

World Events
INTERPRETED BY
WITT NEARING



Vol. IX, No. 1

Winter 1952

Letter 73

Breakdown of West Europe's Economy

Significance of the British Labor Defeat
Churchill a Receiver in Bankruptcy

France Swaps Horses Again

What Brought Eisenhower Home?

Why Andrei Vishinsky Laughed

For a Stronger United Nations

Published four times a year by the
WORLD EVENTS COMMITTEE
125 Fifth St. N.E., Washington 2, D. C.
After March 15, 1952: East Palatka, Fla.

\$1.00 a year

25 cents a copy

*"To put a worthwhile truth in circulation
is a good day's work."*

PUBLICATION OFFICE NOTES

○ If the winds are fair and the gods propitious, WE will bid farewell to its birthplace on March 10th and start on the 1,000-mile trek southward. We are eager to experience life in the land of sunshine and orange blossoms, where "every prospect pleases and only man is (sometimes) vile." We plan to drink deep of Ponce de Leon's fountain of perpetual (free-rifened) youth and do our best to live to see the New Day dawn in "the last citadel of capitalism"—and to hasten its coming.

○ We'll be glad to send you eight copies of the current issue of WE for \$1.00—with envelopes to fit if requested. On account of increased postal rates, however, we have to ask you to add 10 cents toward the postage—15 cents if you live west of the Mississippi. (Stamps accepted.)

○ WE readers have responded handsomely to our offer of SN books at reduced prices. We still have a good supply of all except *The Soviet Union as a World Power*, of which there are barely a dozen copies left. These are available only in our \$3.00 Combination Offer. We shall probably close this special sale March first.

○ What with the big job of packing, the long journey and then the installation in our new quarters, the WE office will be pretty well out of business during the month of March. You will therefore earn our gratitude if you will send in your renewals, gift subscriptions and literature orders by the middle of February.

○ The spring number of WE may be delayed two weeks beyond the usual mailing date, which would bring it out on May First—doubly appropriate because that will be WE's eighth birthday. (Wonder what the next 8 years will bring—World War III or socialism?)

○ If you change your address, you can save us expense and trouble by notifying us in advance. If the change is temporary, please indicate its duration.

○ If you have a copy of last winter's WE 69 which you are not planning to keep, we would be glad to have it to replenish our stock.

World Events

Analyzed and Interpreted by Scott Nearing

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Friends:

WEST EUROPEAN ECONOMY is showing fresh signs of breakdown. The center of dislocation is Britain. Indications of weakness also have appeared in France.

British elections have not altered the trend. Before the change from the Attlee cabinet to that of Churchill, the Labor Party governed by a margin of ten or a dozen votes. Since the change, the Conservative Party, backed by most of the Liberal members, governs by a slightly larger margin. The position of the Conservatives is insecure, however, since the Laborites polled a larger popular vote in the elections than did the Conservatives. Britain, like France and Italy, is administered by an unstable government.

British Labor Failed to Make Good

AFTER SIX YEARS in office, the Labor Party failed to find an answer to Britain's postwar economic problems. British Labor took office in 1945. Two years later (1947) a dollar famine threatened Britain and the entire sterling bloc. The famine was relieved by US gifts and loans. In 1949 there was a second crisis, temporarily relieved by a hasty devaluation of the pound sterling and followed by a panicky devaluation of other West Bloc currencies. Now, in 1951, British economy ran into a third crisis. Labor Party policy failed to rehabilitate British economy, which faces its third major crisis in four years.

Through its entire period in office, British Labor relied upon largess from Washington. Ernest Bevin, who was Foreign Minister when Secretary of State Marshall proposed his plan

for the restoration of West European capitalism (June 1948), said that he and his colleagues rushed to accept the plan with both hands. Some observers felt that this was a strange gesture for a socialist administrator to make toward a capitalist rival and competitor. But Mr. Bevin had both hope and faith. He died before the extent of his misjudgment was demonstrated by the course of events.

Guns Before Butter

MARSHALL PLAN AID did not restore British economy. The arms program, forced upon the Attlee government by State Department pressure under N.A.T.O. auspices, disorganized and weakened the economy and pushed it into the present crisis. The outcome was implicit in the rearmament program for which General Eisenhower is immediately responsible.

Britain's economy depends upon the importation of most of its raw materials and more than half of its food. This large volume of imports must be paid for by exports. For many years the deficit in exports was covered by receipts from ocean freight and passengers, by tourist spending, by interest on foreign investments. War losses cut heavily into these sources of income.

For four years Britain met the export deficit with gifts and loans from abroad. Heroic efforts were made by the Laborites to reduce home consumption, raise production and thus increase the annual supply of goods available for export. Two years ago they were able to report considerable success. Then the Marshall Plan was replaced by the rearmament program. That decision marked a major change in Western policy, for which President Truman, Secretary Acheson and the leaders in Congress are directly responsible.

