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What is Behind the New Arms program of President Roosevelt?,
1939.

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WHAT IS BEHIND THE NEW ARMS PROGRAM OF PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT?

Whither is the United States Moving in Its Foreign Policy? Is It the Way
of Peace and Democracy?



By
Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver

At
The Temple

On
Sunday morning, January 29, 1939

Twenty years ago, my friends, there was written into the Peace Treaty at Versailles a provision for the disarmament of all the defeated nations of the World War and also for the voluntary disarmament by agreement of all other nations of the earth. The Preamble to the Fifth part of the Treaty of Versailles contains this express obligation: "In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of armaments of all nations, Germany undertakes strictly to observe the military, naval and air clauses which follows." In other words, the defeated nations, Germany, Austria, Hungary, were disarmed. All other nations of the world were to disarm. The League of Nations was charged with the primary obligation of working out a plan.

Article 8 of the Covenant of the League, imposed special obligation upon all members of the League with reference to disarmament. It stated that the "members recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations."

The League "shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration and action of the several governments." The primary purpose for calling into existence the League of Nations was to liquidate the armament program of nations which, as Lord Guy said, "If civilization cannot destroy armaments, armaments will destroy civilization."

Sure enough, the first thing which the League undertook, back in 1920, was the appointment of a Commission to study the subject of armament and to present to the League concrete processes for the gradual reduction of world armament. That was in 1920. For years thereafter, the Commission mulled over facts and statistics and held group conferences one after another and procrastinated. And nothing came of it. Nothing.

The great nations responsible for the workings of the League were not interested in armament. In fact, they were interested in maintaining their vast armaments to protect that which they gained in the World War. There were also other interests. The great munition merchants were vitally interested in seeing that this program of the League should not go through.

I read, recently, an interesting book from the pen of a well-known journalist, Pierre Van Paassen, called "Days of our Years." Pierre Van Paassen was a regular attendant of all the sessions of the League at Geneva. This is his observation of what transpired there with reference to disarmament:

"While the eyes of the world were riveted on Geneva, where the interminable debate went on and on, few were aware that, from 1925 onward, representatives of French and German heavy industry were meeting regularly, now in Paris, then in Berlin. Both the German and French metal industry were incurring serious losses as a result of the suspension of armament contracts, and were desperately seeking ways and means to set business in motion again. This could not be done without intimate collaboration...The French metal industry agreed to the rearmament of Germany as early as 1925, as being the only condition for the stimulation of the inner French market.

"Strange personages were beginning to make their appearance in Geneva to assist the diplomats in clearing the last obstacle off the road towards universal peace and disarmament. Germany sent Constantin von Neurath, director of the Credit Hongrois, a Hungarian banking institution controlled by Schneider & Cie., the French armament manufacturers. Carl von Schubert took charge of the permanent undersecretaryship for foreign affairs and the

League of Nations at the Wilhelmstrasse. He was a director of the Krupp metal trust. France, in turn, sent to Berlin as its ambassador, Francois-Poncet, who had but recently been managing director of the Dillinger Huettnerwerke, a German armament firm, but who was also a director of a French steel trust. From 1928 onward, the Labor Bureau of the League was revealing the formation of strange new international business combinations. The Krupp Metal Works of Essen formed a subsidiary known as the Neukirchen Eisenwerke and appointed French munitioneers and politicians to its board of directors. Two German steel firms, the Halberghuette and the Dillinger Huettnerwerke merged with a French company. They appointed a board of directors consisting of six prominent French cannon merchants and six Germans.

"Paul Faure, deputy for the district of Le Creusot, revealed in the French parliament that Schneider-Creusot, the mammoth French cannon trust, headed by the cousins De Wendel, one of whom was a member of the French Chamber and the other of the German Reichstag, was contributing funds to the infant Nazi party of Adolf Hitler, and that Skoda, the Czechoslovakian armament trust, which is largely controlled by Schneider-Creusot, was supplying Germany with artillery, gunpowder and cartridges on credit.

