# We Must Not Lose Our Bearings!

*(On September 27, a press statement was issued from Washington by the officers of the National Council for Prevention of War, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Keep America Out of War Committee. This statement contained a number of ideas and viewpoints going beyond the six-point program forming the basis of the K.A.O.W.C. movement and in violent conflict with the attitude of some of its constituent organizations. Bertram D. Wolfe thereupon wrote to Clarence Senior, national secretary of the K.A.O.W.C., protesting against this procedure and calling attention to the false and dangerous character of many of the ideas contained in the press statement. We publish below both the press release and Bertram D. Wolfe's letter to Clarence Senior.*—Editor.)

### THE PRESS STATEMENT

FOLLOWING Hitler's citation of German willingness to abolish air fleets and bombing, to outlaw poison gas and reduce armies, peace forces today demanded that governments which have repeatedly asserted their willingness to join in disarmament moves, act now in this direction, with first emphasis on elimination of bombing from the air.

On the 16th of last June, the Prime Minister of Great Britain stated in the House of Commons that Great Britain would renounce the practise of bombing outlying territories, if "this practise was standing in the way of a general agreement to abolish bombing from the air." In San Francisco on last July 14th, President Roosevelt declared: "We stand ready to meet them (other nations) and encourage them in any efforts they may make toward a definite reduction in world armament."

An understanding now that a conference for general reduction in armaments, which must for success be combined with adjustment of pending economic and political questions, would immediately follow the settlement of the present European situation would go far toward making such a settlement possible. It would correct the failure, responsible for so much of the present situation, to live up to the pledges given at Versailles for general disarmament. It would reduce the difficulty created by the question of who is to control, under the terms of any settlement, the Skoda munition works in Czechoslovakia.

The initiation of such a move at this time would be in line with the welcome and admirable sanity of President Roosevelt's appeal for negotiation of the present conflict, for the exercise of reason not of force. Events are in the saddle in Europe. The American government and the American people must see to it that here, at least, intelligence continues to function.

The basic principle of democracy is reason as opposed to force. If democracy is to survive, war and the instruments of war must go. America's position in the world give it a special responsibility for the maintenance of democracy. Twenty years ago we tried to fulfill that responsibility by taking part in a foreign war. Today we know we must seek and find some other way. It is America's duty today to make every effort to preserve and bring about conditions in which democracy can survive. This means America must keep out of war. This means America must press for world disarmament.

### BERT WOLFE'S LETTER

SOME of the releases sent out by the K.A.O.W.C. have been excellent, and the constant activity of this character has served to keep its name before the public, which is all to the good. But, occasionally, there creeps into them a note which goes beyond the six points to which we all subscribe and expresses views which some of the component elements hold but others specifically reject. This is unfortunate, for by implication all the members of the governing committee and all the affiliated bodies are responsible for statements to which they may not subscribe. As a case in point I indicate the release dated September 27, 1938.

1. I think the release was unfortunate in pretending to take seriously Hitler's declaration of willingness to disarm, also the British and American declarations of the same type. This can only sow illusions about these governments and lessen the real pressure for disarmament. Rather should Hitler's statement have been utilized to generate some sane scepticism about these cheap words of all the leading statesmen about disarming the other fellow, and thus to generate firm pressure upon our own government and, by contagion, on the other governments involved.

Precisely because the Versailles pledge was a false pretense, and Roosevelt's and Chamberlain's and Hitler's remarks were also false pretenses, made to cover one's self with the mantle of peaceful desire at the very moment of increasing the military budget and preparing for war, Hitler's classic example of this trick should have been used to expose the whole series. A little hard-headedness, frankness and clarity wouldn't hurt among the advocates of peace. Such subtle manouvers neither serve to embarass governments—rather play into their hands—nor to arouse the mass of the people nor enlighten them. All governments proclaim themselves desirous of disarmament at the very moment when they are arming most energetically. All governments favor disarmament conferences to lessen the category of arms most advantageous to the other fellow. Such conferences in the past have yielded no real advantage to the opponents of war. Nor will they till these opponents make it harder, not easier, to get away with such speeches as Chamberlain's, Roosevelt's and, most classicaly, Hitler's—which we here pretend to take seriously.

#### Roosevelt's Role In The Crisis

2. The release endorses President Roosevelt's appeal on the Czechoslovakian matter. Was that appeal not a two-edged sword? Can we give implied endorsement to a statement which not merely contains an appeal for negotiations but, by implication, also endorses the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia provided it comes without war, and represents a huge step forward toward American involvement in the subsequent "guaranteeing" of the frontiers thus arrived at? Did not the heads of the British and French governments interpret it that way? That was John T. Flynn's interpretation. Arthur Krock (New York Times, October 4) heads his discussion of the same move: "America's implied approval," and writes of "the moral responsibility of the United States government for Munich" created by the note. He adds:

"This responsibility has been acknowledged by statesmen abroad (mark Mr. Chamberlain, for example, in the House yesterday).... By the same token, the note helped to assure Hitler that the United States government did not disapprove of the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, the cancellation of their treaty by the French, or the unilateral pact-smashing of the Chancellor himself. He must have been pleased to read that by waiting he would, in the President's opinion, be performing 'an outstanding historic service to humanity'."

