attempt, if it only temporarily relieved the Nazi pressure upon the Red Army, would serve the Soviet interest, however disastrous it might be to the Anglo-American allies.

This contention, in addition to being an insult to an ally which is bearing the main brunt of the war, is utterly false. The plain fact is that an abortive attempt to set up the second front would boomerang back upon the U.S.S.R. far more seriously than it would upon its western allies. This should be obvious because in the event of such a failure, Hitler, although not able to invade England nor the United States, certainly could and would be able to fight the Soviet Union more vigorously. With all fear removed of an immediate attack from the West, Hitler would strip his garrisons in Europe to the bone and throw the collected forces against the Red Army on the Eastern Front. Therefore, when Soviet military experts insist upon the second front the very basis of their calculation is that it must be a success, and that it draw off at least 50 or 60 divisions of Hitler's troops from the Eastern Front.

What, then, is the cause of the profound disagreement between the Anglo-American and Soviet leaders over the second front, if it is not Russian naivete or irresponsibility, as charged? The answer to this question is to be found in the different degrees of determination with which the U.S.S.R. and the Anglo-American powers, respectively, are conducting the war.

The Soviet people are waging an all-out war, mobilizing and using their entire forces to beat the Nazi enemy. They have a granite-like national unity, and the grim resolution with which they are fighting is eloquently attested to by their heroic defense of Moscow, Leningrad and Stalingrad, by their great winter (and now summer) offensives, by their resolute scorched earth policy, by their removal of vast war plants from the exposed West to the far interior, by the profound hardships willingly borne by the workers and farmers, and by the unparalleled heroism of the Red Army fighters.

Fighting thus resolutely themselves, the Russians not unnaturally support an all-out, victory coalition strategy which demands that their allies also exert their power; in this case by the establishment of the second front. In calling upon the Anglo-American forces to blast their way into Europe, the Russians are not asking them to do anything that they themselves could not and would not do. Undoubtedly, had the Red Army, whose big winter offensive of 1941 right after the terrific Nazi initial assault General MacArthur called the greatest military achievement in all history, been in the place of our forces in the British Isles, it would have long ago crashed its way across the English Channel and thrown its forces against Hitler with devastating effect.

On the Anglo-American side of the war there is no such united, do-or-die spirit as that characterizing the Russians. In our two countries the war is being conducted with far less resolution and intensity than in the U.S.S.R. Among the British and (especially) American peoples there is a much weaker national unity than there is in the Soviet Union. This vital fact sticks right into our eyes when we observe the tremendous opposition which President Roosevelt is now facing in Congress and in the daily press. Supporters of this opposition are doing their destructive work, also, in high places of the Administration itself, and they are likewise not without influence in our General Staff. In Great Britain there is a similar defeatist opposition, although it is not so open and insolent, and probably also not so strong as the one in this country.

The defeatist opposition does not want a decisive, democratic victory over Nazi Germany; it wants a negotiated peace with the Hitlerites. Hence, it is sabotaging the national war effort in every direction. It is confusing the American people and sapping their

will to victory; it is undermining national unity, it is hampering production and opposing economic stabilization. And, above all, it is resisting the opening of the Anglo-American second front in Europe. All-out cooperation with our Soviet ally against the Nazis is the very last thing it has in mind. The only kind of a second front the defeatists would welcome would be one after the Russians have defeated Hitler Germany, or are threatening to do so, when it would want the American and British armies to move over into Europe to act as an opposing force to the Red Army. It is this defeatist position, not genuine military considerations, which has prevented until this date the establishment of the second front.

Military historians of the future will justify the position of the Soviet military leaders in this great controversy still raging over the question of launching an immediate second front. Undoubtedly the material conditions, in the shape of men and munitions, are here now, and have been for a long time, in sufficient measure to allow such a front to be set up. What has been lacking on the Anglo-American side are not resources, but a more resolute win-the-war policy. Beyond question, if the American and British military and political leaders had acted with anything even approaching the fierce fighting spirit animating the Soviet people, the second front could have been established early in 1942 and the war long since won.

U. S. REACTIONARIES UNDERMINE UNITED NATIONS POLICY

The powerful defeatist opposition in this country has become an international menace. The forces who confront President Roosevelt with hostile majorities in both houses of Congress, who have made ducks and drakes out of his economic stabilization program, and who are now purging the best win-the-war elements out of various government departments, are also extending their destructive influence so deeply into the spheres of foreign policies as to cripple American military action, threaten the stability of the United Nations, and endanger the whole outcome of the war.

