

---

# SHOULD THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT JOIN IN CONCERTED ACTION AGAINST THE FASCIST STATES? \*

BY EARL BROWDER

## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

WE REPUBLISH here the historic speech that Earl Browder made in a debate on the question of war at Madison Square Garden, New York, May 4, 1938, with certain deletions of passages no longer essential for this time and the more developed situation. And we republish it because it seems to us to be one of the most prophetic documents of the period of development into the present war, and at the same time, if rightly understood, to be a flaming thundering call to action today in the present war.

If one were to forget the *date* on which the speech was made, one could overlook, misunderstand, and even distort into its opposite, the real meaning of the speech. The struggle then was a struggle against the forces that were marching from diplomatic conquest to diplomatic conquest on the road to plunging the world into the present universal

war. Therefore, in speaking for the curbing of the imperialist aggressors, against the warmakers, Browder logically and inevitably spoke of the struggle to unite the peoples against the aggressors as a struggle for world *peace*. But these terms have been changed by history. The struggle is against the same warmakers; but it is against warmakers who have now *already destroyed world peace*. Those whom Browder then justly called "the enemies of world peace" are now crying for "negotiated peace" with Hitler as the recognized conqueror of Europe; and in a little less overt form for "negotiated peace" with the Asiatic wing of the Hitler Axis in control of the decisive sections of Asia. Therefore Browder, if he could speak today and were not locked in prison by the United States Government as a policy of fearful concession to the friends of Hitler and imperialist Japan in America, would no longer speak in terms of *peace*.

Browder said: "The United States holds in its hands the key to world peace," and spoke of the danger that they would fumble this key and

---

\* Extracts from a historic speech in the affirmative by Earl Browder, General Secretary of the Communist Party, U.S.A., in the debate with Frederick J. Libby, Executive Secretary, National Council for Prevention of War, at Madison Square Garden, New York, May 4, 1938. Reprinted from *Fighting for Peace* by Earl Browder, International Publishers, pp. 82-109.

drop it. They *did* "fumble" this key, and *did* "drop" it into the fire of war; it has melted and is out of shape, and it cannot open any doors; it must be beaten into a sword and plunged through the ugly vitals of the Nazi Axis—and only then can its metal be beaten back into the form of a "key to world peace."

The key to world peace today is a sword. This is the position of Browder, the position of Browder's party.

Browder's inspired words: "They have abandoned the very idea of peace," were true in May, 1938—but what a brilliant new light has been thrown upon this thought of the great Communist leader by occurrences since his voice was silenced in prison! Lindbergh, the present foremost Nazi spokesman in America, has openly stated that his purpose has never been peace. In the same Madison Square Garden where Browder spoke, Lindbergh has said that his desire was and his advice to the French and British Governments was that these and all other great states *should support Hitler in war against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*; that the aim of the Quislings has never been peace, but war. But again the American Quislings have raised the blinding slogan of "peace." And again their purpose is not peace, but the demoralization of the forces that, if they are not demoralized, will destroy Hitler. The struggle today is against the same forces that Browder fought until he was silenced in prison. Not alone Lindbergh, but Hamilton Fish and Martin Dies have been brought by the strange proces-

sion of history into a new Klieg light. Congressman Hamilton Fish, whose secretary was found guilty in a criminal court at the time these lines are written, on charges connected with the use of a Congressional frank for the distribution of the "peace" propaganda of the Axis powers—this same Hamilton Fish said in Congress: that he has "a high regard" for a friend of his whom he described as "a distinguished citizen of my state" who, he said, "was an agent of some Japanese firm, or the Japanese Government, not many months ago at a large compensation" and was "creating good will, spreading so-called propaganda" for the Japanese Government which as everyone then knew was preparing its murderous assault against the United States. Congressman Martin Dies has for nearly four years given protection to Nazi and fascist propaganda activities that were rampant in this country as a prelude to the present war, and befriended the German Nazi Bund and the Kyffhauser Bund, even employing sympathizers of such groups in tracking down and slandering the American labor movement. These are the Quislings.

We would call particular attention further only to those remarks of Browder in regard to those who claimed that "the United States is entirely immune from foreign invasion," and those who said that the Communists were seeking a "preventive war." Browder's answer to those hideous lies—which were organic parts of the German-Japanese fascist military plan for war

against the United States—strikes the mind of the reader today with staggering force. We think of the

**M**Y TASK tonight is to sustain the position that the United States, in the interests of preserving world peace, should take part in concerted international action to restrain the fascist war-making governments.