British Labor proposed a modest increase in arms expenditure. The State Department demanded more. British Labor raised the ante to the present \$13-billion program. The effect on British economy was felt immediately. Imported raw materials until then used to produce exports were diverted to the production of non-exportable arms. Exports declined. The foreign-trade deficit grew in August and September 1951,

while the October deficit alone equalled that for the two preceding months. Dollar and gold surpluses were disappearing at so alarming a rate that the Churchill government used the word "bankruptcy" to describe Britain's economic position in November of this year.

Significance of the Labor Defeat

BRITISH LABOR'S effort to apply the principles of legalism and gradualism in one of the major areas of monopoly-capitalist decay and disintegration marks a turning point in the history of this epoch. Legalism and gradualism occupied the central position in socialist thought until the opening years of the present century. Then a split began, with the legalists and gradualists taking one road and the Bolsheviks another. Legalism and gradualism opened the way to fascism in Poland, Austria and Germany. Recent events in Britain support the assumption that legalism and gradualism do not replace monopoly capitalism with socialism. Rather, they prolong the life of capitalism by giving it an opportunity to make the transition to fascism.

Mr. Churchill's Headaches

BRTAIN'S 1951 economic crisis can not be laid at the door of the Attlee government. Only the immediate causes, which I outlined above, are associated with the Labor administration. The real causes lie deeper.

British natural resources are seriously depleted. Tin and other minerals were mined for the Phoenicians long before Britain was occupied by Roman armies. More recently Britain's output of machine tools, weapons, capital goods and metal consumer goods has exhausted the metal ores and used up the higher-grade coal deposits. Britain has never produced petroleum, rubber or cotton. The increased use of these and similar items has added to the import burden.

Add to resource-depletion, heavy war damage and war losses suffered by the British since 1914, the revolt of Asian and African peoples against colonialism, and considerable increases in British population, and you have a situation which can be met by nothing less than a thorough overhauling of the entire economy in its domestic as well as international aspects.

Churchill a Receiver in Bankruptcy

WHEN MR. CHURCHILL took office during the recent war, he said he had not become the King's First Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire. Today he and his cabinet colleagues are receivers in bankruptcy for an insolvent domestic economy and the fragments of a crumbling world empire. The Conservative cabinet must replace an outmoded, unwieldy, partially shattered economic and social structure, at the very least, by a transition economy and polity which will prove workable under present exacting conditions.

At the end of the war there was much talk of a "third force" in European politics. More recently Prime Minister Nehru has attempted to build such a force in Asia. Much of Ernest Bevin's diplomacy was aimed at establishing and maintaining Britain's position of leadership in such a combination. Cold War developments have dimmed that hope to the vanishing point.

Equally unrealistic seems the Aneurin Bevan program which envisages a British welfare state, isolated or neutralized against the power-politics struggle. However alluring such a prospect may be in theory, in practice the geographical position occupied by the British Isles makes it improbable.

Churchill's Dilemma

HARD REALITIES face the Churchill government with two lines of policy. No third possibility is in sight. Churchill must choose between the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc—between Washington and Moscow.

Washington is moving with terrifying speed toward bankruptcy and war. If London continues to accept the leadership of Washington—as it did, with minor lapses, during the entire six years of Labor Party government—the bankruptcy of Britain will precede that of the United States. There are several reasons why US policy-makers would wish it so.

1. Britain is the chief economic competitor of the United States, producing the same manufactures, seeking the same markets for goods and capital, attempting to monopolize

the same sources of raw materials. US business interests therefore would prefer a Britain economically weak.

2. Among the European powers, Britain has been most active in bucking and blocking recent US policy moves—for the intergration of European economy, against recognition of the People's Republic of China or its admission into the United Nations, for the admission of Spain into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. A weakened Britain would be incapable of such obstruction.

3. Britain still holds title to Gibraltar, Suez, Singapore, and Hong Kong. A weakened Britain will more readily transfer such titles to the United States.

If Britain continues to accept US leadership, Britain will play the role in the Atlantic which General MacArthur assigned to Formosa in the Pacific—an unsinkable aircraft carrier. Britain will be occupied permanently, as it is now occupied temporarily, by US armed forces. If and when war comes, Britain will be one of the chief strategic objectives and will be bombed and rubbleized for the same reasons that strategic areas between the fighting lines in Korea have been rubbleized during the past eighteen months.

Churchill knows these facts at least as well as any informed member of the present generation—probably better and certainly in greater detail. As a staunch supporter of Britain and British interests, he regards them with apprehension, if not with alarm.

Another possible course presents itself to Mr. Churchill. He might line up with the East Bloc. Such a move would probably carry with it France and Italy and thus cut off the United States from access to West Europe. There are several arguments in favor of such a course—

1. Most important among immediate considerations, such a move would postpone a general war for a considerable period—perhaps indefinitely—because it would consolidate the Eurasian Heartland, with more than three-quarters of mankind, and leave the United States and the remainder of the Western Hemisphere in a remote, insular and isolated position.

2. It would give political and social institutional expression to a long-standing economic actuality—East-West reciprocal trade. Recently Washington has tried to curtail East-West trade, on the plea that it means dealing with the communist enemy. Anthony Eden, in a recent trip to the United States, was at great pains to point out that Britain would not *resume* trade with the East. He said that Britain would *continue* trade with the East.

