
TEHERAN—HISTORY'S GREATEST TURNING POINT

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THE recent international conferences at Moscow, Cairo, and Teheran have consolidated the coalition of Britain, America and the Soviet Union as the leadership of the United Nations and have given us a clear perspective of victory in the war and an orderly, peaceful world after that victory.

I have noticed with great interest that most of the newspapers and public commentators have as yet not awakened to the great historic significance of the Teheran Declaration. It seems to be taken as a matter of course that the representatives of the great capitalist United States, the head of the British Empire and leader of the great Tory party in Britain, and the Premier and Marshal of the Soviet Union could get together and announce that they have reached complete agreement as to the means required to win this war in the shortest possible time, that they have assessed the problems of the post-war world and can assure the world that they have seen, and are determined to carry through, the possibilities of order in the world as the result of

victory, banishing the scourge of war from this earth for some generations to come.

To me this is no ordinary and routine announcement. I understand this as the greatest, most important turning point in all history.

What the "Military Measures Mean"

It is not necessary to spend much time discussing the significance of the military measures agreed upon for pressing the war to a victorious conclusion. This means, of course, that the calendar has been set for the full exertion of American and British military power against the enemy. The much discussed question of the second front has been settled, and clearly, in the only way allowed by military considerations; that is, British and American armed forces are poised for invasion in force in the west of Europe in the next weeks.

America is going into action, and this means that the real fighting war is now opening for us. It is not going to be easy to carry out this first part of the agreement at Teheran; it is going to be costly, and

hundreds of thousands of American lives will have to be given to execute it. That is part of the price of victory; that is part of the price of wiping out the menace of the Axis; that is part of the price for the development of a free world. And if America were not ready to pay that price, America would not be deserving of its liberty.

But America is and has been ready honorably to perform its tasks in this war, and now we have the assurance that our American military effort will be geared into a unified world effort in which the forces of Britain and the great victorious armies of the Soviet Union will be fully coordinated and will strike a great blow against the enemy from all sides. We have the full guarantee that our efforts will not be wasted, that the price we have to pay will bring the goal that we must have—a victory which opens up the path of progress for the world and which will remove for all time the threat of the destruction of civilization which for years has been hanging over it.

Despite all the predictions of the pessimists, it has been possible to bring about such united, unified, coordinated program between the three great powers, regardless of all differences of ideology or interest that may exist between them. This has been possible because the great over-riding interest of all, the common interest, has been the defeat of the enemy of civilization, because the alternative to this agreement would be to watch the world slide down into the abyss of chaos, anarchy and fascism.

There has been much more pessimism as to whether that unity could be continued after the war. Many people have said: Yes, in the face of the menace of Hitlerism, the three great powers were forced to get together; but how about the day when Hitlerism is destroyed? What will hold these three great powers together then? Will not the coalition fly apart as soon as the common enemy has been destroyed? There is no lack of prophets of doom who assure us every day that it is impossible to conceive of the continuation of this coalition into the post-war period.

The Teheran Agreement Means What It Says

Well, Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin met together personally to assess that question and they have given us the assurance over their signatures that in their judgment it is possible, and they are determined to see that it is realized, that this coalition is extended into the post-war period and organizes around itself all freedom-loving nations of the earth in a general association of equals.

I think that we can take that promise at its face value. I think we need have no fears that this is a diplomatic formula to cover up disagreements. I am fully aware of the fact that public documents cannot always be taken at their face value. I am also aware that men who reach agreements with the full intention of executing them are not always able to carry them out. But I am convinced that this agreement can be accepted at its face value be-

cause the men who made and reached that agreement are, in my judgment, each one of them firmly and honestly determined to make good on it, but above all because the great forces in the world outside these men, and operating through them in the reaching of the agreement, are working in that same direction.

It is evident that the removal of the common enemy, the Axis, will not remove all the great dangers of the world. After military victory has been achieved in this war, there is another great menace to civilization which must be defeated, another enemy on which Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin had their eyes and which they prepared to defeat. That other enemy of civilization is the threat of discord and disunity among the victorious powers after this war.

There is a growing realization among all intelligent men in the world today that should victory over the Axis be followed by a new political disintegration and break-up of world order, as a result of any serious rift and division among the three great powers leading the United Nations, the victory over Hitlerism and the Axis would be jeopardized and the world would still witness the destruction of civilization through the spread of civil wars and their culmination in a new great international war.

The Only Hope for Civilization in Our Time

There are plenty of explosive forces gathered throughout the world today to ensure that that will

happen, unless it is consciously prevented by policy and by organization of all the intelligent people of the world; and the sign and signal of that gathering of all the intelligent forces of the world is the Teheran Declaration of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. That is the only hope of a continuance of civilization in our time. That is why I can accept and support and believe in the Declaration at Teheran and make it the starting point for all my thinking about the problems of our country and the world. I can do this because I have confidence in the intelligence of the masses of the people of the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union, because I have confidence in the type of a combined world leadership that is represented in the combination of those three men who met at Teheran.