It is in the interest of clarity that Mr. Libby is the spokesman for the opposite point of view, because he is the most consistent spokesman for the neutrality bloc which promises to keep America out of war through isolationist policies.

Before we examine any proposals directed toward world peace, perhaps we should first answer the question—is world peace worth preserving? The most prominent spokesmen for the so-called neutrality policy have generally agreed that it is not worth the effort. They have abandoned the very idea of world peace. They have substituted the acceptance of an inevitable general world war. Some of them even consider that such a war will be of benefit to the rest of the world. They agree only that America should at all costs keep out of the war and, therefore, faced with a world in danger of war, keep out of world affairs.

Allow me to speak against all of these ideas. It is possible to halt those forces which are dragging the world toward war. It is worthwhile doing this because, however bad may be the peace precariously maintained at present, it is better than war. To attempt to isolate America from world affairs, at a

dive-bombers at Pearl Harbor, when we read these prophetic words.

moment when her moral and economic influence could be decisive in the interests of peace, means in reality to surrender the world to the war-makers, to make America their partner and, finally, to bring that war to the whole American people.

Is it possible to identify the enemies of world peace? Is it possible to direct our main effort toward restraining them? Mr. Libby and his friends say no. They say all governments are equally guilty of threatening world peace. They say any attempt to identify the war-makers means an arbitrary and unreal classification of governments as “angels” and “devils.” They place in the criminals’ dock the government of the United States and President Roosevelt alongside the Nazi regime and Hitler. In the present state of the world it seems rather childish to find it necessary to argue against such a point of view. The whole world knows who it is that sends invading armies across borders and against other nations. The whole world knows who is conducting aggressive war on other people’s territory and who threatens further war. It is not at all necessary to look for “angels” and “devils,” but only to ask who aggressively cross their own borders. They are the governments of the self-styled anti-Communist alliance, the governments headed by Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado. If it is desirable to restrain the war-

makers, then it is possible to identify them without the slightest doubt. It is further possible to deal with them as a group, because they are associated with common aims.

Perhaps, however, the war-makers are so powerful and so well placed that the peoples and governments who seek peace cannot hope to restrain them, and must of necessity retreat or surrender? But most obviously this is not true. The war-making governments control—by terror and suppression—not more than 10 per cent of the population of the world. Their control of economic resources is certainly no more favorable to them. Mr. Libby assumes that it is even more favorable to the peace-seeking peoples by identifying the war-makers as the "have-not" nations. The peace-seeking peoples occupy the most strategic positions geographically, which makes the isolation of the war-makers a relatively simple technical problem. Finally, the peace-seekers have an enormous moral advantage. They express the desire of all peoples, even those controlled by the fascist governments, for peace. This moral advantage can consolidate not only the overwhelming majority of the peace-seeking nations behind a positive peace policy, but it is also capable of arousing the oppressed millions under the fascist governments, once the easy victories of the dictators come to an end. The peace-seeking peoples have an overwhelming advantage in numbers and resources, in geographical and moral positions. They are superior in every factor which can

influence the course of world affairs—except the will to use their advantage. This missing factor I wish to help produce. Mr. Libby is against producing the missing factor. This is the essential difference between us.

What is the secret of the success of the fascists in their drive toward world domination? It is an open secret which the whole world knows. It is the division among the peace-seekers. The war-making powers know what they want and move toward it concertedly and ruthlessly. They take one bite at a time out of the world they wish to devour entirely. Manchuria was taken by the Japanese militarists, while the rest of the world did nothing except utter moral condemnation. Ethiopia was invaded by Mussolini—and the gestures of restraint were carefully calculated not to be effective, and quickly abandoned when they inconvenienced Mussolini. The demilitarized Rhineland was occupied and fortified by the Nazis—and again there was only the reading of a moral lecture. Spain is invaded by Hitler and Mussolini and subjected to the most ferocious slaughter—and the peace-seeking nations respond by treating the Spanish republic as the criminal to be quarantined. Austria is invaded and wiped out as an independent nation—and Mr. Libby, with his associates of the neutrality bloc, hail the event as "a step toward stability." It is clear that the fascists succeed in dragging the world into war because the peace forces of the Western democracies are divided; they have no general

plan of action; many of them desert one another; they act with the greatest consideration toward the fascist war-makers and the greatest lack of consideration toward their victims. The majority of peace-seeking nations, the bourgeois-democratic countries, have allowed themselves to become confused and paralyzed by the threat of fascist aggression from without and by the demagogic trickery of powerful reactionary minorities within.