"Why should Hitler have received French, Czechoslovakian and British money (for Sir Henry Deterding, chairman of Royal Dutch Shell, was also reported amongst the contributors to the Nazi party's funds)? The answer is simple. One needed but read the Fuhrer's book, "Mein Kampf". In that document, the upstart party leader, with scarcely ten thousand followers at the time he wrote the book, announced that his first task upon attaining power would be to rearm the Reich. Did not such a man deserve international sympathy and support? Armament factories all over the Continent were

standing idle, dividends were sinking, stock quotations going lower and lower. And not a cloud on the horizon to give the deadly armament industry a little spurt, no danger anywhere to warrant the manufacture of a single gun! Would it not be a godsend if Hitler could come to power and make Germany dangerous once more? Wouldn't that be sufficient excuse to kill all this nonsense in Geneva about world peace and disarmament? Once Germany started to rearm, all could follow suit. For the primary condition of a general armament campaign is the rearmament of only one powerful state. With Germany on the way, "the tragic and ridiculous spectacle" (as Francois Delaisi called it once) of nations arming because they were afraid, and afraid because they were arming, could start all over again.

"It did start all over again, and you felt sick at heart with the chicanery and the hypocritical palaver in Geneva about peace and democracy by men who represented the so-called great democracies, but who were scheming and conniving behind the scenes to sacrifice the German people to a barbaric militaristic authoritarianism because that was the condition "sine qua non" for setting the armament campaigns in their own countries in motion again."

The race for rearmament began at first rather slowly and then more and more as collective security received one blow after another at the hands of its presumptive friends.

With the coming of Hitler to Power there began a stampede towards rearmament because he set ^{on} a program of rearmament unprecedented in the history of the world. So that the total armament of the world in 1932 was something like three thousand seven hundred million dollars, in 1938, six years later, it increased to seventeen thousand, five hundred eighty million dollars - over seventeen billion dollars in six years. In Germany

in 1932, they spent two hundred fifty millions of dollars on armament. In 1938, they spent four thousand, four hundred millions of dollars. Ever since the coming of Hitler to power this race has turned into a stampede, draining the very lives of the nation, sacrificing everything to this military race. All of these millions and billions, of course, are taken out of the bread, butter, clothing shelter of these countries. The standard of living throughout the world has dropped. And all this, in twenty years after the Versailles Treaty when the nations of the earth pledged themselves to progressive disarmament.

The United States has not been entirely out of this race. In 1932 we spent six hundred sixty-seven millions of dollars on our defense. Before 1938, we spent one billion sixty-five millions of dollars. And now the President of the United States is asking for an additional five hundred fifty million dollars over and above this appropriation. We are spending too much money on WPA projects, and to feed our poor. We have to slice off one hundred fifty millions from our relief roles, but we may clamp on additional five hundred fifty millions on war debts.

The President of the United States has warned us of the imminence of war. He called both Ambassadors Bullitt and Kennedy before the representatives in Washington to impress them with the fact that war is imminent, perhaps due this year. The United States must therefore be armed, completely armed. There was a discussion of twelve thousand new planes and many new naval bases in the Pacific and elsewhere.

When the so-called Neutrality Laws were passed we were lead to believe that these Neutrality Laws made us secure from foreign entanglements, made us secure in our splendid isolation. We were not to lend money to nations engaged in war, not to ship ammunition to them. However this did not prove to be the case. There is a fear that Europe will entangle itself in the Western

Hemisphere, and ultimately in the United States. The nations over there, especially dictatorships are penetrating South America and are endangering the Monroe Doctrine. Europe is bringing its imperialistic appetites to our door. Therefore we need additional armaments. Furthermore it has become clear that the Neutrality Laws were not doing what we hoped they would do. These laws actually favored the stronger nations and disadvantaged the weaker nations, the democratic nations of the earth. For example in the case of Spain. Embargo against Spain, both insurgents and loyalists. The insurgents, however were able to receive aid from the dictatorships but the loyalist government, the legally appointed government was unable to purchase armament to defend itself, and as a result, is on the way to being destroyed. Furthermore, these Neutrality Laws are are seemingly Neutrality Laws when we choose to apply them only. They are not applied automatically, without discrimination.

It is clear to every thinking person that back of any intelligent armament program there must be an intelligent and consistent foreign policy. What is it we want to prepare for? And against whom? We have followed the good neighbor policy to be sure. That is a good policy if your neighbor wants to be a good neighbor. But suppose your neighbor doesn't want to be a good neighbor? What happens then? What are we preparing ourselves for? What is it we want? Are we ready to go to war to keep an open door in China. To keep an open door in China has been one of the major items in our foreign policy. Are we ready to defend that proposition even if necessary to resort to arms? We want to respect, we want all other nations to respect China's territory. Are we ready to insist on respect to the principle even if it involves us in war? Are we ready to back up by force any arrangement which we prefer on the Asiatic Continent? Do we want to control the whole Pacific, the Western Pacific inclusive?