Wilson was much more cautious in his moves in 1914-16 towards American involvement in European war than has been Roosevelt in the partially analogous years 1937-38 (since the Chicago speech). John T. Flynn sums it up nicely in the New Republic:

"What has changed is that the Administration has been acting in concert with Britain in the moves that canny bargainer has been making on the European checkerboard."

The release could at least have warned of that aspect of the President's note in place of giving naive, one-side, unqualified endorsement.

3. The release by implication endorses America's alleged crusading intentions in the last war—the same slogans with which it was made popular. I quote: "Twenty years ago, we tried to fulfill that responsibility (for the maintenance of democracy) by taking part in a foreign war." Did we? Even those who invented the slogan no longer pretend that America was "trying to fulfill that responsibility." Can we fight the present false slogans by pretending that the past subterfuges were seriously and honestly meant?

#### Disputed Questions

4. As you know there is a fundamental difference between the National Council for Prevention of War and my own organization on

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# Cooperation For War

From the October 17 issue of the United States News:

"National defense appears to make ready bed-fellows.

"Signs that business and government are cooperating to prepare the nation's industry for war-time demands increased last week.

"In continental Europe, it is a familiar spectacle for all political factions and national groups to drop their quarrels when the country faces a threat of war. This happened in France and Germany in 1914.

"The American edition of this emergency cooperation is now being written in a distinctly American way. Cautiously, officials in Washington and in the country's industrial centers are making a start at cooperation, tho the United States faces no immediate danger from abroad.

"First steps have been taken in three large industries—utilities, railroads and aviation—and lesser efforts are under way in scattered industries related to defense.

"The movement was spurred last week by Bernard M. Baruch, a trusted friend and adviser of President Roosevelt, and chairman of the war-time War Industries Board.

"Predictions are that expanded war preparations will bring still closer cooperation between government and industry."

**VOTE A. L. P. TICKET ROW "C"**

# ge in Ukraine

"justify" Lyubtshoko's suicide, the execution of Konor (1932) and Kociubinski (1937) and the arrest of Satonski and Porayko. The above-mentioned people had joined the party in 1919 or 1920 and fought in the civil war. All of them held important positions in the party and the Soviet state.

After the campaign against the Right and Left oppositionists, the drive was started against party members who were 100% Stalinites. A few weeks ago, Kossior, general secretary of the C.P.U. since its inception, was removed from office. At the annual convention of the C.P.U. in June of this year, Chrustsheff, Kossior's successor in office, made a speech which revealed the reason why the party was deprived of its best cadres. He said: "Our enemies wish to tear the bond which ties the Ukrainians to their brother nation. This explains why they are opposed to the movement for the spread of the Russian language thruout the whole Soviet Union. This they do at the time when the most advanced elements of all nationalities realize that they have to study Russian, the language of the Russian workers, the workers of Moscow and Petrograd, who raised the banner of revolt in October 1917. The Russian workers have shown the workers and peasants of the whole world how to destroy their enemies and to win freedom and liberty. The Bolsheviks studied German in order to be able to read Marx in the original. The teaching of Marx and Engels was further developed by Lenin and Stalin who wrote in Russian. The people of all countries must therefore study Russian so as to acquire a knowledge of Lenin's and Stalin's speeches in order to learn how to destroy their enemies."

This is how the Stalinites interpret Lenin who advocated the right of self-determination.

## COURT VOIDS HAGUE CIVIL RIGHTS BAN

*(Continued from Page 2)*

a "riot" on the first occasion.

Nevertheless, the general effect of the ruling will undoubtedly be to facilitate labor organization in Jersey City, which had previously been made well-nigh impossible under Mayor Hague's ban. Judge Clark's decision was therefore hailed in C.I.O. quarters. Mayor Hague, on the other hand, declared that the upholding of the ordinance requiring permits for public meetings and the "modified censorship" permitted by Judge Clark was a "victory" for him and would be used by him to continue his anti-C.I.O. drive.

Maybe you don't understand the

**FARM PROBLEM**

*But that has nothing to do with the Big Barn Dance on Saturday, November 5, at Rivera Hall, 131 West 33rd Street. Come and have fun. Virginia Reels! Square Dances! Songs! Games! Schnitzelband! Gayety unconfined! Graced also by the presence of Frieda Rivera. Tickets (at the door) are 49 cents (worth 50 cents). Auspices: Independent Labor Institute.*

# Let Us Keep Our Bearings

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the theory of "appeasement" of the hungry imperialist powers. I do not believe that colonies, peoples nor raw-material centers with their populations, can or should be handed about without consultation of those populations. Nor that there can be any planned distribution of such materials except on the basis of a non-capitalist world-planned economy. Mr. Libby and I have had this out several times in committee and agreed to disagree. He has as much right to his viewpoint, which I regard as mistaken. as I to mine. But releases for which we are all responsible should not appear to accept his as against mine, or vice-versa. Yet that is the meaning that will be read into the fuzzy wording of paragraph 3. Better not to say anything about "adjustment of pending economic and political questions" or else make it explicit and free from possibility of misunderstanding. No one release can handle everything. A separate release could make clear what we agree on. or Mr. Libby's organization could properly push its own program, as we ours, where we differ so fundamentally. without involving each other in mutual responsibilities on these disputed matters.

**VOTE A. L. P. TICKET**
**ROW "C"**