These reactionary American forces, with help from similar ele-

ments in Great Britain, have up till now prevented the launching of the Anglo-American second front, despite the fact that this policy was long since decided upon. When on June 11, 1942, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill agreed with Foreign Commissar Molotov for a second front before that year was out (this was the only possible meaning of their joint statement) the world had a right to assume that they intended to live up to this agreement.

The second front was based on sound military strategy, and there was every reason to conclude that sufficient resources of men and materials were at hand to put it into effect. It is incredible that these two statesmen would have deliberately misled a hard-pressed ally, raising its hopes high and then plunging it into deep disappointment by a failure to go on with the pledges given. It will be remembered what wide use the Nazis made of this failure, in their attempts to undermine the morale of the Red Army.

It was not because of adverse military developments that the American and British governments have so far failed to fulfill their second front agreement. On the contrary, such developments have been altogether favorable—the Red Army has dealt devastating blows at the Nazis, American and British armed strength has vastly increased, American production of planes, ships and guns has soared to great heights, the submarine menace has been greatly lessened, Italy has been forced to surrender, etc. Still the second front pledge has not yet been carried out.

The basic reason for failing to put it into effect is to be found in the heavy political pressure of defeatist elements in the United States and, to a lesser degree, in Great Britain. Fearing the consequences of a decisive victory over Hitler, these reactionaries have never ceased to oppose the great step necessary for such a victory—the Anglo-American second front. In Congress their Copperhead representatives have inveighed against the second front; their vast chains of newspapers have done likewise; conservative generals in the armed forces took the same anti-second front line, and so have many defeatist borers-from-within the apparatus of the Roosevelt Administration itself.

The plain fact of the matter is that the American and British governments have yielded in the face of this powerful opposition. They have not yet ventured to go through with the huge enter-

prise of a large-scale invasion of Europe in the face of resistance by the powerful, organized reactionaries. They have instead launched the relatively small scale operations in the Mediterranean theater of war; they have also expanded the air-bombing campaign; and now, following Quebec, they are proposing to enlarge these activities and to step up the war against Japan. But the second front still remains indefinite. The present military operations, important though they may be, are not decisive fighting; they do not constitute an all-out war effort; they are not real coalition warfare—all of which considerations can be realized only through the second front, when the several million idle American, Canadian and British soldiers in the British Isles are thrown into action.

As things now stand, with no second front, not only is the great burden of the war thrown upon the Russians, but the war, which could have been won in 1942 with a second front policy, is being needlessly prolonged. This will mean far greater casualties for us and our allies, as well as more devastation in general. The lack of a second front is also preventing the real consolidation of the United Nations for their great tasks of winning the war and organizing the peace. For this dangerous situation the Hoover-Taft-Hearst-Wheeler-Vandenburg defeatist opposition in the United States is basically responsible.

The American defeatist opposition is also upsetting the diplomatic, as well as the military, policies of the United Nations. This is obvious when we consider the practices of our government with relation to Europe, in contrast with its glowing promises. Time and again, during the war our national spokesmen have, with the hearty assent of the great bulk of the American people, declared that we are out to destroy Hitlerism, root and branch. The United Nations have quite generally subscribed to such sentiments. The powerful reactionaries in this country, however, afraid of all democratic developments, want no such eradication of Hitlerism. Instead they want to make peace with it. And many of the diplomatic activities of our State Department would lead one to believe that it is yielding more to the demands of the American defeatist opposition than being guided by the high statements of anti-fascist policy by President Roosevelt, which are in line with United Nations' policy.

APPEASEMENT POLICY

The State Department, headed by the conservative Mr. Hull, to whose defense on Soviet relations the President recently came, is loaded up with anti-democratic, anti-Soviet elements, such as Long, Dunn and Berle, and is following a line which is definitely opposing the growth of democratic movements in Europe and is encouraging European reactionaries, particularly in their moves to isolate the U.S.S.R. For proof of this, all we have to do is to consider the notorious appeasement of Franco and Mannerheim; the attempt to inflate Otto of Hapsburg into the hope of Austria; the coddling of the Vichy government, and also of Darlan and Peyrouton, and the flint-like opposition to De Gaulle; the ill-fated toying with the Badoglio government, etc.