Do we want to defend the Philipines, the country in which we have vested interests? If that is our foreign policy, then it is quite logical, mandatory to embark upon a vast program of armament and to build many new naval bases and to fortify an island like Guam, five thousand ^{west} miles of San Francisco. But if we have no intention of fighting for the Philipines, or for the open door policy of China, or any arrangement on the Asiatic, however desirable that might be, it is a waste of money and a needless provocation to embark upon such a naval program.

What is our foreign policy? Do we wish to join in collective action with the remaining democracies of Europe against aggressors? Do we wish to join with France and Great Britain to check the spread of dictatorships in the world? If so, then we ought to build not only a huge navy, but immediately lay plans for the vast expansion of our army, because such an arrangement might again necessitate an overseas expedition on the part of the United States in a world war. Is that our foreign policy?

President Roosevelt has been toying with is latter ideal. President Roosevelt is a great democrat. President Roosevelt has been outraged by the indecencies of dictatorship, seeing it as a menace to the remaining democracies. He would like to quarantine them, as he said. He would like to unite the great democracies of the world and pit forces against force and check them. He would like to do what the League of Nations failed to do, insure respect for treaties through international law, through military enforcement of some form or another for the remaining democracies of the world.

This is a courageous program. But I am afraid it is a little fantastic. For he is reckoning without the great democracies of France and Great Britain. They are not as excited about saving democracy as is President Roosevelt. The Tory Mr. Chamberlain, even Daladier of France,

are far more concerned with checking up things in Europe, such as the spread of radicalism or liberalism, or the popular front movements,

or socialism or communism. They are much more concerned with checking those forces than checking Fascism or Nazism. The powerful elements in control of those two democracies do not want to see Hitler and Mussolini liquidated.

It was clear at Munich that these two great democracies betrayed the noblest of democratic countries in Europe, broke their alliances with this country, which France, at least, promised to defend. When President Roosevelt thinks of these democracies, of whom is he thinking? Of the masses of those countries who are surely democratic but who do not control their governments, or the governments of those countries who are not concerned with democracy but who use countries, things, for the advancement of their own imperialistic interests. And these two democracies did not even come to the assistance of Spain, to the extent of allowing that country to buy and sell. They permitted Franco to bring that helpless country to ruin, to drench that country in blood and to establish another stronghold of reaction in one of the important countries of Western Europe. With whom does President Roosevelt wish to unite in defense of democracy?

Those nations, France and England of course want American cooperation not to defend democracy, but their imperial interests, perhaps Tunisia, Corsica, or British Colonial interests in Africa. President Roosevelt Chamberlain, Daladier do not even speak the same language. And the American people ought not, in the name of democracy be asked to set for themselves additional taxes in order to build up a war machine to back up this sort of an alliance between American which has no imperial interests, which is deeply interested in democracy as such and those

two countries to bolster up their imperialism. We ought not to repeat our mistake of 1917. We ought not to enter into any regional alliances at all and take sides in imperial rivalries which are going on today. We ought not to enter into any commitments with any nation against another unless the issue involved is the issue which was involved in 1920, namely, the building up of a world organization for law and order, a world organization which would make armaments unnecessary. That is a different thing.

Let us be frank with ourselves. Our own country refused to enter the League which we helped to build. We refused to enter an international court of order which four presidents of the United States recommended and endorsed. We were unwilling to assume any responsibility or to make any sacrifice for a world organization for peace. Such joint action with all other nations of the world for peace would have involved us in far less risk than the new ideas with which some of our leaders are toying - joining up with one group of nations against another group of nations and dividing the world into two hostile camps. Certainly this would lead to war. We ought not to be stampeded into voting vast sums of money for rearmament in the name of democracy.

What should we do? The world being what it is today, with madness loose, the United States should be prepared to defend itself in times of attack. The prospect of an attack, however, is not very great. Fortunately we are so situated geographically that such adequate defense need not be excessive and need not involve us in colossal armament programs. We are a nation of great wealth, great raw materials. We have a highly developed industrial machine. We have great staying power and no nation will likely enter into a war with us either on the high seas if we are

adequately prepared and certainly not on our shores where they will be so far removed from their base of supplies. Adequate defense, a powerful Navy supplemented by an air fleet on our shores is all that is necessary to defend ourselves from attack. We should forego any thought of again going overseas to Europe to help fight European wars. That would be disastrous for us. Another such war will destroy democracy in the United States and will establish Fascism because such a war will necessitate completely militarizing the life of the American people, the complete regimentation of everything, capital, labor, wages, price. Everything will be rigidly and regimentated in order to prosecute a war on such a large scale. We should forego any thought of another war. We should bend ^{our} energies toward protecting our own shores. That can be done.

