
ONE YEAR SINCE PEARL HARBOR *

BY EARL BROWDER

WE ARE approaching the anniversary of Pearl Harbor. Our country has been fully in the war for almost a year. At last we have taken the initiative with the blow in Africa. It is a convenient time for stock-taking, for adding up our accounts, to see where we stand.

In the Pacific, after many catastrophes, we have established a line of defense which holds over months, and have even given a sample of magnificent counter-offensive action in the Solomons. The total military score for the year, however, remains a staggering loss. We have but a relative handful of land forces in contact with the enemy, and naval action remains essentially in the phase of defense and protection of communication routes.

On the main front, Western Europe, we have as yet engaged the enemy only in the air, and in naval safeguarding of the sea routes. We have now secured French Africa from the Axis. In the course of the first year of war, however, we have not yet been able to establish that Western European front which is the key to the whole war, the obviously

essential measure for victory. The great significance of our move into Africa is that it obviously prepares the Second Front—perhaps very soon.

Our first year of active war, in short, has been a year of improvised defense, and of *preparations for war*. Now we move toward offensive war.

One great achievement alone stands out in this first year, a political and diplomatic achievement which laid a firm foundation for victory—the cementing of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition and the formation on that basis of the United Nations.

It is clear that our country entered the war appallingly unprepared. It is further clear that we are not yet more than partially mobilized for the war.

Our lack of preparation was only incidentally a lack of the materiel of war. It was first of all moral and political unpreparedness. Our national mind, heart, and character were unprepared and ill-prepared for this Armageddon which decides the future of all mankind.

Let us remind ourselves, for a moment, how ill-prepared was our

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national mind. We did not, as a nation, know the most important facts about the dangerous world in which we lived. We did not even know the most simple facts of the relative strength of the various governments of the world. We did not even know that we were ignorant. We thought we knew, but our opinion was illusion compounded of misinformation, prejudice, and wishful thinking. It collapsed into dust at the first blows of war. We found ourselves in war-to-the-death in a world hitherto completely hidden from our eyes by clouds of illusion. We had to begin, painfully and step by step, to reconstruct completely our understanding of the world.

We had thought of France, in alliance with Britain, as the preponderant military power of Europe. But France, rotten with treason at the head of the state, collapsed even more swiftly and miserably than had semi-feudal Poland; the British army was driven from the continent without its arms. Hitler conquered all Europe west of the Soviet Union at lightning speed and nominal cost. Our "experts" had misled us. The true relation of forces was the opposite of our opinion.

We had been taught to consider the Soviet Union a weak and minor power in the European constellation. When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, even after our Government and Britain had taken their stand in her support, our "experts" told us he would conquer that country in a few weeks or months at most. But the Soviet Union has alone held

up the full military power of Hitlerized Europe for almost seventeen months now, has killed or incapacitated 3,000,000 of Hitler's murderous hordes, and has presented us and our Allies with the possibility of victory. Once again our "experts'" opinions were proved wrong, but this time we can be happy that they were wrong.

We had been taught to sneer at Japan as a military power, and to look upon the British-Dutch Empire as our stronghold in the Pacific. But after Pearl Harbor, Midway, the Philippines, we were astounded to witness a few hundred thousand Japanese soldiers sweep that centuries-old structure away in a few weeks and occupy the whole South Pacific from India to the gates of Australia. Once more our "experts'" opinions turned out to be but silly illusions, disastrously silly.

More disastrous, however, even than these illusions about relative power, was our confusion as to who were our enemies and who our friends. We Americans as a nation helped Hitler's puppet, Franco, destroy the Spanish Republic, the same Franco whose network of spies, the Falange, works freely for Hitler throughout the United States and Latin America. We supported the traitors at the head of France, and continued to do business with them until last Saturday; we went delirious in our glorification of Hitler's ally, Baron Mannerheim of "poor little Finland," and give his agents the freedom of Washington even to this moment; and we took this course because, as a nation, we had swallowed entire the gigantic

Hitler lie that the Soviet Union was our enemy. We had been morally "prepared" for war against the Soviet Union, but we had been systematically "unprepared" for the coalition with the Soviet Union by which alone we could defeat Hitler. We even trusted Japan up to the very hour her planes bombed Pearl Harbor!

Some persons will say: "Why speak of the past? That is all changed now. Why raise dead issues?"

