
ON SOME ASPECTS OF FOREIGN POLICY

BY EARL BROWDER

THERE have been several requests that I deal with comments of the capitalist press on my Boston speech of October 6, and to develop further some of the points of that speech. I do this the more readily, since many persons have misinterpreted that speech to obscure one of its main points, which needs constant re-emphasis. I said:

*"It will be worse than useless for the United States to approach the Soviet Union in the hopes of finding an ally in a war, the aims of which are to redistribute the colonies and subject peoples among the great powers. The Soviet Union will never participate in such a war."**

That would seem to be clear and definite. Yet for the capitalist press and commentators, another phrase was taken from the speech, and interpreted to mean just the opposite; namely, that I was advocating that the United States should seek to obtain the Soviet Union as an ally in the imperialist war. I must emphatically repudiate such a suggestion.

It is necessary for me, however, to admit that I carelessly helped these falsifiers, when I gave them the quotable and ambiguous formulation of a "Washington-Moscow-

Chungking Axis" as a possible description of what would result from a correct people's policy for peace on the part of the United States. That made it too easy for gentlemen like Mr. Sokolsky and others to distort the whole question and obscure the real issues. Therefore I must disclaim this formulation of "Axis," and make this the occasion for deepening the whole question.

One of the chief features of the international situation, and the decisive factor for the United States, is the fact that the United States Government is pursuing a policy of feverish intervention in the imperialist war. It has embarked upon a gigantic and intense drive for building the greatest empire the world has ever seen, with the instrument of an overwhelming military machine. In this course it is expressing the will of the united American bourgeoisie. The policy and aspirations of Washington may be summed up in two headlines from *The United States News*—"Unofficial Merger of Britain and U.S." (Oct. 4, 1940), and "America to be Enriched by Vast British Holdings" (Nov. 29, 1940). For these aims American youth is conscripted, the masses are loaded with the burdens of enormous armaments, social and labor legislation is being

* See: *An American Foreign Policy for Peace*, p. 13, Workers Library Publishers, New York.

dismantled, civil liberties are curtailed and swiftly being extinguished, and standards of living are driven down. For the masses the slogans are "national defense" and "democracy," but among the ruling classes it is frankly and outspokenly for "enrichment," for empire.

The American bourgeoisie is united behind this policy. But it is not fully united on *how to realize it*. One important difference is that one trend says, in the words of another headline in *The United States News*, that it would be wise to consider "Russia and China—New Allies for the U.S." (Oct. 11, 1940); or in the words of Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen in a recent issue of *Look* magazine, "the U.S. and Russia are natural allies"; or to quote the *New York Daily News*, "We should hold our nose and make a deal with Stalin." Another trend says, in the words of George Sokolsky:

"It is preferable to go down to defeat than to be victorious as the little ally of the Russian Brute. It is preferable to suffer the agonies of a prolonged world war than to accept peace as a bounty from Stalin." (*New York Sun*, Oct. 9, 1940.)

Now both these trends are part of the one war camp of the bourgeoisie. Both consider relations with the Soviet Union purely from the angle of whether the United States can or cannot use the Soviet Union as a catspaw for its own imperialist purposes. The first says it is possible and should be tried; the second says it is impossible and that to try it would be dangerous. Both are

war policies, against the interests of the American working class and equally against the interests of the Soviet Union.

The American people, the real nation, are truly the "natural allies" of the Soviet Union and its peoples; but "Washington," that is, the present imperialist, war-making regime, is a natural enemy of the Soviet Union and of its policies of peace, of neutrality toward the imperialist war, of limiting the war and stopping it at the earliest possible moment. Washington, Roosevelt and the American bourgeoisie see in the Soviet Union the most powerful obstacle to the realization of their grandiose dreams of a far-flung American empire.

The approach of Washington and our ruling classes toward China is purely imperialistic. For years the United States complacently furnished the Japanese militarists with the materials for their war of conquest in China. Only now, when the Japanese threaten to seize the whole Far-Eastern colonial empire, including the rubber, tin, and oil of Indonesia, does the United States, still niggardly and half-heartedly, grant some credits to China and threaten to cut off supplies from Japan.

Clearly, under present circumstances, to speak of any alliance or even collaboration between the United States, China, and the Soviet Union, except as the result of the reversal or defeat of the present policies of Washington, only means to pour water on the mill of the imperialist war-makers.

Does this mean, however, that we shall not urge the American people

to demand a correct policy toward both China and the Soviet Union, a policy that would truly be in the interests of the people of all three countries, a policy of peace? Of course, it means that we *shall* urge and fight for such a policy. But we must always point out that the people's interests clash with those of Wall Street, and the Wall Street-dominated government, and that such a policy must be imposed by the people.

Does this mean that the United States Government must inevitably, so long as it remains an imperialist, capitalist government, further follow up its hostile attitude towards the Soviet Union? Not necessarily, for even Nazi Germany found it advisable to replace its hostility with a formally correct attitude toward the Soviet Union. At least as much may be demanded, and gained, from the Government of the United States, by an informed and alert working class.

Clearly, all phases of a correct people's policy of peace—neutrality toward the imperialist war, friendship with the Soviet Union, real help to China, the denial of aid to the Japanese invaders of China, limitation of the spread of the war, and its earliest end—all these things must be continuously demanded from whatever administration holds power in the country. They may be

achieved in part, by a sufficiently energetic struggle of the masses, against the will of the bourgeoisie, before imperialism is thrown out of power.

But they will be achieved only by struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie and its policies, and never by falling under any illusions of collaboration between the working class and this imperialist bourgeoisie.

These considerations were the foundation of and were implicit in my Boston speech of October 6. Any contrary implications drawn from the "Axis" formulation are false and dangerous; and the use of that formulation is wrong as giving color to such implications.

The Soviet Union is the stronghold of peace for the workers and oppressed peoples of the world. It is fully capable of defending itself from any attacks, especially since it has the warm sympathy, love, and support of the toiling masses over the whole world. It is steadfastly holding its peoples outside the area of the imperialist war, giving an example thereby of how the interests of the American masses could best be protected. It is a beacon light showing us and the whole world the way out of capitalist oppression, starvation and war, to a new world of socialist freedom, plenty and peace.