

HYPOCRISY OF 'NEUTRALITY'

By Norman Thomas

One of the first questions before Congress, now in session, was that of neutrality. A resolution was passed forbidding the sales and shipment of arms to Spain.

There can be no doubt that sincere peace lovers honestly—but, as I believe, incorrectly—object to any shipment of war supplies to the Spanish government or any departure of volunteers, who on the other side of the water will seek ways to aid the Spanish Loyalists, on the ground that somehow or other the total effect of this will be to increase the likelihood of American participation in war.

Nevertheless, it is absurd on the record to believe that President Roosevelt or most Congressmen are acting in perfect good faith as pacifists or opponents of the arms trade in their sudden denunciation of the purchase by the Spanish government of certain airplanes and airplane engines.

It is a bitter world where such purchases have to be so carefully guarded against the evils of profiteering. Indeed it is a bitter world where a government needs such airplanes in the struggle against Fascist aggression.

But the plain fact is that to deprive the Spanish government of arms is directly to encourage a Fascist victory which menaces the peace of America as the sale of arms to a friendly government does not. The President knows or ought to know this. Conceivably he might say: "Even so, for the sake of precedent we must keep America entirely out of any business in arms."

But this is not at all what he has said or rather what he has done. Neither he nor Congress

has raised any effective protest against the large sale of military supplies to the Chinese government to use against Communist rebels. No protest at all has been made against the sale of arms to Japan, which arms doubtless are used sooner or later in China against the Chinese.

The State Department figures show that in November 1936, this trade to Japan alone amounted to \$682,300. The whole record shows that with impunity and without rebuke established governments if they are conservative or Fascist have been allowed to buy what they needed in the way of military supplies when not actually at war with another nation. It is only when the Spanish government fights against Fascism for the peace and freedom of mankind that the President's scruples are suddenly aroused.

What is the explanation? In part, at least, this: He sees in the Spanish incident a chance to get discretionary power for the Executive as against Congress over the whole trade in arms. That kind of power is too great to entrust to any man. The desire for it in this case is an ominous sign of a drift towards personal government.

CONTROLLED RECOVERY

Now that there is recovery and prosperity for all except about nine-tenths of the people, the administration is getting skittish lest the recovery should get out of hand and become a boom, followed by a smash.

Therefore, there will probably be talk of "stabilization" or some other word that may be invented to fill the bill.

Even though there are about nine million unemployed and a great many more millions of women and children cursed with the unemployment of their men, besides many other millions working for wages that are below a decent standard of living, yet the prosperity for the few is becoming so marked that it is liable to create rising prices, higher costs, the skyrocketing of the stock market, etc.

How to prevent such a development and still retain the dog-eat-dog system, is the problem. Making a leopard change its spots by giving it new thought treatments is a mild problem by comparison.

But men who are bent upon raving the dog-eat-dog system will catch at straws. Perish the thought of considering any such sensible notion as the abolition of that system.

Of course, there are some little things that can be done, but will they be effective? The reserve requirements of the banks can be raised so that they will not have so much money on hand to loan for stock

Grant that the question of satisfactory neutrality legislation is difficult, we can at least be sure that the main principles in neutrality in international war should be laid down by Congress; that exceptions to it should be granted by Congress which on the whole is less subject to various pressures and ambitions than any individual in the White House.

Beyond that we can protest and protest most vigorously against the discrimination which allows Japan-and-China to buy supplies refused to Spain.

FASCIST FRANCO INTERNATIONALIST

A story current in Madrid concerns an interview with the Fascist leader, Franco, which goes like this: "What artillery have you, General?"

"German."
"What airplanes have you?"
"Italian."
"And your troops, what are they?"
"Moorish and the Foreign Legion."
"Is there anything Spanish about your campaign?"
"Oh, yes. The target."

Little Difference

In hard times, the poor have nothing with which to buy things, and in good times they cost more than they can afford.