It is clear that the whole problem is that of defeating the reactionary minorities within, and achieving some degree of a common front among the peace-seeking nations. The trump card of my opponent and his associates of the neutrality bloc, upon which they gamble all their chips, is, in the last analysis, the confusion and disunity among the peace-seeking peoples and their assumption that this condition is not remediable. They assume that there is no leadership capable of bringing any unity among the peace-seekers. They point to the fact that when the Soviet Union, through the Litvinov proposals, gives the initiative to this end, the Western democracies are silent, refusing to allow the land of socialism to lead the peace forces. They point to the fact that when the Mexican republic, through President Cardenas, offers a similar initiative, the great democracies are too proud to take a lead from one of the smaller nations. They point to the fact that Britain, assumed to be among the democracies, has turned her back on the goal of organized peace and, under the lead-

ership of Chamberlain, is making her own terms with the war-makers at the expense of the rest of the world. They point to the fact that the French republic, itself saved from a fascist insurrection only by the hasty erection of the *Front Populaire*, is paralyzed by fear and drags at the apron-strings of Chamberlain. Where, they triumphantly ask, is there a leadership which can bring any stability into this swamp of indecision and cowardice?

There is not the slightest desire on my part to evade or underestimate any of these difficulties. It is only by facing them fully and frankly that we can find the way to overcome them. But we declare that it is possible to overcome all difficulties, it is possible to organize the world peace front. This is possible, however, only on condition that we set ourselves this task, that we refuse to surrender either to our own difficulties or to the threats of the war-makers. We declare that the alternative is to surrender the world to universal catastrophe.

From where can the leadership come that has the possibility of organizing the peace forces of the world? We propose that it shall come from the United States. The United States has the strongest selfish interest in peace, without which it cannot maintain world commerce so necessary to it under the present system. We say that the United States is in the privileged position of being able to assume world leadership for peace without serious danger to itself. The United States holds in its hands the key to world peace. The question before us is,

shall we hesitate, fumble and drop this key through fear or incapacity? If we do, that will be the most unprofitable and most shameful page in American history.

Let us, before we proceed further, examine in more detail this privileged position in which the United States finds itself. I am glad to note that on this point Mr. Libby agrees with me. He has written several times recently that the United States is entirely immune from foreign invasion. In February, 1938, he wrote: "We should give due consideration to the fact, which is vouched for by leading military and naval experts, that our country cannot be invaded. . . . We cannot have a war, therefore, unless we seek it abroad." I will leave it to Mr. Libby to establish this point in detail. I accept it as substantially correct with two important qualifications: first, that it is true only for the immediate period and the present world relation of forces, but will be changed substantially if the fascist governments succeed in subjugating Western Europe and China; and second, it is true only for continental United States and does not apply to the Philippines, Hawaii and the Pacific Islands, or Alaska. I must, however, draw opposite conclusions from those of Mr. Libby from these facts. He says that, since we are safe, we should risk nothing for the peace of the world. I say, precisely because we are safe for the present we, above all, must take the leadership in preserving the peace of the world, which is also to guarantee our own peace for the future.

A further feature of America's privileged position is our unexampled economic resources. Not only has the United States almost half of the world's accumulated wealth and productive resources, but we are also most nearly, among all nations, economically self-sufficient. Considering the greater mobility of American wealth and production, we can easily say that the economic weight of our country in world affairs is equal to, or greater than, that of all other countries combined. . . .

Of course, we are keenly conscious that anyone who advocates world peace in this practical way will be charged with being in favor, in reality, of a preventive war against the fascist powers. I feel certain that Mr. Libby will repeat this charge tonight as he has been making it heretofore at every opportunity. When President Roosevelt, in his famous Chicago speech advocating quarantine of the aggressors, gave a brief indication of such a positive peace policy as I am defending, the neutrality advocates joined in the shout that this was a policy of dragging America into war. But what do we actually propose? . . .

We propose that the United States should distinguish between those nations which violate their obligations to us to refrain from warlike aggression against their neighbors, obligations which they voluntarily assumed by solemn treaty, and those governments which on the contrary observe these treaty obligations. We propose that the United States shall cut off all eco-

conomic intercourse with those governments which violate the Kellogg Pact outlawing war, and shall maintain and extend our economic relations with the governments which observe their treaty obligations and especially with those who are victims of aggression. We propose that the United States shall follow a policy designed to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.