Such dangerous policies have nothing in common with America's and the United Nations' announced program of smashing fascism and forcing Germany and Japan into unconditional surrender. Small wonder, therefore, that the fear is growing throughout the allied countries that the United States is out to prevent anything like a democratic renaissance in Europe and is preparing eventually to make a deal with some German Badoglio after Hitler has fallen. Should the reactionaries succeed in forcing upon our country any such policy as this it would be a world disaster and would lay the basis for another terrible war.

The machinations of American defeatists, seeking to distort and undermine American and United Nations war policies, constitute a grave danger that organized labor must pay close attention to, or we may run into a disastrous situation. The trade unions are increasingly alert to the menace of the bloc of defeatists in Congress and outside, to the democratic regime in the United States, but they are not yet sufficiently aware of the world threat these American reactionaries constitute to the winning of the war and to the eventual formulation of a democratic peace.

The activities of the American defeatists, in both the domestic and international spheres, emphasize again the imperative need for the trade unions to bridge over the split in their own ranks and to embark upon an all-embracing campaign of maximum support to the Commander-in-Chief. As never before, the labor movement must mobilize its millions to back up the President, at

the same time insisting that a firmer stand be taken by the Administration against the defeatists wherever they may be found, and against their corrosive policies, which have now become a danger to all that the democratic peoples are fighting the war for, all over the world.

ISOLATIONISM AND IMPERIALISM

Among the most vicious and persistent enemies of the second front and of victory in the war are the so-called isolationist leaders, such as Hoover, Lindbergh, Hearst, McCormick, Vandenburg, Coughlin, et al. But it is an illusion to call such men "isolationists," either in the present or past tense.

They are most decidedly nothing of the kind; but on the contrary, are mouthpieces of the most rampant American imperialists. They represent the same reactionary strata of the capitalist class which in Germany produced fascism and that country's ruthless drive for world conquest. If given an opportunity, the pseudo-isolationists would try the same thing in the United States.

There have long been, of course (and still are to a lesser extent), huge numbers of honest isolationists in the United States, but the above gentlemen are not of them. Through the years vast masses of the American people have nursed the pacifist illusion that our country because of the two broad oceans washing its east and west coasts and because of the absence of rival great powers in this hemisphere, could go on indefinitely living its own life, eschewing entangling alliances, trading peacefully with the rest of the world, without fear of any potential invader. Farmers, city middle-class, and workers in large numbers have shared this traditional isolationist illusion, and they have had many honest spokesmen, of whom the late Robert M. La Follette was the most outstanding recent example.

If the most rabid American imperialists have adopted an isolationist propaganda, it is because they have been able to make very effective use of the isolationist illusions among the masses. In the days following the first world war, for example, when the question of preventing future wars through the League of Nations was being decided, the American imperialists, feeling strong enough to go it alone in the world against any and all rival powers, rejected

the League and, by skillfully playing upon prevalent mass isolationist sentiment, succeeded in keeping the United States out of that body, thereby sentencing it to death.

Again, during the late 1930's, in the great fight led by the U.S.S.R. to line up the democratic powers of the world in a bloc for collective security against the fascist menace, once more the American imperialists, who in the meantime had themselves grown fascist-minded, would have nothing to do with collective security. What they wanted was what the British imperialists also wanted—to have fascist Germany smash the Soviet Union. Hence, sounding their isolationist shibboleths of “minding our own business” and “no entangling alliances,” they once more mobilized successfully enough power to keep the United States out of the projected international peace front. In consequence, World War II broke out.

Finally, as the war conflagration spread, eventually engulfing the U.S.S.R., and when obviously the United States had to side with the world democratic forces or face the gravest danger of conquest by the Axis, the fascist-minded imperialists redoubled their isolationist cries. They sought a reactionary victory in the war that would smash the U.S.S.R. They wanted the United States to come to an understanding with the victorious Hitler, and in the world chaos following the war, grab up the pieces of the broken British Empire and also establish a strong American imperialist hegemony over the entire Western Hemisphere.

This was the only thinly-disguised program of the fascist-saturated America First Committee, which was typified by the vicious anti-Sovietism of Hearst, the violent anti-Britishism of Coughlin, the reactionary Pan-Americanism of Lindbergh (who challenged Canada's right to enter into the war without first asking the United States' consent). And the central slogan of these chauvinistic reactionaries for the accomplishment of their grandiose imperialist schemes was the isolationist watchword that we would be safe if we remained in our own backyard.