Recently I read a book by George Fielding Eliot, formerly Major, Military Intelligence Reserve of the United States Army, called "The Ramparts We Watch" in which he makes this summary:

"Our navy, when at full strength, will require 135,000 men. An organized naval reserve of 35,000 backed by a volunteer reserve of say equal strength and a proper merchant marine reserve, can immediately fill all mobilization requirements. The navy can begin functioning at once. Additional men will be needed, of course; but they will not be needed in great numbers. It is doubtful whether - if the navy be maintained at a level which will permit those vigorous offensive measures necessary to assure victory - it would ever require more than another hundred thousand all told.

"The army (including the National Guard) begins with 44,500 men in our overseas possessions, and 423,000 at home. Another 200,000 will be needed to bring the National Guard to war strength, plus a few thousand specialist reserves.

"If our military establishments be maintained in a condition to produce such a fighting force quickly, and to strike with it without loss of time, the result will be that few nations will challenge its power; and if any does, we shall be the deliverer and not the recipient of the terrible hammer-strokes of war.

"The forces enumerated are well within the power of this nation to create and to maintain at full strength in war, without regimenting all our vast resources under a single control without wiping out our democracy, without abandoning our American ways of life and government."

Even then, my friends, we ought never lose sight of the important fact that this is not the answer to our nation or to any ~~xx~~ nation. The answer to the problem of war or peace does not lie in neutrality legislation, in armament, in isolation, in regional pacts, or in any other device. The answer was known and proclaimed, then rejected by the nations of the world right after the World War. The answer lies in building up an international machinery comprised of all the nations of the earth, implemented by a machinery capable of enforcing international law to protect the weak against the strong, discourage the aggressor and to create a sense of confidence and security in the world. This is the only answer. Even though we live in our own country we ought not to lose sight of this one solution. This mad race will lead to another war. That is almost certain.

Perhaps mankind broken and beaten a second time will again come to the realization that a world organization such as was tried following the world war and destroyed because of lack of vision on the part of leaders of the major powers of Europe and because of the machinations of munition dealers and armament merchants, is the only real solution to the problem of armament and to the whole problem of war and peace.

1/ Peace Treaties - Versailles - defeated - disarmed -

Germany - 100,000 - Heavy Artillery

(Inst.) . Wrecked - munitions (Inst.)

Predicated on Collective Security - Script 1932

Hitler -

World Armament { 1932 = 3,700
1938 = 17,580 - 4 fold

Germany

{ 1932 = 250 M.
1938 = 4,400 M. -

{ Fifteen Billion in 4 years

Swiss Munch - maddest race of all -

Driven head-long by Fear - War -

{ Taxes - drained - lowered standard of living
Montaged Future - Debts - astronomical figures

14/ Our am U.S. { 1932 - 667 M.
1938 - 1,065 M.

Our President - an additional 550 M. -

No funds for Relief - 150 M. - WPA.

Warning - Kennedy - Bullitt

12,000 planes

new naval Bases

2-ocean navy

5/ We had signed - enactment; Neutrality Law - secure ⁽²⁾ against
foreign entanglements - seen in our splendid isolation -
Evidently not! Fear that Europe will entangle itself
in Western Hemisphere! Penetration in Mexico etc.
Scraps, paper, monroe doctrine!
Many Europ. Imperial appetites & ambitions to our
thrust hold

① Neutrality laws - ^{Favor} favor the strong - dislike aggressor
universal obligation - automatic applied that to Spain
Enlarged on Spain - helped destroy a democr. govt.
not applied to Japan - China - state has exist -
Pres. failed to find it so - defeated clear intent

6/ Break of an intell. Am. program must be a completely
foreign policy. What do we propose to do? Good thoughts
not enough - when neighbor does not want the a poor
neighbor - but

I We want an open door in China! Are we ready to
to war for it.

We want respect for independence, Ch. territory! Are we
ready to go to war for it?

Are we ready to back up by free any arrangement as
Asiatic continent

Philippines?

Are we ready to defend British interests in W. Pacific?

in any friendly arrangement?