The whole substance of the policy which I defend here is embodied in the provisions of the O'Connell Peace Bill, which is now before Congress.

What would be the result of the application of this policy? It would mean the immediate lifting of the embargo against republican Spain—a shameful embargo which was an unfriendly act against a democratic government, a violation of our own treaty obligations and against the interests of America. In its place, it would lay an embargo against all commercial and economic relations with Germany, Italy and Japan, as well as against Franco's armies of invasion in Spain. It would mean that American scrap iron, cotton, chemicals and machinery would stop going to Japan to assist the enslavement of the Chinese people. It would mean stopping the hundreds of thousands of aerial bombs now being shipped from America to Hitler. It would mean the complete divorce of American economy from its present service to the war-making governments.

Mr. Libby is already on record that this does not create the danger that the fascist governments will counter such an embargo by making war against the United States. But many of his friends in the neutrality bloc do not agree with him on this. In particular, Dr. Charles E. Beard, speaking for an important part of the neutrality bloc, has written in the *New Republic* directly against the policy I am defending, that if the United States ever undertook such a task, then in all likelihood the fascist powers in a "war frenzy," "a spirit of world power or downfall," "would strike back" and make war against the United States. Against this argument of the Beard section of the neutrality bloc I place the evidence of Mr. Libby himself that "our country cannot be invaded, we cannot have a war unless we seek it abroad." Unfortunately the unity of the neutrality bloc is an unprincipled one, and Mr. Libby and Dr. Beard simply agree to disagree on this point, without in any way disturbing their harmonious cooperation in keeping America isolated at all costs. This difference of opinion between them is merely a division of labor. Mr. Libby is to round up for neutrality all those who will agree on the basis of the argument of safety, while Dr. Beard shall round up those who can be scared into neutrality by the threat of immediate invasion.

Would this policy, which is embodied in the O'Connell Peace Bill, bring the United States into entangling alliances or limit our freedom of decision and action? Not in the slightest. We propose that the

United States should assume no special obligations toward any government except the obligation of impartially applying this policy to all and sundry. Once the policy is established, of course, it is assumed that the United States would welcome the adherence to the same sort of policy by as many governments as would wish to do so or which could be persuaded to do so. We know in advance that some important powers will immediately follow the lead of the United States, among them certainly the Soviet Union and Mexico. We can assume that the people of France would greet such action by the United States with the deepest joy, because it would liberate their People's Front government from its humiliating bondage to the pro-fascist, tory government of England. We can reasonably expect that, with such a profound change in the relation of world forces, the British Labor Party would shake off its present paralysis of fear, and actively rally the peace-loving majority of the English people behind it. We can be absolutely certain that, as a result of such a policy, the peoples of Spain and China would be enormously strengthened in their heroic struggle against the fascist invaders and would quickly administer for the first time some decisive military blows against the invaders and thus realize in the most practical fashion the popular slogan, "Take the profits out of war." . . .

Is there any danger that with such a policy the United States would become a catspaw for the sinister ambitions of other powers?

Would there be any danger of falling under the domination of "perfidious Albion," or raking British chestnuts out of the fire? This is the great bogeyman of one section of Mr. Libby's neutrality bloc. His associate, Mr. Quincy Howe, has written a whole book on the subject, the conclusion of which is that the British Tories are so damnably clever and Americans such constitutional simpletons that the only way we can avoid being the catspaw of British imperialism is by complete withdrawal from world affairs. But, strangely enough, neither Mr. Howe nor any other Anglophobe has the slightest difficulty continuing in the closest comradeship with Mr. Libby when he praises the Chamberlain tory government for capitulation to Mussolini, says this is the only path to peace, and openly advises the United States to model its own foreign policy on the example of Chamberlain. Strangely enough, they fear British imperialism only if the Labor Party should come to power and swing England to the support of a world peace front headed by the United States. But they are quite complacent toward a British imperialism expressed in Chamberlain's alliance with fascism and even want us to follow England along that shameful road.

Would the policy that we propose require us to break with the great American traditions in foreign policy? No, on the contrary, precisely this policy, and only this, would give us a continuation of that greatest of all American traditions in this field that was established by Thomas Jefferson as Secretary of

State under Washington's administration. At that time the young and weak American republic, occupying a position far removed from our present overwhelming strength, was not afraid, in the interests of peace and democracy, to boldly challenge the reactionary aggressors and align itself on the side of their victim. . . .

What America needs today, what the world needs, is a foreign policy based upon these lines of Thomas Jefferson. The general line of such a policy has been proposed by President Roosevelt. . . .