East-West trade has been going on for centuries. Writing in the *United Nations World* for November 1951, Sir Hartley Shawcross, President of the British Board of Trade in the Attlee government, stated that "trade between Eastern and Western Europe has always been a regular and important feature of Europe's economy. It has made available to the West the great grain resources of Eastern Europe, timber from the forests of Russia, coal from Polish mines, food from the farms of Hungary, Poland and the Baltic States. In return, Eastern Europe has received raw materials which it lacked and manufactures from the industries of Western Europe." Shawcross estimated the value of exports from West to East (in dollars at current prices) at \$827 million in 1938 and \$930 million in 1948. Exports from East to West he put at \$1,152 million in 1938 and \$1,275 million in 1948.

East Europe and Asia have provided one of Britain's most profitable markets for goods and capital. It was this fact which led London, against Washington opposition, to recognize the Peking government almost as soon as it was formed in 1949. British businessmen are not concerned to argue with the Chinese, they need to trade with them.

3. Mr. Eden emphasized another point. Western markets are partially closed to British businessmen by tariffs and other restrictions. East Europe and Asia are prepared to take British manufactures and to send back in return the food and raw materials without which British economy must perish. British-American economic relations are largely competitive. East-West economic relations are complementary.

4. Geographically, Britain is a part of the Eurasian Heartland. Commonwealth and imperial affiliations complicate

the situation somewhat but, in the last analysis, economic necessity and geographic proximity will unite Britain with Eurasia.

January Visits

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND Mr. Churchill arranged to call on President Truman in early January. Diplomatic formality required him to make this call first. Besides, in the course of the visit, he might pick up some loose change urgently needed to tide Britain over the current crisis.

Even should parleys in Washington result in a new hand-out, they cannot afford Britain anything more than temporary relief. In the East—and only in the East—can Mr. Churchill hope to find a more permanent answer to the recurrent crises which are undermining and threatening to engulf Britain's crumbling economy.

Significantly, there are two political groups in Britain which are pulling London away from Washington and pushing her toward Moscow. The first group is a left segment of the Labor Party, said to number at least a hundred members of Parliament. These leftists have been arguing, on Marxist grounds, that the interests of Britain's laboring masses would be better served by lining up with the East. The group began advancing this argument long before the labor government took office in 1945.

The second group is made up of Young Conservatives, as they are called, who have been arguing that, since the magnitude of US productivity has overshadowed the entire world market, the future of British business interests lies in the East, rather than in the West. This group has been making itself heard since the developments of the early 1940's made it evident that, at the end of the war, Britain would occupy a subordinate position in a two-power world. From all reports this younger element seems to have considerable influence in the Conservative Party. If Mr. Churchill makes a pilgrimage to Moscow, he will carry with him the good wishes of both these groups.

A fourth fact should be kept in mind. Within the past decade Mr. Churchill has played a large part in winning a

war which threatened Britain's continuance as an independent nation, bankrupted Britain's economy and cost her much of her empire. None knows better than he that the British are in no position to undergo a similar ordeal in the immediate future. In the light of this experience, he has every reason to avoid a repetition of 1939-1945—during the recent election campaign he said as much. He also indicated that he would like to crown his political career by bringing peace to Britain and the world. An understanding with Moscow would go far toward realizing this ambition.

Washington leaders have been examining the position which I have just outlined with a concern that is verging on alarm. They will not be reassured when they recall the words attributed to a frank, competent British diplomat and statesman, Lord Palmerston—"Britain has no permanent friends, only permanent interests."

France Swaps Horses

THERE IS an old saying, "Never swap horses while crossing a stream." For better or worse, France has changed governments in the midst of the present West European crisis. There is nothing new in this experience. Through the past two decades French governments have come and gone more often than the leaves on the trees of the Bois de Boulogne.

Hoffman-Eisenhower-Acheson efforts to unify and arm West Europe have been hampered by the perennial instability of the Paris government. The October shift in administrations was followed in November by a dangerous increase in the export deficit. The Plevin government countered this trend with a retrenchment program which included a heavy reduction in imports and a sharp increase in taxes.

Crisis in France was linked to crisis in Britain; some of the same causes were operating. The retrenchment and austerity remedies followed the same pattern.

Let us note in passing that retrenchment and austerity cannot provide more than temporary relief from the problems of a mass-production economy which has advanced to a point of excessive profit accumulation. The only real hope lies in a reapportionment of wealth and income that will increase social

well-being and add to social stability by raising living standards among the world's underprivileged.

Eisenhower Flies to Washington

THERE ARE good reasons to believe that General Eisenhower's surprise flight to Washington early in November was occasioned by the economic crisis in West Europe, a crisis intensified, but not caused, by Washington's insistence on a stepped-up rearmament program. Stockpiling and indiscriminate buying of raw materials, especially by the United States, pushed up price levels in 1950 and 1951, adding considerably to the outlay which European governments were forced to make in order to secure the supplies necessary for industry and war. Arms production cut down the supply of exportable goods and led to further depletion of dollar reserves. Again, overhaste and lack of foresight had spilled the broth.