SOCIAL STUDY CLUB ACTIVITIES

Chicago, Ill. The meeting of our Social Study Club last Friday night drew up plans for activities in the near future. Every member obligated himself to recruit our friends to attend the next meeting. Oscar Go-fina was assigned to prepare an outline and lead the discussion on the Spanish Civil War. Comrade Donald J. Lotrich reported on the progress made in literature sales for 1936. Quite a few of the members were absent. It is necessary and important that all members attend the next regular meeting on Friday, February 12, as there is always plenty of work to be done. Bring your friends along.

One of our first affairs for 1937 will be an Card Party, Sunday afternoon, January 24 at the Slovene Labor Center. We want all members to attend. Bring your friends along to enjoy a fine afternoon in the various games and contests. There will be some fine prizes awarded to winners so come out Sunday, January 24, and join the fun.

Some Distinction

"A telegram from George, dear."
"Well, did he pass the examination this time?"
"No, but he is almost at the top of the list of these who failed."

THE DEPRESSION IS STILL HERE

While it is claimed that private industry has given jobs to some of the unemployed, it should not be forgotten that the depression is still here and that there are about 9 or 10 million still unemployed. Furthermore, that the depression cannot be wiped out as long as the capitalist system remains.

The American Federation of Labor gathered some data that gives a clear picture how the machine is depriving men of their jobs. I will cite a few examples which I believe are very interesting.

Years ago it took one man 80 hours to make an average of 450 bullets. Now there is a machine which can turn out 40,000 bricks in an hour. In casting pig iron, where it formerly took 60 men to do the work, only seven men are now needed. In reloading iron where 128 men were employed, a machine now does the work with only two men. As late as 1918 it took one man to turn out forty bulbs per day. Now a machine turns out 73,000 electric bulbs in twenty-four hours. In a tube shop where it formerly required 240 men to do the work with 20 machines, ten machines can now do the same amount of work with only 30 men.

The same thing has taken place among the professionals. The radio and vita-phone have displaced thou-

THE OLD YEAR SUMMARIZED

The year 1936 presented many developments encouraging to the advocate of political and industrial democracy and many that were profoundly discouraging, according to the summary of the year's events just made public by Harry W. Laidler, executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy.

Dr. Laidler set forth the trend toward world war as the most ominous of the world trends in 1936. The League for Industrial Democracy executive saw, on the other hand, signs of progress in the labor movement on the economic, co-operative and political fields.

"The year 1936," declared Dr. Laidler, "has been a year of great social and international confusion. Many national and international forces at work have given considerable causes for optimism to the progressive forces of the nation. Others have led many to despair of the immediate future. Ten developments during the year favorable to democratic progress in industry or politics are, in my opinion:

"1. The reduction in the ranks of the unemployed, although a great army of nine million is still out of work despite the recent increases in industrial production and in business turnover.
"2. The beginnings of an aggressive campaign of organization in

the electric equipment, steel, automobile, and other basic industries along industrial lines, under the direction of the C. I. O.

"3. The increase of social insurance legislation, although most of the unemployment insurance and old age pension legislation passed last year will have to be fundamentally revised to meet the needs of the times.

"4. The increased interest and experimentation in consumers co-operation in the United States, as indicated by the enthusiastic reception accorded to the Japanese Kaga-wa, the recent favorable action of American labor, the appointment of the American commission to study co-operation abroad and the remarkable growth of co-operative enterprise.

"5. The increased interest among workers and farmers in independent political action, an interest which promises to be crystallized in the formation of a national Farmer-Labor party in the not-distant future.

"6. The refusal of the American people to base their hopes on Father Coughlin, Gerald Smith, Congressman Lemke and Dr. Townsend as the fathers of a third party movement; the refusal of the American voters to seek economic salvation in the laissez faire monopoly-capitalism advocated by the Republican party.