Let us pass on to the consideration of some of the typical and standard arguments of the isolationist school of thought, which Mr. Libby shares and which must be answered here. One of the most used is the argument that America must not take sides against the warmakers, because, while they may be formally violating treaties and world peace, in reality this is only because they have been unjustly dealt with; that they are the "proletariat among nations," that they represent the "have-not" peoples, whose demands must be vindicated, against the rich nations, against the "haves." We cannot join with Mr. Libby in assuming that, even if this were true, America should assist or condone the resort to war to remedy the supposed grievances. But we challenge the assumption of Mr. Libby's facile classification into "haves" and "have-nots." If we are to assist the "have-nots" against the "haves," then surely we must assist Ethiopia take possession of Italy and not the other way around; we must

help Manchuria to some of the Japanese wealth; we must help the Chinese people make Japanese economy serve their great needs and not the other way around. The wildest stretch of even Mr. Libby's imagination cannot paint Czechoslovakia as a "have" nation in contrast with Nazi Germany, which threatens its destruction. It is true that the bandit governments, when they have gobbled up the small and most "have-not" countries, will move toward the object of their greater ambitions, the wealthy countries, and, above all, the United States, but that is only the music of the future. I have yet to hear Mr. Libby or any of his associates propose that that half of the world's wealth which is held by less than 10 per cent of the world's population, that of the United States, should be divided up among the other nations of the world in order to bring about that equality among the peoples which would wipe out this classification of "haves" and "have-nots." Perhaps Mr. Libby does believe that America's wealth should be so distributed. If so, he should tell us tonight. If not, he should drop the meaningless classification of "haves" and "have-nots," which is only a shame-faced justification for fascist aggression. It is an interesting historical sidelight on this argument that it was Japanese imperialism which taught this slogan to Mr. Libby and his friends, which first justified military aggression against weaker peoples on the grounds that the aggressor was hard up, a "proletarian among the nations," and needed the booty. Every common

criminal is equally justified in his crime.

But Mr. Libby, in common with all his associates, strenuously objects to the introduction of moral standards into the relations between nations. They say it is unrealistic and dangerous. They say this is the unreal classification of governments into "angels" and "devils." They cry, we all are sinners together, therefore let none pass moral judgment upon his neighbor. Since Mr. Libby is personally a Quaker and a pacifist and also, if he draws the logical conclusions from his position, a philosophical anarchist who would desire the immediate dissolution of all governments, there is a certain logic and consistency in his position, but for the great majority of workaday Americans, who are not Quakers, are not pacifists and not anarchists, this summary dismissal of moral standards from the field of foreign relations is unacceptable. We are too keenly conscious of the results of such an attitude in the destruction of the standards of morals and justice between man and man, of the disintegration of all social ties, that must flow from the adoption of amorality as our guiding principle in international relations. The advocates of neutrality and isolation argue for the acceptance of international anarchy as the permanent condition of world affairs. We declare that the time has come when the continuation of civilization itself, in America as everywhere, depends upon world organization to enforce a minimum moral standard among nations. . . .

Some of Mr. Libby's associates, whose collaboration he has gladly welcomed in joining the so-called Committee to Keep America Out of War, try to ridicule us, the members of the Communist Party, for our championship of international morality. Particularly, Norman Thomas, Jay Lovestone, Bertram Wolfe, accuse us that thereby we have abandoned the teachings of Marx and Lenin, have abandoned our revolutionary Communist principles. They, on their part, claim to uphold the teachings of Marx and Lenin by ridiculing moral standards between nations as a guiding principle. By this, however, they only expose their own hostility to the teachings of Marx and Lenin, their own renegacy from the revolutionary principles of Socialism. Against all such arguments allow me to quote to you somewhat extensively from the Inaugural Address to the First International written by Karl Marx in 1864. Dealing with the tsarist conquest of the Caucasus, the suppression of the Polish uprising, and the Russo-Turkish war, current events of the day, Marx said:

"... The shameless approval, mock sympathy, or idiotic indifference, with which the upper classes of Europe have witnessed the mountain fortress of the Caucasus falling a prey to, and heroic Poland being assassinated by, Russia; the immense and unresisted encroachments of that barbarous power, whose head is at St. Petersburg, and whose hands are in every cabinet of Europe, have taught the working classes the duty to master them-

selves the mysteries of international politics; to watch the diplomatic acts of their respective governments; to counteract them, if necessary, by all means in their power; when unable to prevent, to combine in simultaneous denunciations, and to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations.