It is necessary to speak of the past, however, because it is not yet dead. We have, as a nation, revised our wrong opinions, but only very incompletely. We have not yet fully learned the lessons of this past. The slogan "Remember Pearl Harbor" is important precisely because we must still learn the full lessons of those events.

Allow me to cite a few examples of current continuation of this pre-war thinking in illusions instead of reality, which leads to disaster for our nation. In a recent meeting of big industrialists in New York to consider war policy, the Government's efforts to organize and plan the war economy were denounced as "socialism," and the chairman summed up the sentiment of those present by saying:

"If we're going to come out of this war with a Marxist brand of national socialism then I say negotiate the peace now and bring Adolf over here to run the show. He knows how. He's efficient. He can do a better job than any of us and a damned sight better job than Roose-

velt, who is nothing but a Left-wing bungling amateur."

Here we have a simon-pure American example of the same treason that destroyed France. And it is deeply imbedded among the big industrialists who control our war economy. This is not representative of all American industrialists (for example, at the meeting mentioned, the direct Morgan and Rockefeller interests did not join in these treasonable expressions) but it does represent the business-as-usual capitalists who are fighting against the essential planning of the war, and who are responsible for the present economic chaos. If they must submit to Governmental authority for the war, they call that "socialism," and prefer the defeat of the United States and its conquest by Hitler.

Clearly, all such talk about the "danger of socialism" is merely a cover for defeatism bordering on treason. The recent Report of the Tolan Committee to the House of Representatives, on October 20, proposes a completely centralized national administration of industry and manpower, working upon a single plan for victory in the war. Its proposals are embodied in the Kilgore-Pepper Bill in the Senate and the Tolan Bill in the House. The committee bluntly declares that "our war effort is in jeopardy," that "this war can be lost in Washington," if such a central administration is not established. The committee is composed of conservative Democrats and Republicans, with not a "Left-winger" among them.

Indeed, Congressman Bender of Ohio, supporting the report, complains that "some points are not made strong enough." And Mr. Bender, leader of the old-line Republican Party of his state, is a confirmed anti-New Dealer, but clearly moved by one single consideration—patriotism, the will to victory in the war, which he sees is in grave danger unless the Tolan Committee proposals are adopted and carried out energetically.

Indeed, the Tolan Committee proposals are truly national, and deserve the support of capital equally with that of labor, of the farmers equally with that of the small industrialists, businessmen and middle classes. It shows the only way in which our economy can be mobilized to meet the strains of all-out war without a breakdown. But our business-as-usual industrialists, who cannot abandon their old pre-war prejudices, fight these proposals to the death, and are ready to surrender our country to Hitler rather than see them adopted.

The patriotic men and women of all classes must unite to save our country from such influences, and thereby save it from destruction at the hands of Hitlerism. Victory in the war is the single over-riding consideration that must govern everyone alike, regardless of what sacrifices may be demanded to that end. Such proposals as those in the Kilgore-Pepper and Tolan Bills must be supported by all, whether they are adopted by the Executive or by Congress.

Another example of this pre-war thinking which damages our war

effort is the campaign of certain newspapers about a supposed "menace of communism" in the United States. This campaign takes the form of saying: "Yes, we are allies of the Communist-led Soviet Union, and that is all right; but we must all the more suppress the Communists here at home, for they are not allies, but dangerous enemies."

Now, it is unfortunately still true that most persons do not see how dangerous this argument is, they do not see where it leads; they see that American Communists are a very small minority in the country, and think it makes little difference one way or the other if the Communists are suppressed. But this argument is equally as dangerous for our war effort as the openly pro-Hitler arguments before quoted. This danger is not only in that it endorses Hitler's central slogan that he is the savior of the world from the "Communist menace." It has immediate, concrete results that help Hitler in a military way. Allow me to show a few of these results to you.

Look at China. The Chinese Republic is greatly weakened today in face of the Japanese invaders by the fact that its unity is incomplete. There are two powerful parties, the Kuomintang or government party headed by Chiang Kai-shek, and the Chinese Communist Party, which leads two powerful armies in semi-autonomous regions; these two parties, after years of civil war, patched up a truce in 1937, a kind of national unity, in face of the Japanese invasion, but their relations remain very much strained.

The Kuomintang has, on at least one occasion, deliberately prevented the Communist-led armies from inflicting a heavy defeat on the Japanese, because they were more afraid of "communism" than of the Japanese invaders. Today two of the strongest Chinese Kuomintang armies are occupied in blockading the Communist-led armies instead of being used against the Japanese.