"7. Increased resistance to the suppression of civil rights and to Fascist trends in several parts of the country, as indicated by the senate investigation into the use of detective agencies in labor disputes, the break-up of the Black Legion, the conviction of the Arkansas "slaver" the preservation of civil liberties, the success of the anti-Hearst campaign, etc. The stated refusal of the new commander of the American Legion to permit this organization to be used to break up radical meetings is a welcome sign of the year.

"8. The abandonment of the Monroe Doctrine as an instrument for American imperialism and the advances taken at the inter-American conference toward the preservation of peace throughout North and South America.

"9. The victory of the People's Front in France, of the Social Democrats in Sweden and the continued resistance of the Spanish loyalist government to the Fascist forces.

"10. The adoption of the new Russian constitution along more democratic lines to be followed, friends of democracy hope, by the actual application of democratic principles to honest critics of the Stalin regime. (The continued prosecution of critics of Stalin and the protest of the Russian government against governments providing a refuge for Leon Trotsky and others do not, however, seem to many to be consistent with Russia's new policies as described in the new constitution.)

"Numerous developments throughout the year may be listed on the debit side of the ledger. They include:

"1. Such international events as the rise by Italy of Ethiopia; the increased militarization of Germany in preparation for another war and Germany's interference in Spain; the Japanese ventures in China; the civil war in Spain with its threat to world peace, and the breakdown of the machinery of the league of nations as an effective instrument for the prevention of war.

"2. The entrenchment of Gen. Batista as the absolute dictator of Cuba and the continuance and strengthening of dictatorships in many other Latin-American countries.

"3. The increased appropriations for the army and navy of the United States, not as a means, many claim, of national defense, but as a possible basis for operations in the Far East resulting from disagreements over trade, credit and raw materials.

"4. The growing rift in the American labor movement between the craft and industrial unions.

"5. The wholesale discharge from the WPA of thousands of men and women who were unable to obtain work in private enterprise and the threat of further reductions in work relief and home relief in the immediate future.

"6. The future of social legislation to meet the minimum needs of

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DRUMS

Drums, drums up the street,
Tramp, tramp, marching feet,
Clank, clank, guns of death,
On, on, your glory to get.

Guns, guns everywhere,
Death, death, in the air,
Fight, fight, or lose your life,
Deep, deep cuts the knife.

Tears, tears for the dead,
Money, money murder lead,
Silence, silence shall we meet,
Marching, marching down the street.

Over, over is the war,
Fields, fields filled with gore,
Dead, dead all the men,
Forget, forget once again.

Crosses, crosses row on row,
Guns, guns to kill the foe,
God, God will it never end,
Peace, peace to us send.

Jos. A. Mihalka.

THE AUTO STRIKE

By Norman Thomas

The beginning of the strike against General Motors is of enormous importance to the entire labor movement. It is likely to involve a test of the value of the friendship of the all powerful Democratic Party for the workers, a friendship upon which labor in the last campaign leaned so trustfully.

As to the issues, a fair minded reader ought to get an appreciation of the justice of the workers' cause by reading the two statements; one by President Martin of the Automobile workers and the other by President Sloan of the General Motors Corporation.

The particular demands of the union all seem on the face of them reasonable. Unquestionably they are the sort of thing the workers desire and should want to discuss with the bosses. But Sloan won't talk to the Union's Committee, That's the fundamental fact and all this protestation of desire to avoid a labor dictator is applesauce.

Here, then, is wishing success to the automobile workers and every other union which on land or water is challenging the power of entrenched capital in the interest of the workers!

It behooves every Socialist to do all in his power to aid the unions in their struggle. All Socialists who are members of them have a special obligation to show their loyalty and their wisdom at this time. Differences of opinion must not be allowed to produce division in the face of the enemy. And Socialists will find in the situation a chance to help their brothers and sisters understand that the real enemy is the system which gives such vast power over human beings to absentee owners, a system which will not even permit genuine collective bargaining without determined struggle.