"The fight for such a foreign policy forms part of the general struggle for the emancipation of the working class."\* (Italics mine.—E.B.)

Here, in the very words of Marx, we have formulated the precise description of the policy we urge upon the United States today. We propose nothing else than that the United States shall establish as the guiding principle of its foreign policy "to vindicate the simple laws of morals and justice, which ought to govern the relations of private individuals, as the rules paramount of the intercourse of nations." Marx himself tells us that the fight for such a foreign policy forms part of that general struggle for the emancipation of the working class. This is just as profoundly true today as it was when Marx first wrote it in 1864.

Mr. Libby and most of his associates deny there is any relationship between alignments on foreign policy and those on domestic issues. But we cannot accept this shallow separation of the two. We admit quite readily, of course, the con-

tinued existence of great confusion among the masses and among some of their leaders, but we believe this confusion is being rapidly dispelled. Just as in the domestic political issues of our country, so also on foreign policy, we find the growth of two new political camps which cut across old party lines, one the camp of progress and democracy, the other the camp of reaction and fascism. The camp of reaction and fascism in our domestic life is the main force behind the policy of neutrality and isolation. The camp of progress and democracy is the main force behind the policy of concerted action under American leadership to restrain the fascist war-making governments. When Mr. Libby called upon his followers recently to rejoice, because, as he expressed it, "Hoover resumes leadership in international affairs," and joyously reported Hoover's return from a visit with Hitler and his complete rejection of the theory of concerted efforts against aggressor states, we have a right and a duty to ask what this means in the domestic life of our country. When Mr. Libby advises us to listen to Boake Carter for our radio interpretation of the news, when he asks us to agree with William Randolph Hearst's editorials on foreign affairs, when he asks us to get inspiration from Father Coughlin's radio sermons—all in the interest of peace—we have the right and the duty to ask him what kind of company is he getting us into, what will be the effect of this kind of leadership on the daily life of our country? . . .

On the other hand, we have the

\* *Founding of the First International*, International Publishers, pp. 38-39.

following significant alignment of forces on the side which I am defending tonight:

Organized labor, both of the American Federation of Labor and the Committee for Industrial Organization, overwhelmingly support President Roosevelt's Chicago call for quarantining the aggressor, as well as the O'Connell Peace Bill. Most of the articulate intellectual circles, university professors, students, writers, are, in great majority, supporting the O'Connell Bill for concerted action against the aggressors. Church organizations, outside of the Catholic hierarchy, are at least three-fourths on the same side. The political forces aligned with the New Deal are almost unanimously in its favor. The great student-strike movement on April 27 marched at least 90 per cent under the banner of lifting the embargo against Spain and the adoption of the O'Connell Peace Bill. In a recent gathering of peace advocates called in Washington, with the participation of Mr. Libby himself, with the objective of turning attention away from concerted action and toward abstract problems of world economics, a revolt among the guests against the program of the leadership of this conference disclosed the majority on the side of concerted action to restrain the fascist war-makers. During the past six months the progressive majority of the American people have decisively broken away from the false neutrality policy. They are emphatically supplementing their progressive and democratic platform in domestic affairs with a progressive

and democratic foreign policy, the policy of quarantining the aggressors. At the same time all the forces of reaction are gathering for a desperate last-stand fight to maintain the old, bankrupt, neutrality policy. . . .

The fascist bloc of war-making powers operates under the flag of the anti-Communist alliance. The neutrality bloc within America agrees with the slogan of Hitler that the menace of Communism and of the Communists is what is endangering the peace of the world. Because the American people are so overwhelmingly against fascism, our own domestic anti-Communist alliance says it is against fascism and Communism, but in all their arguments and in their practical activities we find the menace of fascism figures very little, if at all, and their main concern is to fight Communism. And who are the Communists? The anti-Communist alliance certainly is not primarily concerned with my small party. Their definition of Communism is so broad that it includes the New Deal and President Roosevelt himself, especially it includes the policy of quarantining the war-making governments. The anti-Communist slogan in America has exactly the same significance as Hitler's use of this same slogan to establish his bloody dictatorship over the German people. It has exactly the same significance as the same cry against the Spanish republic. It is preparation for the fascist destruction of democracy and the republic also in America.