While we are on this subject, I should like to point out what I have stated again and again in *World Events*, that the economy of West Europe cannot be restored (put back to where it was). Here is another bit of evidence to support that contention. After years of heavy outlays under the Marshall Plan, the British and French economies are in crisis and that of Italy is shaky. This is not the result of the Marshall Plan, but in spite of it. If hand-outs under the Plan had been doubled, the results would have been about the same. West Europe is suffering from three maladies—(1) the over-shadowing surpluses in the US economy, (2) the disruption and depletion of European economy resulting from two destructive and exhaustive wars and (3) the disintegration of capitalist imperialism from within, hastened by the revolt of the colonial peoples. Marshall Plan aid of whatever magnitude can no more meet these problems than a cup of coffee and two doughnuts can meet the economic problems of a hungry, jobless man, low in spirits and crowded by debt.

Europe's 1951 economic crisis has been serious for Eisenhower's European Army, which was to have been ready for action by January 1, 1952. There have been gains, but most of the program remains on paper.

Once again we are reminded of the difference between promise and performance. We are likewise reminded of the immense difference in potential between Europe and North America. Eisenhower comes from a country which is literally bursting at the seams with surpluses of goods and investment capital. West European economy has been battered and shattered by depression, inflation, repudiation, war and revolution. Even if the oligarchs who make policy for West Europe were willing to follow the Acheson-Eisenhower line—and some of them are far from willing to do so—and even if the US treasury were willing to foot all the bills, there would still remain the problem of mass assent and mass participation in any major move such as that involved in a general war effort.

If a West European army were finally mobilized and equipped, the harrasing question would remain, Will the rank and file fight or will they carry arms and baggage across the battle lines and join "the enemy"? Remember that we are discussing Europe and that Europe is involved in a civil war. Under these conditions does the real threat to West Europeans come from other Europeans or does it come from transoceanic intruders who are urging Europeans to destroy European property and snuff out European life. It is only a few years since this same strategy was being followed in Asia during another long-continued civil war. Any of Eisenhower's aides who is willing to pursue this inquiry might turn to Chiang Kai-shek for information based on bitter personal experience. Briefly, in that case the arms and equipment were carried across the battle lines in China and are now being used in an effort to drive out the transoceanic intruders.

Vishinsky Laughed .

TRUMAN, ACHESON and Vishinsky engaged in a momentous debate on November 7-8, 1951. After several days of preparatory propaganda, President Truman over the air, and Secretary Acheson in the United Nations offered a disarmament program which was to begin with a UN survey of military installations and to be followed up by the adoption of a disarmament schedule. In their speeches, both Truman and Acheson belabored the Soviet Union.

In his reply, Foreign Minister Vishinsky treated the proposal as a joke, saying that he laughed when he heard it and had laughed ever since, that he could not sleep for laughing. His answer sounded irrelevant and he supplemented it with a disarmament proposal of his own. Actually, Vishinsky's mirth was justified, although it might have been better tactics to laugh behind his hand and keep a sober face in public.

The key to Vishinsky's merriment—and to much of the Cold War—may be found in the present role of the United Nations. Since June 1950 the UN has abandoned its role as a neutral preserver of world peace and has become a prisoner of the US State Department, accepting its lead and carrying out its policies. Perhaps, in view of the preponderance of wealth and military strength under US control, no other outcome was likely—or possible. Be that as it may, since the outbreak of the Korean War, the UN has played an ignominious role.

When civil war broke out in Korea in June 1950, UN officials did not make even a pretense of looking into the situation, hearing both sides and reaching a judicial conclusion. It had followed this procedure in the Israel-Arab and Indonesian-Dutch controversies, holding hearings, reaching decisions and then trying to have them accepted by both sides. In the Korea dispute, however, the UN did not hear even one side but, when President Truman jumped into the war on June 26, UN followed suit the next day.

Since June 1950 the UN has been a partisan in one phase of the cold war, lending its name and providing its flag as a cover for a military adventure in which the United States was the first outside participant and remains the chief participant to this day. Since March 1947 the declared purpose of the Truman administration has been to make war on communism, with the Soviet Union named as the nation primarily responsible for leadership in the communist areas. Generals MacArthur and Ridgway, officers of the US Army and of the United Nations, publicly stated that their object in Korea was to kill communists. In effect, the United Nations, while having members on both sides of the Cold War, has taken

up a position with the enemies of the communist world, as though everything pro-communist were wrong and everything anti-communist right.

With the United Nations supporting the anti-communist bloc, it is easy to understand why Vishinsky laughed at the Truman-Acheson proposal to have the UN inspect armaments. The Soviet Union and the communist areas of Europe and Asia are encircled by a string of US-occupied military bases from which destructive bombing raids might be directed against almost every important industrial center behind the Iron Curtain. UN inspection would reveal to the UN-US military authorities exactly where these industrial centers were located and provide full information as to their relative importance. Thus inspection of the Soviet Union and its allies and associates would place the communist areas at the mercy of the US armed forces.