All this injures not only China, but also the United States; our Government, helping China, does not like to see its help wasted in internal strife between Kuomintang and Communists. But when Americans speak to Chinese leaders about this, and propose to end this senseless quarrel within China, they are answered: "But you also, in your own country, take exactly the same position against the Communists that we take in our country. We are only following your example. If it is necessary for you to fight the Communists so strongly, where the Communists are weak, how much more necessary is it for us to fight the Communists here where they are strong?"

Our Government has but recently made a serious effort to influence the Kuomintang to make a real peace with the Communists, so that the war can be strengthened against Japan by a million or two of the best soldiers in Asia; but it is greatly to be feared that this appeal will not be successful, because the Chinese do not take it seriously when over the same wires they get news that the U. S. Government is trying to deprive American Communists of their citizenship on the ar-

gument that it is impossible for them sincerely to swear allegiance to any government except a communist one, and when American newspapers continually shriek about the "menace of communism."

Thus, by our own example at home, we are directly contributing to the situation in China, where two groups of Chinese armies are watching each other suspiciously and taken away from the struggle against Japan. In the further course of the war, if this is not changed, hundreds of thousands of American boys will pay with their lives for this stupidity.

Or let us take another example, Yugoslavia. Two armies have been fighting against the German and Italian invaders, the Partisan Volunteers led by a united front of all popular parties, including the Communists, and the Chetniks headed by General Mikhailovich and supported by the Yugoslavian Cabinet in London. Recently we learned that Mikhailovich was fighting against the Partisan Volunteers, on the pretext that he had to "suppress the Communists," and had entered into treasonable relations with the Italians for that purpose.

This is a terrific blow against the United Nations, and for the Axis, and the Yugoslavian Cabinet is itself sharply divided on the issue. But American newspapers, trained in the necessity for "suppression of the Communists," unquestioningly support Mikhailovich and deny his treason. The American Government is seriously disturbed by this development, but not our newspapers, who know, without investigation,

that anyone suppressing Communists must be in the right. And when American representatives fly into Yugoslavia to ask Mikhailovich to stop fighting the Communists and to fight Germans and Italians instead, the wily general will probably read to them a copy of Attorney-General Biddle's decision on the Bridges case. Thus Hitler continues to be strengthened militarily in Europe by the "anti-Communists" in the United States.

Now let us take a look at France. Sooner or later, and we must hope sooner, Britain and America are going to open up the Second Front, and hundreds of thousands of American boys will be fighting to the death with German troops on French soil. We are already calling upon Frenchmen to rise and help throw out the Germans. Conservative correspondents have united in the judgment that the only political party in France that has maintained its organization and extended its influence despite German and Vichy suppressions is the Communist Party of France. When our boys go into France are we going to issue the slogan to the French people: "Arise to throw out the Germans and suppress the French Communists"? If we do we are simply going to help Hitler again as we have stupidly been doing ever since he emerged from his Munich *bierstube*. For the French Communists are an essential and invaluable sector of the coming French Army of Liberation. They will be as good fighters on our side as are the Russian Communists.

If we really want to smash Hit-

ler's Axis, and do it as quickly and efficiently as possible, we need the Communists of China, of Yugoslavia, of France as our allies, even as we need the Communists of the Soviet Union. Yes, we need the Communists of the United States also for victory, and the Communists of all lands, not least within Germany itself, where the Communists are hard at work preparing to blow up the Hitler regime from within.

Let's see how Hitler's slogan of the "menace of communism" works close at home. I have a memorandum dated July 23, 1942, circulated in Detroit among management and labor circles by an important official, which contains the following paragraph:

"There are many Communists in the plants and they cannot be trusted since their attitude is likely to be guided by whether Russia remains in the war on the side of the United States, or not. Russia may or may not remain an ally of the United States. She deserted the Allies in the last war and may do it again in this war."

Here we have the clearest example of the political significance of the "anti-Communist crusade" as it is carried on in the United States. This is the sort of stuff Radio Berlin spreads to Britain and America, and against which our Government has warned us many times. It spreads suspicion and distrust against our most powerful ally, the very one which restored to us the perspective of victory by single-handedly stopping the Hitlerite hordes. It sows disunity and suspicion among the

war workers, and throws doubt upon the patriotism and loyalty of every one who expresses friendship and admiration for the Soviet Union. It strikes directly against the most zealous guardians of our war production in the plants. In every way this kind of thing is doing Hitler's work in America, just as surely as his agents who landed from U-boats with explosives not one half so dangerous as this.