The organization for which Mr. Libby speaks has declared officially

that it "does not cooperate with Communists or fascists." I do not question that this prohibition against cooperation with fascists is applied to the open, self-labeled fascist groups in America. But these are not the most dangerous expressions of fascism in our country. Hitler also spoke against fascism when he was fighting for power; he operated under the slogan of Socialism; he called his party the *National Socialist Party*. We must not be surprised that American fascism is taking on the banners of democracy and even of labor. Who can forget our famous "Liberty League," even though the du Ponts would like to have us forget it? And with these, the most dangerous, fascists who sail under the flag of liberty as Hitler did under the flag of Socialism, are precisely the most powerful and welcome supporters of Mr. Libby's viewpoint. Must I mention any names other than those of Hamilton Fish, Father Coughlin and William Randolph Hearst to substantiate this charge?

Mr. Libby's organization does not cooperate with Communists, they say. Surely they do not cooperate with the Communist Party, for on the question of the road to peace we stand in opposite camps; but when they can find anyone who calls himself Communist, but who at the same time supports neutrality and isolation, then we find Mr. Libby and his organization are quite ready for the closest collaboration. Mr. Libby is a member of the Committee to Keep America Out of War. This body was launched at a meeting in the Hippodrome, New York,

on March 9, at which Mr. Libby sat on the platform. Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, the meeting's chairman, praised one of the speakers, Mr. Bertram Wolfe, as "the tireless organizer" of the whole affair. Mr. Wolfe calls himself a Communist. He made a speech at that meeting, in which he declared that in case of war between the United States and Japan he proposed to work for the defeat of the United States. Not Mr. Libby nor any of his associates on that platform repudiated that slogan at the meeting or since, and they continue to work together in close alliance. Mr. Libby may reply that Mr. Wolfe is not really a Communist at all. That is absolutely true, and we would like to emphasize this to the whole world. Mr. Wolfe has for years, however, maintained close connections with the Bukharin group in the Soviet Union, the leaders of which a few weeks ago were executed for applying in the most practical way in that country the slogan that Mr. Wolfe put forth for America, the defeat of our own country in a possible war with Japan. Is it too much to ask Mr. Libby if he agrees to collaborate with people who call themselves Communists only provided they stand for the defeat of the United States in case of a war with Japan? Or does he agree to collaborate with that kind of self-styled Communist only because he knows they are not Communists at all but sail under a false flag? And may we ask what Mr. Libby thinks about this use of the slogan for the defeat of our government when faced with a fascist power, when this slogan is put forth

from the same platform on which he sits, under the auspices of an organization of which he is a leading member? . . . We declare that if, in spite of all our efforts for peace, Mr. Libby's policy should prevail and therefore war should in fact occur between Japan and the United States, then we consider that the interest of world progress, of peace, of democracy, of the independence of China's four hundred millions, of the future of America and of the Japanese people itself, all joined to demand the defeat of Japan's militarist government in such a war, and we would make that defeat a major guiding consideration of our whole policy under present world relationships.

The greatest danger to the peace of the whole world is the retreat of the peace-seeking nations before the fascist offensive. The fascist menace has grown on its easy victories. If this course is not stopped, the fascist war aggression will soon be on American soil itself. This is apparent to anyone with the slightest knowledge of the course of world affairs since 1931. Yet, the neutrality bloc and not least its spokesman, Mr. Libby, find their only hope of world peace in continued retreats and surrenders to the fascist powers.

Within the past few weeks Mr. Libby's official organ, a publication called *Peace Action*, often under Mr. Libby's signature, has expressed an attitude toward current events which is identical with Chamberlain's in London and leads in the same direction of coming to agree-

ment with fascism on its own terms. With regard to Austria they expressed "relief to have this inevitable union over with" and concluded that "it will be a step toward stability." They are satisfied that "The future of Spain is apparently in process of solution . . . in the discussions between Chamberlain and Mussolini." They are hopeful that Czechoslovakia "will now sever itself from Russia and develop its ties with Germany." They declare that "Danzig belongs to Germany and will return to Germany." They express the hope that Germany and Poland, while settling the Corridor problem, will also decide without disagreement the fate of Memel and, presumably, also of Lithuania. They say "these changes . . . should have been made years ago." They urge the United States to follow in the Far East the same disgraceful course Chamberlain has followed in the Mediterranean, toward Hitler, and toward Spain. In judging the effects of Franco's recent military successes in Spain they cannot see in this any new menace to European peace; on the contrary, they conclude. "Europe is much nearer peace today than it was a month ago." These are quotations from the current issues of *Peace Action*, edited by Mr. Libby. In not one single issue of that paper, not one single article, not a paragraph, not a sentence, can be found a word in condemnation of Hitler, Mussolini or the Mikado, as the violators of world peace. And all of this, which clearly represents the path of surrender to the war-makers and to

fascism, is presented as "peace action." Such is the conclusion to which neutrality will bring all its adherents if they do not break once and for all with that bankrupt policy.