On the other hand, inspection would bring no such military advantage to the Soviet Union, since the Soviet Union does not have a string of bases adjacent to the continental territory of the United States.

Furthermore, there is no guarantee that the arms installations of the USA and its allies and associates would ever be inspected. With the United Nations voting five or six to one in favor of every crucial measure championed by the United States and against every such measure proposed by the Soviet Union, it seems highly probable that, in the inspection controversy, the Soviet side would not get even so much as a hearing, let alone a favorable vote. After the voting-bee conference which accepted the Dulles-Japanese treaty on September 8, 1951, anything might happen. Had the Soviet delegation to the UN accepted the Truman-Acheson proposals for inspection, they would have delivered the USSR into the hands of its bitterest enemies.

The deadlock in the United Nations, like that in Korea and Indo-China, means a continuation of the Cold War and local shooting wars. Cold wars and local wars, if continued long enough, will result in general shooting wars. Except for a handful of militarists, no one wants war. At the same time,

no one seems able to break the circle of necessity of which war is one segment.

Escape from war, if escape proves at all possible, seems to lie in a conference of the Big Five or in a reversal of the role now being played by the United Nations in Korea and the adoption and acceptance of a stronger UN policy.

The Big Five (Big Four)

REQUESTS AND DEMANDS for a meeting of the Big Five are heard in many quarters. President Auriol of France, welcoming the UN delegates to the present session in Paris, made an urgent plea for an end of the Cold War and suggested that the chiefs of state come to Paris as the guests of France while the UN meetings were in progress. At the same time, the World Peace Congress concluded a week of sessions in Vienna, in the course of which it adopted a number of resolutions, one of which called for a Big Five meeting. The World Peace Congress has been collecting signatures to a petition urging such a conference. In China alone, 144 million people out of a population of 500 million signed the petition. There is no lack of popular demand that the Big Powers get together.

Present US policy makes such a meeting unlikely. For the past eighteen months Washington has succeeded in carrying out a one-nation policy of world domination, of which the most recent example was the Japanese Treaty episode. If Washington can get away with this sort of thing single-handed, there is no good reason why it should encourage the holding of a conference which might put a crimp in such unilateral procedure.

There are several specific reasons why a Big Five conference would be distasteful to Washington, the first and most significant of which is that "Big Five" includes the Chinese People's Republic. The Big Three (Britain, France and the USA) have frequent meetings—over the settlement with Germany, the admission of Greece, Turkey and Spain into the N.A.T.O., the N.A.T.O., the build-up of Eisenhower's European Army, the integration of West European economy. Conceivably, the Big Four might get together, although President Truman seems

to be opposed to such a move because it would give the Soviet Union a chance to discuss a Korean settlement. Washington's major strategy calls for US control of the Pacific area, including the island chain from the Aleutians to the Marianas, of which Formosa is one of the essential links. This entire insular structure, which is a defense line for Washington's "Peaceful Ocean," provides bomber bases which threaten the demolition of every important harbor on the Asian mainland from Vladivostok to Singapore.

Neither China nor the Soviet Union can accept this US Pacific policy because both live under daily threat of atomization by US bombers. As long as the "island chain" remains under Washington's control and is occupied by US armed forces, China and the Soviet Union cannot call their lives their own. Either the "island chain"—which, geographically, is Asian—must be a part of Asia's defense or it must be demilitarized and the entire Pacific area placed under international supervision.

The same holds true, of course, for the Atlantic, the Mediterranean or any other body of water lying between centers of production and population. With US fleets patrolling the Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Pacific and with US bomber bases pockmarking Europe, North Africa, the Near East and the Pacific "island chain," there can be no reasonable hope for a peaceful world unless the 94 per cent of the human race living outside the USA are prepared to begin each day by facing toward Washington, bowing their heads and repeating in unison, "Thy will be done!"

Since the non-USA members of the human race—and in particular the 800 million inhabitants of the Soviet areas—have not yet been reduced to that level of servility, there seems little likelihood of a Big Four conference getting anywhere, let alone a conference of the Big Five. "Big Five" includes China and at the opening of the UN sessions in Paris, Secretary Acheson made it clear, that Washington will not recognize or deal officially with the Mao regime.

A Stronger United Nations

ONE AVENUE for ending the Cold War—and only one—remains open—an increase in the activity of the United Nations.

The American Friends Service Committee's analysis of the present world situation, *Steps to Peace* (available for 25 cents from the AFSC central office, 20 South 12th Street, Philadelphia 7, or from any of its regional offices) lists the strengthening of the UN as Step Number 2, Step Number 1 being the continuous and persistent use of negotiation. In an armed world, writes the Committee, the most important function of the United Nations may be to act as "an agency through which peaceful settlement can be continuously sought." The report suggests four immediate steps for strengthening the role of the UN as peacemaker:

- 1—"Move immediately to admit all applicants who express willingness to accept the responsibilities of membership."
- 2—"Avoid exerting pressure on other countries to accept the position being taken by the United States Government."
- 3—"Renew efforts to settle the Korean conflict by negotiation."
- 4—"Emphasize and develop the Security Council and General Assembly in their peace-making functions."