We are in this war as a part of the United Nations, at the head of which stands the coalition of Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States. We can only win this war if we fight it as a United Nations' war.

We are now entering the stage of active fighting in which American boys will be giving their lives to smash the enemy, not in the hundreds but in the tens of thousands. We must unite the entire country behind them, we must produce everything they and our allies need, we must stop all arguments which are not directed to the one question—how to win this war as quickly as possible.

Unity to win the war requires that we rise above all differences of political opinion. Democrats, Republicans, Communists, Socialists, Prohibitionists, all must work together without regard to their particular "ism," and stop fighting one another over the old labels. The only test is what one is doing to win the war. Any one who places private interests, his class prejudices, or his political opinions, in a position of higher importance than the winning of the war, is thereby moving to-

ward treason to his country and to humanity.

The Communist Party of the United States meets this test. It has proclaimed its policy, and carries out this policy, to subordinate its own program of socialism to the needs of national unity that includes all classes. It actively mobilizes the workers for complete support to the war effort. It helps to work out democratic solutions for the problems of the war. It offers its cooperation to all sincere supporters of the war to victory. It works for the extension of American national unity, and of the United Nations, for the orderly solution of post-war problems. The Communist Party is entirely and without reservation a party of national unity for victory. And we have a contribution to make which no other group can substitute, a contribution at home and a contribution in strengthening our country's position abroad.

This fact is being recognized broadly in our country and throughout the world. Thus, in India, the British authorities have recently legalized the Communist Party and released all its leaders from prison even though it supports the independence movement, because the Government learned from experience that the Indian Communists were the best mobilizers of the population against Japan. In Canada the Government has recently released all the Communist leaders who had been held in concentration camps, because it learned that it needed them for the war effort. In Latin-American countries the Communists are in the forefront of the

fight for alignment with the United Nations, and in Chile the Communists, who are part of the coalition supporting the government, lead in the fight for declaring war on the Axis. In Cuba the Communists are part of the governmental coalition, which supports the United Nations. And so it goes in country after country.

This trend of development toward all-embracing unity which includes also the Communists is a part of the general awakening to the tasks of the war. Wherever persons and groups and nations come to the realization of the gravity, dangers, and difficulties of the war they want all the help that is available for victory. And nowhere can they find better helpers than the Communists. Only in the United States is this fact not so generally recognized, at least not by all the departments of the Government, for some of them work at cross purposes.

Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles, who has faced some of these problems concretely in his work, has recently made an important pronouncement of policy on this question. On October 12 he declared that continuation of the strife between Kuomintang and Communists in China would be unfortunate; he indicated that the United States wished to see such problems settled by processes of conciliation; that the United States would be pleased to see complete unity accomplished; that the so-called menace of communism was looked upon with skepticism, as a pretext of the Axis; that our Government "regards unity within China, unity within the

United States, unity within each of the countries of the United Nations group, and unity among the United Nations as utterly desirable toward effectively carrying on war against the Axis powers."

That is a policy to which we can declare our unconditional support. It is a policy which should be made known throughout the whole of our population and over the world. It is a policy which needs to be carried out fully by all departments of the Government and in the armed forces. For it is a policy designed to bring victory at the earliest possible moment, to reduce the costs of the war, and to insure a just peace when victory has been attained.

It is not my intention to paint for you a bright picture of the situation, nor to pretend that the problems of the war have been solved or that victory will come easily. No, the Axis will be crushed only at terrible cost, and with the full exertion of all our powers. Every step in the development of policy adequate to victory must itself be fought for, it does not come automatically, heavy obstacles must be overcome. Correct policies when established must still be fought for in practical application. And finally when we have mobilized all possible resources they must be thrown into battle against the enemy, and the enemy must be crushed in deadly struggle. Africa is a first step in that direction.

There is no other way.

But Americans do not look for an easy way. They are ready for the full tasks which alone bring

victory. No burden is too heavy, no sacrifice too great, which is necessary for victory. We will never be Hitler's slaves nor try to find a corner for ourselves in a Hitler-

dominated world. The Axis must be destroyed. That is the only goal which means victory. And for free men everywhere in the world the issue is victory or death!