Those for whom I speak, and on this I am sure I speak the mind of the majority of the American people, see in every victory of the fascist war-makers a darker gathering of clouds of war over the world, including America. We declare Chamberlain's criminal sellout has stimulated every reactionary and war-making force. We see in the conquest of Austria a knife in the back of the Czechoslovakian republic, the last oasis of democracy in central Europe, which can stand only by unity with France and the Soviet Union. We find Spain's contribution to world peace in the heroic republican forces that brought Franco's foreign armies to a halt. We find the hope of the Far East in China's magnificent national unity and military successes against the Japanese. In short, we see every one of the questions from the exactly opposite viewpoint of Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado, and therefore from the exactly opposite viewpoint of my opponent of this evening and of his associates. They see peace only in the victory of the fascist dictators; we see peace only in the defeat and destruction of fascism. That is why my opponent wants the United States to continue helping the fascist dictators; that is why we demand that the United States shall take the lead in concerted efforts to halt them.

Would a courageous initiative by the United States against the war-makers receive enough support in the world to defeat them? Yes, we would have overwhelming support if we displayed a firm policy. It is certain the Soviet Union would wholeheartedly support such a policy. We would end the hesitations of the French government and its dependence upon Britain. We would encourage British democracy to throw over the cynical Chamberlain. America alone could change the whole course of world affairs by our moral and economic influence. We could ensure the victory of the Spanish republic, which was almost at the point of victory several times while American influence was thrown the other way. We could ensure the victory of China which, without our help, is already bringing Japan to the verge of collapse. The defeat of the war-makers in these two areas would shatter the myth of their inevitable victory, would release the democratic aspirations of their own people, who would quickly abolish their defeated dictators. And we could do all that without the slightest danger of involving the United States in war. Failure to do this will create for us the danger of war. The United States enjoyed for a time a privileged position. This makes it our inescapable responsibility to use this position to help organize the peace of a world in which no other land is so fortunately situated. If we delay too long, our immunity will quickly disappear in a world made victim to fascist aggression, con-

quest and destruction. By acting now against the war-makers of the world, we *can* keep America out of war.

Mr. Libby has told us tonight quite openly that he proposes, as the way to peace, to make the fascist nations prosperous. If we make them prosperous enough, they will stop threatening us with war. I asked Mr. Libby if he was prepared for that purpose of dividing American wealth among the fascist nations. He did not answer that directly, but I think we can see that this is the logical conclusion which must be drawn from his remarks.

Mr. Libby expressed agreement with us on some points. But it is a strange agreement. I said neutrality is murder. Mr. Libby says he agrees with me that neutrality is not enough. . . .

As a matter of fact, Mr. Libby relies mainly, for bringing you around to his point of view, upon telling you about the terrible, terrible things that are going to happen when "the boys come home." He wants to frighten us by telling us what our enemies are planning against us, the terrible things that Hitler is going to plan against us if we cross him. He forgets one thing: the fascists abroad and at home will make their plans, but when it comes to executing these plans we are going to have something to say about the question.

Mr. Libby is disturbed because I don't propose that the United States go to war; and as most of his argument is directed toward the horror

of war, he must conclude in spite of everything that I do propose war, so he says "an embargo against the war-makers is a war measure." But, my dear Mr. Libby, we propose an embargo against the war-makers; you propose an embargo against both the war-makers and their victims; therefore, you propose war against both of them, war against friend and enemy alike. You say embargo is an act of war, but the whole purpose of the Neutrality Act is designed to place the embargo against both war-makers and victims—if the embargo is war, you propose twice as much war as we propose, war against the whole world.

Mr. Libby assured us that if we dare take action against the fascist dictators, this will only consolidate the people of these countries behind their dictatorships, and he draws a picture following the American declaration of embargo of the women of Italy rushing with their wedding rings to Mussolini. But what is the truth of this? These dictators live upon the cheap victories presented to them by policies such as Mr. Libby wants us to follow. When those cheap victories stop, the dictators will fall. One good stiff licking is enough to finish Hitler, because, so far from having the support of the German people, Hitler can exist only so long as he can create the appearance of invincible power that even forces the British lion to crawl at his feet. The moment that illusion is wiped away, at that moment the house of cards of fascism will begin to tumble. . . .