Such steps to strengthen the United Nations should be taken "during this period previous to general disarmament agreements." Beyond these immediate steps, the UN could be strengthened by "developing patterns for the international control of arms, instituting measures of implementation in the field of human rights and expanding international programs of economic development." "Disarmament cannot be undertaken without concurrent development of the United Nations into an organization having the confidence of all its members and the ability to carry out its inspection function. On the other hand there can be no effective development of the United Nations as long as individual nation states engage in a competitive arms race that means international anarchy. Moreover, neither the elimination of arms nor the building of a

strong world organization is likely so long as the basic causes of strife are allowed to continue unchecked. This means that a world-wide attack on poverty, disease, hunger and outworn social and economic patterns must be launched simultaneously with renewed efforts toward disarmament and the establishment of world law."

The Service Committee proposals involve immediate steps which might be taken at existing culture levels. They do not enter the area of long-term strategy.

The United Nations came into existence seven years ago. During that period it has encountered tougher going than did the League of Nations during the first seven years of its existence. The League had a dozen years to prepare for the series of episodes that opened with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and reached its climax in the Spanish, Chinese and European wars launched between 1936 and 1939.

The United Nations has had to function in a two-power world. It has had to deal with a continuous stream of wars and revolutions in Europe and Asia. In the past two years it has flown in the face of reason and justice by refusing admission to the Chinese People's Republic. In the Korea conflict it did not even attempt to investigate but allowed itself to be pushed into a partisan position. During the past few months it has failed to bring peace in Iran or to do justice to Egypt. In all of these cases, big powers were involved; in all of them the United Nations has played the role of a puppet rather than that of a world authority.

At some point along the road which it is now following, the UN will crumble, as the League of Nations crumbled in the late 1930's. There seems to be no escape from this fate unless the small nations, who hold nine-tenths of the voting power in the UN, should stage a move under Mexican, Indian or Arab leadership and demand that the Big Powers abandon the arms race, settle the Cold War, come together under the auspices of the United Nations and get down to the practical business of making the world reasonably safe for justice, decency and orderly procedures. The small nations do not have the power to enforce such demands, but they would have behind them

an overwhelming preponderance of world opinion and they do control the voting strength in the United Nations.

Beginnings in this direction were made early in December when, as the result of a UN Political Committee resolution, representatives of the Big Four began secret conversations aimed at finding a formula that would end the arms race. The Political Committee resolution called for agreement within ten days. Dr. Padilla Nervo, Mexican president of the UN assembly, presided over the discussions.

EGYPT'S DEMAND that British armed forces leave the country and Britain's announced determination to continue its military control over the Suez Canal area, in accordance with the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, raise some important questions in international relations. 1936 is a long time ago. Must not the changes in world relations that have occurred since that remote date be taken into consideration in 1952? If Asians have thrown out Western imperialists since 1936, is there any reason why Africans should permit their presence? Shall a stronger Egypt tolerate aggression by a weaker Britain, even if London is backed by Washington?

There is another question—Can the armed forces of one nation occupy territory beyond its frontiers without friction and eventual conflict? Armies of occupation have never been popular. Usually, they are feared and hated because of potential or actual predations on property and persons in the occupied country.

Suez is a case in point. The Egyptian eviction order led Britain to increase the number and equipment of her occupation forces in and near Suez. Rioting and armed clashes followed. An Associated Press despatch from Cairo, published November 7, 1951, reported that British troops had raided a village near Ismailia in the disputed Canal Zone, searching for arms in the possession of Egyptian civilians. Another village, Abu Chamous, was raided because the British believed that it harbored terrorist groups. The dispatch continues: "Each house was painstakingly gone over. Mine detectors were used. Men were removed from their homes and placed

inside barbed wire enclosures for interrogation and screening later.”

Nothing was said about search warrants. Armed forces usually overlook such niceties. But let us suppose that the British soldiers had warrants. Imagine the terror and anger among Egyptians—or any other country people—whose home village is surrounded, men-folk hustled behind barbed wire and held, without any charge or evidence of personal guilt, while foreign soldiers tramp through their homes. I do not know Egyptian idiom, but I presume they have a phrase which accurately translates the saying, “An Englishman’s house is his castle.”

After a number of armed clashes in which scores were killed and wounded, the British announced, on December 7, that necessity compelled them to build a military highway linking a water-filtering plant with Suez City. Construction of the road would entail “demolition of several Egyptian mud-hut villages.”

Even if soldiers who searched homes and demolished villages conformed to every legal requirement, respected every right and treated the villagers with the utmost British politeness and deference, such an invasion outrages and bites deep. British troops may stay on Egyptian soil through the remaining days of 1952 and far into 1953, but sooner or later the armed raids on Egyptian villages in the autumn of 1951 will bear their fruit of frenzied nationalism and mass determination to win and preserve independence by driving the invaders into the sea.