Control other islands in Pacific
If 20 - then it is quite logical - Guam ^(Bohring) by 4-14

5000 m. west from J. Hawaii

If 20 - Philippines - 1945 - indep. (1934) - Naval bases
at Manila

9/ not - ^{we are not} waste of funds - needless provocation

(3)

II. Do we wish - particulars over West Hemisphere -

Defend Canada -

need vast fleet - airplanes - new bases

III. Do we wish to join collective action with remain-
ing democr - as aggressors ^{- in Europe} Eng. & France - ag.
Italy & Japan - possibly also Japan -

Might involve another over-seas expenditure - 1917
not only vast Navy - but also vast Army
our whole plan of armament & type must be different

IV. 7/ Pres. R. has been toying with this latter idea. Great danger
that he is - seduced by underestimates of Dict. - seeing
menace to all free countries - in their dynamic -
imperial - total - guaranteeing them -
with power & democ. against them - Let
face against face! Stop them!

(a) A conceivable program! But he is not recog.
with his democ. partners! They are not as
excited about saving democ. as he is! They
Chamberlain & even Deland - not aroused -
Elements in their pop - more concerned with
checking social - & preserving democ!
Do not want to destroy H. M.!
Munch - capitalistic - betrayed a democ. Rep. to help -

world not even ^{permit} ~~and~~ - Blum - a ^{dem} ~~by~~ ^{sent} to bury ⁴
an institution - to defend def ag. Fas. unimpaired!

They want Amer. military cooper. not to defend
dem. - but yes - then imperial interests!

"Tunisia" etc - British Col. interest in Africa
→ We don't talk the same language!

→ shall we build up a war machine - for such
an alliance - collective action - to blister up 7. Mr. imperial
to repeat the mistake of 1917? To pour out
our wealth etc, and thinking of one

- no regional alliances will do! To talk sides
in imper. rivalry is criminal folly for
us - we have no imper. interest to defend.

A world org. - that is something else
again - for all - for inter. order + law
enforcement - the Amer. dream - Wilson

collective action - leading to disarmament - not
to division, world into 2 hostile camps

Have shown no readiness for it - no resp. for collect. des.
but alliances involving greater danger - less - least - imperial
obstacles

8/. Until that time - would not

→ adequate defence against attack!

(Togo) - any that adventures in Asia or Europe -

need not be excessive - fortunately restricted - 2
Reams - are vast bastions of defence

We have the wealth - the man power - the mechanical
industry - the raw material - the staying power

no nation will lightly enter into war with us - on 6
the high seas - if we have a powerful navy & sufficiently
air fleet - or on our shores - so far removed from
their base, supplies - Just

The new weapon - An plan - The dict. has gotten
a running start in devel. this weapon - Other
countries including our own must catch up with
them + cancel that dangerous advantage. We
can do it. We should do it - the world being what
it is to-day. (~~Washington must~~). We
must have the plants & machinery to put air craft
~~production~~ into mass production - and a
sufficient no. of ships on hand for our immediate use.

9). But never lose sight of real solution for W. Peace.

Armanent even, this unknown, tremendous cost -
Drawn - Local Services

① Makes for Farmers - Taxes -

Preamble to Part V, the Treaty of Versailles - contains an express obligation:

"In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, Germany undertakes strictly to observe the military, naval & air clauses which follow"

Art. 8 of Covenant, League - imposed spec. obligations upon all members, League - with ref. to disarmament.

the members "recognize that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety, and the enforcement by common action of international obligations"

League - "shall formulate plans for such reduction for the consideration of the Council, the several governments"

Lord Grey - "if civilization cannot destroy armaments, armaments will destroy civilization"

1920 - Commission appointed - (~~Security~~ ~~disarmament~~ ~~together~~ -)

procrastination - chicanery

Our navy, when at full strength, will require 135,000 men. An organized naval reserve of 35,000, backed by a volunteer reserve of say equal strength and a proper merchant marine reserve, can immediately fill all mobilization requirements. The navy can begin functioning at once. Additional men will be needed, of course; but they will not be needed in great numbers. It is doubtful whether - if the navy be maintained at a level which will permit those vigorous offensive measures necessary to assure victory - it would ever require more than another hundred thousand all told.

The army (including the National Guard) begins with 44,500 men in our overseas possessions, and 423,000 at home. Another 200,000 will be needed to bring the National Guard to war strength, plus a few thousand specialist reserves.

If our military establishments be maintained in a condition to produce such a fighting force quickly, and to strike with it without loss of time, the result will be that few nations will challenge its power; and if any does, we shall be the deliverer and not the recipient of the terrible hammer-strokes of war.