Millions of honest, democratic, peace-loving American people had fallen victims to this pseudo-isolationist propaganda, when the sudden Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor shattered the whole isolationist illusion and plunged the United States, willy-nilly, into the war. Like a thunderbolt, the American people realized that the

two bordering oceans were no real protection and that our country was exposed to an acute danger of invasion. In this bankruptcy of isolationism the imperialistic, fascistic America First Committee had to fold up and go out of business.

But the imperialists are not yet through with exploiting American isolationist sentiments for their own purposes. They know full well that, although the American people, in overwhelming majority, have become convinced they must fight the war through to victory and then join some form of international organization of states to prevent a new war, they are still afflicted with numerous hang-overs of isolationism, including anti-British sentiments, suspicions toward the U.S.S.R., fear of "entangling alliances," etc. So the ultra-imperialists simply revamped their pre-Pearl Harbor tactics and, with their "new isolationism" are playing upon the lingering isolationist illusions among the masses in order to drive wedges between the United States and its allies, to prevent the establishment of a second front, to bring the war to a stalemate, and eventually to achieve a peace that will save Hitlerism, or as much of it as possible.

The American capitalist class is divided into two major sections regarding its foreign policy. But neither is isolationist in the sense of our attempting to hole up and ignore world conditions. That great section, spokesmen for which are Roosevelt, Willkie, Wallace, Welles, etc., recognizes the menace of fascism and isolationism and is determined to carry the war through to victory and to become part of a post-war collective security system.

The other section of the capitalists, voices of which are such people as Hearst, Hoover, Wheeler and Taft, is resolved to press forward, with fascist zeal, its imperialistic aims for the United States to grab what it can, regardless of the interests of weaker nations and the danger to world peace. These "new isolationists" seize upon every opportunity to exploit the lingering isolationist moods and fears among the masses, precisely to prevent, so far as they can, both present-day and future cooperation among the democratic peoples. To obscure the true meaning of this destructive program, the rabid imperialists, bearing in mind the growing bankruptcy of isolationism among the masses, hide behind tongue-in-cheek endorsements of the war and of post-war collaboration among the United Nations.

Although the Hoover-Hearst-Wheeler type of defeatists and "isolationists" are compelled to tip their hats to the generally recognized need for joint action among our allies, now and in the post-war period, they are no less imperialistic than the more outspoken pre-Pearl Harbor demagogues, Lindbergh and Coughlin. Thus, Colonel McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune*, with a bull-in-the-china-shop frankness, exposed their true line when he called recently for the incorporation of Scotland, Canada, New Zealand and Australia into the American Union as states. Clare Boothe Luce, in her maiden speech in Congress, also voiced it when she denounced the Roosevelt international program as "globaloney" and insisted upon American post-war air supremacy. And so do Mr. Ziff, the aeronautical writer, and Mr. Kelland, Republican National Committee member, who outlined grandiose schemes whereby the United States, in the hypocritical name of self-defense, would control air and naval bases ringing the American Hemisphere and ranging from Dakar to the Far East, would "turn the Pacific Ocean into an American lake," and thereby dominate the world.

The Hoover-Hearst-McCormick defeatist bloc, phony "new isolationists," constitute a grave danger, nationally and internationally. Backed by great capitalist industrialist organizations and newspaper chains, exploiting the people's economic difficulties and playing upon isolationist remnants among the masses, they are strong enough to dominate both houses of Congress. They are slowing up our national war effort, crippling our military strategy, distorting our foreign diplomacy, sabotaging the whole fight of the United Nations.

In the 1944 elections they hope to seize full control of the United States and to launch forward on their fascist-like policies of domestic reaction and foreign aggrandizement. They realize the United States will almost certainly come out of this war with the biggest navy, air fleet and merchant marine in the world, and also with a huge army. Could they secure direction over these tremendous forces, then, in the spirit of Hitlerism, they would try their utmost to plunge our country into a wild attempt at world imperialist domination.

This situation makes it imperative that the American trade union movement mobilize all its forces politically, together with

other win-the-war elements, to smash the menacing defeatist, phony isolationist bloc. One of the most important angles of this vital task is for labor to begin to cleanse its own ranks of traditional isolationist illusions by lining up its forces internationally with the British, Soviet, Latin American and other United Nations trade unions. This is an essential part of the great problem of uniting the peoples of the world against reaction and of securing the second front. The fate of American democracy, the outcome of the war and the shape of the future peace, depend directly upon the extent to which American organized labor understands and fulfills its political tasks at this crucial period in the war and in world history.

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