Since large-scale shooting stopped in 1945, most of the independence struggles have been staged in south and south-east Asia. Recently they have upset foreign interests (especially oil) in Western Asia. Egypt is in Africa—but there have been many predictions that Africa may be next. Thus far the conflict is localized in Egypt and the provocation is minor, but one false step—one blunder such as the order which General Dyer gave to machine-gun the defenseless crowd at Amritsar—and Africa, like Asia, may be aflame.

THE YORK, PA., *Gazette and Daily* carried two stories in its December 6, 1951 issue. On the front page was an Associated Press story from New York City that the State Department had refused twice to issue a visa to Dr. Ernst B. Chain, Nobel prize-winner and co-discoverer of penicillin. Dr. Chain, a native of Germany and now a British subject, was asked by the United Nations World Health Organization and the American Committee for the Weizmann Institute to go to the United States to do a piece of research and to help in a drive to raise funds for the Institute. The State Department refused the visa “for security reasons.”

Another story, on page 19 of the *Gazette and Daily*, written from London, described the visit of a group of well-known Soviet citizens during “British-Soviet Friendship Month.” One member of the group, Mrs. T. Murashkina, Deputy Mayor of Stalingrad, went to Coventry, which, like Stalingrad, was wrecked during the recent war. Another member of the group, the author Boris Polevoy, toured mining villages in South Wales, talking to the villagers and answering their many questions. Other members of the Soviet delegation engaged in similar friendly acts.

If Britain, with her shattered empire and her near-bankrupt economy, can bear up under the impact of a visit by a dozen Soviet citizens, would the presence in the USA of one British subject disrupt the life of “the greatest and most powerful”? If it is too much to ask the State Department to maintain a sense of proportion under McCarthy-McCarran probing, it might at least come clean and admit that it is ashamed of itself.

ANNA LOUISE STRONG is issuing a monthly news letter entitled *Today*. Number 8 contained an unusually competent discussion supporting the thesis that “the evil fantasy of World War III is fading.” Number 9, a “China Special,” gives the best brief analysis I have seen of the course of recent events in New China. The theme of Number 9 is: “China, in this decade, is the pivot on which the world turns . . . If China’s new economic set-up prospers, the rest of Asia follows, swinging mankind’s majority into the socialist bloc. In the struggle

of our time between capitalism and socialism, China's success becomes decisive for the world."

This statement appears at the bottom of each issue of *Today*: "*Today* is a personal letter on how things look to me. It appears about once a month. If you want it, send your name. If you want to pay your way, send \$1 to cover most of a year. If you want to help, send more. We send *Today* to any who ask, whether they can pay or not." The address is Anna Louise Strong, Box 161, Montrose, California.

Anna Louise began her brilliant writing in the *Seattle Union-Record* about 40 years ago. Since then she has spent time and effort in every important revolutionary situation, including Russia and China. I rate her as the best informed left-wing journalist now writing in the USA. If you are looking for information and interpretation on the course of world events, *Today* is a "must."

SENATOR TAFT ends his new book, *A Foreign Policy for Americans*, on this high note: "Communism may be defeated by an affirmative philosophy of individual liberty and by an even more sincere belief in liberty than the communists have in communism. In the United States we see the product of liberty to be the greatest and most powerful nation the world has ever seen, with the happiest people."

I am so accustomed to hearing the politicians talk about "the greatest and most powerful" that I do not mind it any more, although I think "richest and best armed" would be nearer the truth. Such comments as Taft's cannot be answered statistically. However, they can be balanced against Kipling's "For frantic boast and foolish word, Thy mercy on thy people, Lord!"

When it comes to "the happiest people," however, I must object. If the Senator had written "tensest," "most hectic," "most harried," "most worried," I would agree. I would even agree if he had used such words as "distraught" and "terrified." But happy? No, that word does not describe the 1952 American scene. I have mingled with many peoples in many places. Occasionally I have enjoyed the company of

happy peoples. However, that was not in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland or Detroit. Certainly it was not in New York, Chicago or Los Angeles. American life has produced many things, from automobiles and television sets to easy money, alcoholism and 480,000 annual deaths from diseases of the circulatory system, but it has brought neither happiness nor blessedness, Messrs. Taft and Truman to the contrary notwithstanding.

SECRETARY ACHESON sent the following directive to Ambassador Jessup on July 18, 1949: "You will please take as your assumption that it is a fundamental decision of American policy that the United States does not intend to permit further extension of communist domination on the continent of Asia or in the Southeast Asia area" (*N. Y. Times*, 10/5/51, p. 1).

Under this pronouncement, which applies the Truman Doctrine to Asia, Washington is proposing to tell Asians what form of government the USA will "permit" on that continent. If Washington, in pursuit of this policy, attempts to Koreanize Asia, any adult with his head fastened on straight and a knowledge of events since June 1950 can guess the outcome.