The forces enumerated are well within the power of this nation to create and to maintain at full strength in war, without regimenting all our vast resources under a single control without wiping out our democracy, without abandoning our American ways of life and government.

From
THE RAMPARTS WE WATCH
By
GEORGE FIELDING ELIOT

Formerly Major, Military Intelligence Reserve, United States Army:
~~Co-Author of "IF WAR COMES"~~

ABSTRACT OF ADDRESS DELIVERED BY DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER AT THE TEMPLE, ANSEL ROAD AND EAST 105TH STREET ON SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 29, 1939.

WHAT IS BEHIND THE NEW ARMS PROGRAM OF PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT?

Back of an intelligent armament program must be an intelligent and consistent Foreign Policy. What shall we prepare for? We want an Open Door in China. Are we ready to go to war for it? We want the territorial integrity of China respected. Are we ready to go to war for that? Are we willing to back up by force any arrangement which we prefer on the Asiatic Continent? Do we want to fight for the Philippines? Do we wish to control both sides of the Pacific? If so, then it is quite logical to embark upon a vast program of naval expansion, to build many new naval bases and to fortify an island like Guam, five thousand miles* west of San Francisco.

But if we are not willing to defend the above positions, then it is a waste of money and needless provocation to engage in such expansionism.

Do we wish to join with the remaining democracies of Europe in collective action against aggressors? Do we wish to unite with England and France to check the dynamic expansion of Germany and Italy? This might involve us in another overseas expedition as in 1917, and we must therefore prepare for such an eventuality by not only expanding our navy but by building a vast army as well.

President Roosevelt has been toying with this latter idea. Great democrat that he is, and outraged by the indecent aggressiveness and brutal imperialism of the dictators, and fearing that they are a menace to all free countries, he would like to "quarantine" them, to unite the forces of democracy against them and by pitting force against force, to stop them.

This is a courageous program. But President Roosevelt, I am afraid, is not reckoning with the true nature of his democratic partners. They are not as excited about saving democracy as he is. The Tory Chamberlain and even Daladier are not ~~xx~~ seriously disturbed by the spread of Fascism. They are disturbed by the threat of Fascist countries to their own imperial interests. There are powerful

elements in the population of France and Great Britain who are more concerned with checking industrial control, social progress and the growing power of organized labor on the Continent than with preserving democracy, and these elements are now controlling their governments. At Munich it was not any fear, but the pressure of these powerful elements which forced France and England to capitulate to dictatorship and to betray a democracy which France, at least, had pledged to defend. These democracies also helped to strangle a legally elected democratic government in Spain by making it impossible for that government to procure munitions to defend itself against Hitler and Mussolini who used Franco as their tool.

France and Great Britain want American military cooperation, ~~xxx~~ not to defend democracy in the world, but to defend themselves - their imperial interests, perhaps Tunisia and Corsica or British Colonial interests in Africa. President Roosevelt simply does not talk the same language as the heads of the governments in France and in Great Britain although they may use the same terminology.

In the name of defending democracy, the American people ought not to be stampeded into building a still more powerful war machine to bolster up French and British imperialism, thereby repeating the tragic mistake which we made in 1917.

We ~~ought to~~ should consent to no regional alliances, however informal and tacit they may be. As a nation, we have no right to take sides in imperial rivalries.

We should have done our share in the last twenty years to effect a strong world organization for peace. That was the program which America presented to the nations of the world following the World War - collective action for collective security. We failed to do it. We were unwilling to assume any responsibility or make any sacrifice for a world organization for peace. We even refused to enter a World Court which American statesmen had helped to project and American Presidents endorsed. Such joint action with all other nations of the world for peace would have involved us in far less risk than the new ideas with which some of our leaders

are toying today - joining up with one group of nations against another group of nations and dividing the world into two hostile camps.

The world being what it is today, and mad dictators being on the rampage, it is of course necessary for a nation like ours to be adequately protected against attack. Because of our fortunate geographical position, such adequate defense need not be excessive and need not involve us in colossal armament programs. No nation will likely make war upon us, our wealth being what it is, our resources, our raw material, our man power, our industrial machine and our staying power. We should forego all thought of adventuring in the far Pacific or again saving the world for democracy on the battlefields of Europe.

And we should never lose sight that the real solution of war and peace in the world is not armament or neutrality legislation or regional alliances, but a world organization such as was tried following the world war and destroyed because of lack of vision on the part of leaders of the major powers of Europe and because of the machinations of munition dealers and armament merchants. The experiment will have to be made again - perhaps after the next world war.