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# HITLER'S SECRET WEAPON—THE BOGEY OF COMMUNISM\*

BY EARL BROWDER

**T**H**ERE** is deep significance for today in the fact that we combine in this meeting the commemoration of Abraham Lincoln, America's foremost contribution to the world leadership of democratic liberation, and of Vladimir Ilych Lenin, founder of the Soviet Power which at this moment is liberating the world from the menace of Nazism.

In the joining of these two commemorations in one, we are expressing the understanding, now general among the American people, that the destinies of our two countries are intertwined, that close and ever closer relations of cooperation inevitably arise from the deepest of common interest.

At this moment the common interests of the United States and the Soviet Union are expressed in the goal of victory over Hitlerism. When the Axis is destroyed that common interest will lie in the reconstruction of a world order in which peoples can peacefully work out their own destinies.

Achievement of victory over Hit-

lerism is the supreme common task today. In the name of Lincoln and Lenin we devote all our capacities to that goal.

Great events are taking place. Hitler's armies on the Eastern Front are being encircled and annihilated, one after another. All history contains nothing to compare with the mighty deeds of the Red Army under the guiding genius of Stalin. They have turned the tide of war definitely in favor of the United Nations. They have brought victory within reach.

The brilliant military occupation of North Africa by American forces, the heroic actions in the South Pacific which halted the Japanese and threw them back, the resounding defeat of Rommel in Libya by the British—all these facts show that the time is ripe to deliver a concerted smashing attack by all the United Nations, which can break the backbone of the Axis.

We must be profoundly dissatisfied, however, with the contribution which our country, the United States, has so far made to winning victory in 1943.

The conference at Casablanca

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\* An address delivered on Lincoln's Birthday, February 12, 1943, at Baltimore.

gives us promise that America's might will be thrown soon into the scales of war. It is high time that this were so. Laggards cannot win this war; victory does not come "at leisure."

### *Hitler's Victory in Congress*

At this moment when the black clouds of doom gather over Hitler and his armies, Der Fuehrer has gained one brilliant victory. To our shame we must confess that Herr Shicklgruber's single victory was won in the United States, in Washington, in Congress. By a vote of 302 to 94, the House of Representatives endorsed Martin Dies, the clearest and most consistent exponent of Hitler's policies and slogans within the United States.

If the Congress of the United States is still an important policy-making body of our government, this latest endorsement of Martin Dies must be looked upon as one of the most sinister threats to victory in the war, and to the future of our country. For Martin Dies has declared that he hopes for the defeat of our ally, the Soviet Union; he has slanderously denounced Joseph Stalin, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Armies, as the chief enemy of our country; he has echoed all the slogans of Hitler and promoted them; and now the majority in Congress has renewed its declaration of confidence in that same Martin Dies and all he stands for.

It is small comfort to remind ourselves that Martin Dies does not represent the vast majority of the

people of our country. It is small comfort to repeat that he does not represent the Administration of President Roosevelt, whose correct war policies are supported overwhelmingly by the people. For this Congress has the power, and a reactionary, defeatist coalition of Hoover Republicans and Wheeler Democrats is influencing a majority of Congress to use this power, under our Constitution, to throw confusion into the war effort, to disrupt the national unity, to negate the declared policies of the President, and to serve notice on our Allies that they cannot depend upon the United States honoring the commitments which have been made by the President.

Is there anyone who can dismiss all this as merely the exaggerations of a special pleader, because I have for years been insisting upon the importance of friendship between our country and the Soviet Union?

Today this importance is recognized by conservative circles of all political ideologies.

The *New York Herald Tribune* is a conservative Republican newspaper. It has always hitherto supported Martin Dies. But before Congress voted this time, it called for a halt of this "play into Hitler's hands." And yesterday, enlarging upon its argument in connection with our fumbling diplomacy in North Africa, this conservative newspaper said:

"How can the oppressed Europeans believe in democracy if we give them the impression that we believe so little in it ourselves?"

There are but two choices before the democracies now. One is to cooperate with Russia in rebuilding the world—as there is an excellent chance of doing, if we believe in the strength of our own principles and prove it by applying them. The other is to get involved in intrigues with all the reactionary and anti-democratic forces in Europe, the only result of which will be to alienate the Kremlin. . . .” (*New York Herald Tribune*, February 11, 1943.)

I could spend hours in quoting from the most serious spokesmen of all political groupings, to show the general acceptance of the fact that the future of the world and of our own country depends upon friendship, understanding and cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union. But the majority of Congress on Wednesday, by a vote of 302 to 94, voted no confidence in this whole line of policy by giving their confidence to Martin Dies, who is the embodiment of hostility against the Soviet Union in the full spirit of Hitler.

Evidently, the majority of Congress does not wish, or does not consider important, the friendship and cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Those who wish to cement that friendship are put on notice that they must defeat the majority of Congress on this question. We cannot eat our cake and have it, too; nor can we travel in opposite directions at the same time. No more can we have Martin Dies as the symbol of our policy, and also have friendship with the Soviet Union. It is a contradiction in policy and interests.