SEVERAL *World Events* letters have carried the statement that the strategy followed by Washington is designed, not to defend the West, but to contain or encircle the East. Anyone who wishes to check up on this statement should get a *Great Power Hemisphere Map* showing the location of the military bases controlled respectively by the United States and the Soviet Union. (Denoyer-Geppert Co., 5235 Ravenswood Avenue, Chicago 40, Ill. An 8½-by-11-inch notebook map costs 25 cents. A 44-by-64-inch wall map costs \$2.)

Jamaica, Vermont
December 27, 1951

Scott Nearing.

Report on a Cross-Country Lecture Tour

SPACE DOES NOT PERMIT of an extended report, but I should like to make a few comments on the economic and social pulse of the U.S.A. as I was able to observe it during a sixty day speaking trip that took me across Canada, down the West Coast and back East through the central part of the country. The trip began late in October and ended just before Christmas. The chief theme of my talks was the possibility of making peace.

1. There is more expressed interest this year in the kind of thing we have been saying and reading in *WE* than at any time in the past decade,—notably more than in 1949 and 1950. Attendance at meetings was better. Questions and discussions were more vigorous and more prolonged. Faith in the old social order was less. Interest in an alternative social order was greater.

2. Lest you interpret this note to mean that there is a mass crusade to set up a new order in North America, let me hasten to add that the day before I spoke in Seattle, General MacArthur toured the city, and spoke at the University of Washington. The Seattle papers estimated that 250,000 persons saw the General and that a great many more listened to his speech over the radio. I spoke five times on successive days at 4033 University Way, opposite the University of Washington campus. Attendance ran from 50 to 150 and averaged around 75. I began talking in Berkeley two days after 90,000 people jammed the Stanford Stadium to see the University of California football team play Stanford. At the first meeting in Berkeley, held under Fellowship of Reconciliation auspices, we had 50 people. At the second meeting, held under Arts, Sciences and Professions auspices, we had about 100.

For every person who attended a meeting at which I spoke in the average town or city, I suppose 200 to 400 attended a movie on that same evening. The overwhelming majority of people in the U.S.A. go to sports, movies, shows. Buffalo is a fair example. I spoke there twelve times in five days. I

estimate that around one out of each 8,000 of the population attended one or more of these meetings.

3. I might put the matter differently. The terrible war-destruction during 1939-45 and the frightful devastation in Korea in 1950-51 have not changed the attitude of any considerable group in the United States. There is no mass pacifist movement. There is little resistance to the peacetime draft. Most people take war as a matter of course. They would prefer peace but, if war comes, they will fall in line so long as everyone else is doing it.

4. People who came out to meetings were discouraged by the fewness of their numbers. Again and again the question was raised, "What can we do, when there are so few of us?" My answer was, "If you feel that you (we) are on the right track, go ahead, regardless of numbers or consequences."

5. All across the country there is a noticeable stiffening to meet the attack of reaction. Two years ago people were still frightened by the inquisitions, the smearing, the arrests and jailings. Today they look upon these incidents as they would on any occupational hazard. Most of these people are adults, "old timers." A few are of high-school and college age. But one and all, they are ready for whatever comes. From what I have heard about the growth of The Resistance in Nazi-occupied France and Holland, the movement here has many of the same characteristics. The provocation is less open, so the movement grows more slowly. There is on question, however, but that it is resistance. No iron-heel tactics will stamp it out or prevent its growth.

6. In many communities across the United States little knots of determined people gather periodically. In some places it is a discussion group, in others a social circle, in still others a literary club. Many of these people read *World Events*. Methods of protest differ, but always the purpose is the same—to get together the people who understand, to pass around information, exchange ideas, make new contacts, build organization. Everywhere they ask, "How can we find out what is going on?" and "What can we do about it?"

7. US high schools are wide open to the military, the veterans' organizations, the chambers of commerce and the service clubs, but they are sealed hermetically against liberalism, progressivism and radicalism. I would expect to break into Fort Knox and get away with a wheelbarrow-load of their yellow dirt sooner than to get into a high school and say the things that are written in this letter.

Colleges are a bit more open. Generally, however, educational institutions are in fear of losing their incomes, teachers fear job-loss and students fear smearing and worse if they express unacceptable ideas.

Press and radio are even more subservient to Big Business than the schools. Here and there a minister speaks out against fear, hatred, prejudice and violence and in favor of faith, hope, love, tolerance, negotiation and cooperation. Almost always he is dubbed "communist."

Big Business still sits in the saddle, supported by the Big Military, Big Politicos and Big Public Relations Tycoons. These oligarchs decide policy, profiteer and plunder, while their spokesmen distort, misrepresent, red-bait and smear.

But the Big Boys suffer from three fatal maladies—(1) they have no positive policy, (2) they are afraid of communism, which they know has a positive policy, (3) in their hearts they know that their end is near at hand. Also they know that The Resistance is growing and hardening and, like all tyrants threatened by increasing popular resistance, they do the things best calculated to increase that resistance—use state power to persecute and suppress their opponents as advocates of "force and violence," while the oligarchs themselves expand military spending and clamor for war.

S.N.

*Scott Nearing assumes sole responsibility for writing
"World Events" but takes no part in its
publication or distribution.*