

IX

Two Letters \*

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Since the correspondence given below, the *New Republic* has gone over openly to the Chamberlain line (March 30 issue) by advocating rapprochement with Hitler without political conditions. This is a logical follow-up of the letter to the *American Mercury*.

EARL BROWDER.

March 4, 1938

Dear Mr. Browder:

It seems to me that you were very unfair in your reference to me in the *New Masses* of March 8. You say "Thus Trotskyites boldly collaborate in the fascist *American Mercury*, and Bruce Bliven writes them 'explanatory' letters."

I have written just one letter to the *American Mercury*. They accused me of being a Communist, and I replied defending myself from that charge. Your insinuation that this is an act of friendship on my part toward the *American Mercury* is either an extraordinary piece of muddlement, or something worse. What would you have had me do? Permit their long attack upon me, in an article, to go unchallenged?

Sincerely,  
BRUCE BLIVEN.

March 8, 1938

Dear Mr. Bliven:

Upon returning to the city I find your letter of March 4. First of all I must apologize for having spoken of your letter

\*The following correspondence refers to the statement made by the author on p. 34 of this book.

to the *American Mercury* in the same sentence with the reference to the Trotskyist collaboration with that organ. This inclusion of the two matters in that single sentence was wrong because it could be misinterpreted that I was trying to directly connect you with the Trotskyites. Accept my apologies for this mistake.

I must, however, say that the reference to your letter, if separated from its direct context with reference to the Trotskyites, was in order and must stand. The very fact that you considered it necessary to defend yourself from a charge of the fascist *American Mercury* that you are a Communist and to defend yourself in an explanatory letter to that publication gave some justification for the *Mercury's* exultant comments that their charges against you had borne good fruit, inasmuch as it had brought you into the international anti-Communist pact. I did not insinuate that this was an act of friendship upon your part to the *American Mercury*. I was pointing out that it was a step toward capitulation to the *American Mercury*. The *American Mercury* itself so greeted it, and you did not consider this important enough to make a public statement on.

In conclusion, let me assure you that I have not the slightest desire to develop unnecessary differences. In the past period, before the sharpening of the issues of isolation, I had considered the *New Republic* representative of some of the healthier elements in the non-Communist Left circles. It has been a great disappointment to me to see the *New Republic*, under your leadership, break down so completely on this issue.

Sincerely,  
EARL BROWDER.

*New Masses*, April 5, 1938.