GOING INTO A HUDDLE



Annual Meeting of Slovene Social Club Saturday

Chicago, Ill. The annual meeting of the Slovene Social Club will be held Saturday, January 16, at the Labor Center, 2301 So. Lawndale Ave. Various reports will be submitted and officers to be elected for 1937. Every member is urged to be present. After the meeting a social will take place. Hot lunches will be served and a general good time will follow. There will be plenty of card parties and other amusement so don't fail to be present this Saturday. J. K.

SEARCHLIGHT

By DONALD J. LOTRICH

I listened to the President's address on the state of the nation, which he delivered to the joint session of the House and the Senate, and I must say that it sounded as radical as any American President has ever delivered. More than that, one would be inclined to say that it was a masterful jibe at the Supreme Court and that practically a bold challenge was hurled at the almighty Court; if it wasn't that we knew something about the record of the present administration. In the same speech in one breath the President was for democracies and republican forms of government and at the same time he wanted to be neutral on the Spanish Civil War where a democracy is desperately struggling to exist against the fascist curse. The President had hardly finished his address, when Congress passed a resolution to forbid shipment of arms for the defense of their democracy. If the President really meant what he said, then it was our duty to assist a legally constituted democratic government.

Roosevelt is serving the interests of the capitalists and with them they maneuver back and forth permitting fascism to raise its head and then denouncing it. They then dilly-dally back and forth until they cobweb themselves so bad that they forget all about their golden promises. That's precisely what France has been doing. And the English, too. First, they set up the Hitler's and Mussolini's and when these maniacs get too bold and have gone too far they try to stop them, something that can't be done. The result is that everyone's nerves are upset and the big hungry dog of war (capitalism) is waiting to destroy untold wealth and countless millions of good bodies. Again we say, the people are getting exactly what they vote for. Hitler was voted in.

The prize tweezers of the week goes to Hitler blaming the Russian Ambassador to Spain for causing lies and ill feeling to go the rounds about Hitler's aims in Spanish Morocco. The fact that German soldiers are occupying parts of Morocco and building fortifications is only a nightmare to Hitler. It may yet prove to be the nightmare which will make Hitler walk in his sleep and get "bumped off."

We read with satisfaction reports and editorials on Spain in the Chicago Tribune and Chicago Daily

News. Though the News' foreign correspondents have always been more just in reporting the situation, the Tribune must have gotten a heart throb for Spain for, now that hundreds of thousands of able bodied men, women and children have lost their lives, they admit the right for the Spanish government to defend itself. Whereas, thruout the early stages of the struggle and until very recently the Tribune crucified the Reds, Communists, Socialists and Anarchists of Spain. It must be that the Tribune fell out with Franco. Or that they were double-crossed. How else can the Tribune change its opinion?

In connection with the funds our own organization is collecting and that of the S. N. P. J. for the Spanish Loyalists, and our people are doing a fair job, the story of the Debs battalion of Americans (many Socialists) being enrolled now is certainly the kind of news that gives us more courage and desire to help the poor devils of Spain. The comrades of New York are to be congratulated for taking the initiative to form this battalion, to be known as the Eugene V. Debs battalion. We hope that they may serve the cause brilliantly and that they return to us soon in sound health.

Just now the auto strike in America is in the limelight. We are not at all astonished at the stubbornness and the trickery employed by the employers. That's their job. But it is disgusting as the dickens to see the American Federation of Labor acting as a strikebreaker. Frey, Green and others, leaders of various craft unions, are actually working with the bosses against the workers now striking. What else can they do but alienate the workers from the A. F. of L.? Just because the A. F. of L. couldn't organize the auto workers and the C. I. O. has outsmarted the employers, in comes the A. F. of L. to the rescue. But we all hope that even with their help General Motors will not win. And may these reactionary misleading labor leaders soon find their places in the ditch.

The Yugoslav Socialist Federation Executive Committee met last Thursday to receive reports and to make plans for the work ahead. The Educational Bureau sub-committee reported on the 1936 affiliations and the distribution of over 3000 books. 1937 should be a good year for the Educational Bureau.