It is very interesting to examine the thought expressed by the *Herald Tribune* before quoted. That conservative organ has come to the conclusion, reluctantly, we may be sure, that we of the United States may ally ourselves with the forces of democracy in Europe *only* on condition that we ally ourselves with the Soviet Union; if we reject the alliance with the Soviet Union, then inevitably we shall find ourselves plunged into intrigues with all the reactionary and anti-democratic forces in Europe. This means, further, that when our government engages in intrigues with those reactionary forces, all intelligent men everywhere understand this to mean that we are thereby abandoning our alliance with the democratic forces of Europe, especially with the Soviet Union.

There is a profound truth in this thought of the *Herald Tribune*. Recognition of this truth is sweeping away one of the biggest lies of all history, the lie that socialism or communism is “undemocratic” or “anti-democratic.” The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is so much the foremost champion of all the democratic forces in Europe that the United States, our country which for a century and a half stood in the vanguard of world democracy, can now be allied with those democratic forces in Europe *only on condition* that we are allied with the Soviet Union. That is not my statement, that is the statement of the *New York Herald Tribune*, one of the outstanding conservative newspapers of the United States. This is a mere restatement of the

thought clearly expressed in the editorial which I quoted verbatim.

### *A Policy That Points Both Ways*

Our country, in the midst of life-and-death war, has not clearly defined its policy. Our Commander-in-Chief points in one direction with the Atlantic Charter, the United Nations, and alliance with the Soviet Union; but powerful forces in the State Department point in the opposite direction by its entanglements with Vichy, with Franco, with Mannerheim, with Mikhailovitch, with Otto of Austria, with Bethlen of Hungary, while Congress emphatically contradicts the President by voting its confidence in Martin Dies. And the same Congress emphatically refuses to express its confidence in the President.

Our national policy is ambiguous. It points both ways. And the conflict is not only within Congress and between Congress and the Executive; it is within the Executive Department itself. The President considers it necessary to conciliate a hostile Congress; even more serious, he considers it necessary to tolerate the same hostility within his own cabinet.

In the State Department we have the ineffable Mr. Adolph Berle, Jr., spinning his webs of intrigue in Europe and Latin America. This is the person whom a prominent visiting Britisher is reported to have sized up in these few words: "He is not only anti-Soviet, he is also anti-British; he is not only anti-British, he is also anti-American."

At the head of the Department of Justice we have Mr. Biddle, whose chief virtue is weakness of character which prevents him from following his mischievous theories to their logical conclusions. He introduced a brief in the Supreme Court on the Schneiderman case (and argued it against Mr. Wendell Willkie) which bases itself on the conception that the Soviet Union is essentially hostile to the United States in particular and to democracy in general. He issued an order for the deportation of Harry Bridges, with a legal argument lifted bodily from Hitler's "Anti-komintern," the illiteracy and obscurantism of which can be matched only in Nazi Germany. He tried to imprison Senator Stanley Nowak of Michigan on the same basis on which he wishes to deport Harry Bridges, but had to drop it with a bald "admission of error." He shares the basic theories of Martin Dies, but is jealous of the Texan's prominence.

Yes, our national course is ambiguous. The President has charted a clear and correct policy, but it is challenged not only by Congress but also by members of his own Cabinet and executive appointees. Instead of a showdown and clarification, the nation drifts along with compromise and appeasement of irreconcilable policies.

In the North African political muddle, which followed a brilliantly executed military occupation, we experienced our first sharp example of the disastrous results of an ambiguous policy. It required the personal intervention of President

Roosevelt, flying 6,000 miles to Casablanca, to begin to bring some order and sense into that mess. The release at last of 27 French Communist Deputies, and some 900 other prisoners, did much to clear the moral atmosphere. But even on this question of the North African prisoners, it seems we have not heard the last word. Some 25,000 French patriots, Spanish Republicans and other anti-fascists, are still held behind barbed wire, and Mr. Hull has still not clarified his cryptic hints that Francisco Franco may wish to be consulted as to their fate.

In the question of the North African prisoners we are learning the first lessons on the political problems of Europe. By the way in which we handle this question the United States will be judged by the peoples of occupied Europe. Uncle Sam is preparing to enter Europe heavily armed and ready to shoot on sight; the peoples of Europe are anxious to know if Uncle Sam's eyes are keen enough to distinguish clearly between friends and enemies! In the shadow of the Stars and Stripes in North Africa, 25,000 anti-fascist fighters still languish in prisons and concentration camps! The Nazi-inspired laws against the Jews are still enforced!

We cannot leave such questions to be settled at leisure. The war goes on, and time waits for no man or nation. If our national policy, in its application, remains ambiguous, then the results it will bring to our nation will also be ambiguous.

There is a loud-mouthed cult in

our country which is willing to admit every weakness and error so long as it can blame it on the President. These are the demagogues of reaction. But there are also too many honest democrats, progressives, and even labor men, who weaken the President's position by leaving all problems for him to settle, by failing to take energetic action themselves to help solve all these problems. This was the main factor that enabled the President's foes to gain strength in the last elections, for the President's supporters sadly neglected that campaign with the excuse that "F. D. R. can take care of it." Now they chide the President for conciliating his enemies, but they are themselves among the first conciliators. No one has any right to criticize the President who is not himself in the midst of the hottest and most uncompromising fight to halt the mob of reaction now controlling the majority of Congress and threatening the whole country and its war effort.

#### *Red-baiting Is Sabotage of Correct World Policy*

The President has himself given more than a hint of the course all democratic Americans should follow. Speaking at a recent press conference, the President quoted from an interview given by General Giraud in North Africa. Giraud had declared his intention, following the example of De Gaulle, of uniting all Frenchmen, from conservatives to Communists, with the only condition that they unite to fight Hitler and not play politics.

The President expressed the opinion that this would seem to be a good line for any country to follow. He evidently meant that this would be a good line for the United States also.

I wish emphatically to support this proposal of the President, on behalf of the Communist Party of the United States. There are thousands of Communists and friends of our Party in the armed forces of the United States, ready and anxious to fight Hitler and not to play politics. But too many of them are being transferred out of fighting units into non-combat duties at home, and even into polite substitutes for concentration camps. We have raised this question with the authorities, but have not been able to obtain clarification of the problem. Until the Communists are permitted to fight Hitler and his accomplices on the same basis as all other Americans, we must continue to discuss this problem publicly, and press for action in the spirit of the President's expression on French unity.

Some well-meaning persons advise me not to keep raising the question of discrimination against the Communists, but that we simply keep our mouths shut, that we grin and bear it in the interest of the war and national unity; after all, they say, the Communists are only a small group in a big nation.

My intelligence compels me to reject such an easy way out of the problem. If the Communists of the U. S. are but a small group in a big nation, that is all the more reason for insisting that correct principles

be applied by the nation in relation to the Communists. If the United States is so fearful of its own small proportion of Communists that it must have special laws against them, special committees of Congress to hunt them out of governmental service, and special segregation of them into labor service in the armed forces—then it will be certainly impossible for such a fearful United States to have a realistic relationship of alliance with the Communists of Europe and Asia, who are much more powerful, and without whom it is impossible for the United States to have an alliance with the democratic forces of the world. When we fight for the full admission of American Communists as citizens of the country without discrimination, we are fighting for a correct world policy which is necessary for victory in the war.

American democracy needs more confidence in itself in order to win the war. It needs to snap out of the hypnosis induced by Hitler and Martin Dies, in which the cry of "Communist" raises hysterical fear and sets the democrats to examining one another for hidden "Reds" and protesting each his own innocence of the "terrible" charge of which few know the meaning. American democracy must grow up, and stop believing in ghosts and witches.

Above all, American democracy must throw off the fear of victory. Yes, there is being deliberately cultivated in our country the fear of victory over the Axis because that victory is being advanced today primarily by the armies of the Soviet Union. That fear is stupid and

senseless, in the first place, because America still has the opportunity, despite all past delays, of striking decisive blows against Hitler and winning an honorable position in the victory by the side of the Soviet Union. We need fear only our own failure to strike in time with our full force; such a failure, truly, would endanger victory, would have terrible consequences for our national safety and the common cause of the United Nations.

That fear of victory came before a Congressional Committee last week in Washington, in the person of Herbert Hoover. That specter from an almost forgotten past mumbled a new slogan for America: "Let's not do too much, too soon."

Hoover wants to drag out the war for two, three, four or more years, with America doing little fighting. Above all, we must not strike in 1943, he intimated. He sees the good side of the war in the opportunity it affords him and his cronies to try to transform it into chiefly a form of martial law against the American working class, with unlimited profits for the capitalists. Hoover is still clutching close to his heart the banner of Chamberlain and Munich.

But the last shreds of the ghost of Munich were scattered to the four winds during the past weeks, by the events at Stalingrad, Schluesselburg, the Caucasus, and Kursk, and all the long list of

smashing victories of the Red Army. Any attempt to resurrect the shameful policy of Munich can result in nothing but disaster for those who try it. That old world which produced Munichism is dead beyond recall. All those who try to follow that path now will find that it leads immediately to the grave.

We are in war, a war to the death. We are fighting to save the world from reversion to barbarism. We are fighting to save civilization from destruction by Nazism and its Italian and Japanese allies. We are fighting for the possibility of future progress for humanity. We are fighting a just war.

All this means that we must fight with all our might, not in some tomorrow but now. We must fight with a full heart, for the destruction of the enemy, his complete annihilation, the wiping of Hitlerism forever from the face of the earth. We must fight with complete good faith toward our allies, and with full confidence in them. We must strengthen the Anglo-Soviet-American Alliance in the fires of war so that it will be an indestructible instrument for an ordered peace. We must forge the United Nations as the guarantee of liberty and independence for all nations.

All this must still be won.

It can be won only by fighting.

Thanks to the Red Army the war has turned in our favor.

*Let America also strike now, for victory in 1943!*