If this agreement were taken away or had no meaning there would be nothing but chaos and anarchy facing us in the future. It is this understanding of the significance of the agreement in Teheran which we must bring to the people of America so that they will begin to understand our country's tasks and responsibilities in the light of this great overwhelming issue before the world and the solution laid down in that agreement.

The Teheran Declaration is very short and simple. This has been confusing to many people who think that great international documents must be very long and very complicated. As a matter of fact, there is only one way to understand this agreement, and that is to take it

at its face value — that it means what it says. If you try to evaluate it in any other way you are certain to go wrong, as Dorothy Thompson did when, in the early part of last week, she summed up the Teheran Conference with the wise-crack that never before in history had so few kept so much information from so many. A few days later Miss Thompson came out in another column in which she gave exactly the opposite interpretation of the Teheran Agreement. Well, her first reaction was much worse than the second, but I am afraid that her second was not so good either, because she gave a very complicated and involved explanation, according to which the real meaning of Teheran was that the conferees had made an offer to the German people for peace.

The Threat From Within

Now, it is true that the Teheran Conference holds out the only perspective for peace that is possible for the German people, but that is only incidental. The main thing, that Miss Thompson completely missed, is that the Teheran Conference holds out the only offer of peace to the entire world. And this is the understanding of the Anglo-Soviet-American Alliance that must penetrate the whole American people. The realization of this post-war perspective still has to be secured; and there remain serious threats against it. I am speaking now not about the threat of the Axis; I am speaking about the threat inside the United States and the forces that are gathering to

knife the Teheran Conference, to destroy the policy that was set up there and to take America onto a new, the most dangerous, path that has ever been offered to our country. Every voice today that is raised in America to cast doubt and suspicion upon the Teheran Agreements, represents the gathering forces of reaction, obscurantism and anarchy in American life, and there are all too many of such forces in this country.

America must be armed against these efforts, which are receiving highly organized direction and which are gathering with the hope and the expectation that they will seize control of our country in the 1944 elections. Do I need to spend much time identifying these people for you? Most of you know them; but do your neighbors? How many hundreds of thousands and millions of your neighbors have as yet only the slightest inkling of the great problems involved in this question of where one stands on the Teheran Conference? Are you for it or are you against it? Are you supporting it or are you undermining it and casting suspicion upon it, preparing to turn our nation away from it? That is the great dividing line within our country today, and it will divide us in the elections of 1944; everything else is incidental to that.

Teheran Represents a New World Perspective

Now, there are many things that are not explicitly stated in the Teheran Conference Declaration, but which are involved and implied in it and which we must begin to

understand. We must understand that when the Socialist Soviet Union and the British Empire and the great capitalist United States arrive at a common policy for the war and for the post-war reconstruction of the world, this is something new and therefore represents a policy that has no parallel in past history. It means that these three great powers have reached a compromise on a policy which represents the historical tendencies not exclusively characteristic of any one of the three, but which is in fact something quite new. It means, in the first place, that Britain and the United States have closed the books finally and forever upon their old expectation that the Soviet Union as a socialist country is going to disappear some day. The Socialist Soviet Union is accepted as a permanent member of the family of nations, and the policy of destruction of the Soviet Union, which has been a permanent feature of the policy of the great capitalist powers since 1917, is finally ended. In its place, the Teheran Conference has not only strengthened the fighting alliance of the anti-Hitler Coalition, but has established a relationship for peaceful post-war collaboration between the Soviet Union, Britain, and the United States.

Such an agreement necessarily means that most of Europe west of the Soviet Union probably will be reconstructed on a bourgeois-democratic, non-fascist capitalist basis, not upon a Soviet basis. But it will be a capitalist basis which is conditioned by the principle of complete democratic self-determination for

each nation, allowing full expression within each nation of all progressive and constructive forces and setting up no obstacles to the development of democracy and social progress in accordance with the varying desires of the peoples. It means a perspective for Europe minimizing, and to a great extent eliminating altogether, the threat of civil war after the international war.

As far as the United States is concerned, therefore, all those who want to strengthen the coalition and minimize the forces within our domestic life that will fight to break up the coalition, must help to remove from the American ruling class the fear of a socialist revolution in the United States in the post-war period. They must be guided by the great issues which are involved in a unified world policy on the basis of the agreements at Teheran. They must understand the great role which the united moral forces of Britain, America and the Soviet Union will play in guiding the masses of the world in the post-war period. These moral forces will be a hundred times more important than our military forces after the war is over, because we cannot possibly guide the post-war developments by military control, but we can guide them by a moral control that is buttressed by the Anglo-Soviet-American Coalition.

New Guides for a New World

The fulfillment of this perspective, this world policy that flows from the Teheran Agreement, will require the readjustment of our

whole political and social life. We are only beginning this readjustment now. Every class, every group, every individual, every political party in America will have to readjust itself to this great issue embodied in the policy given to us by Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill. The country is only beginning to face it so far. Everyone must begin to draw the conclusions from it and adjust himself to the new world that is created by it. Old formulas and old prejudices are going to be of no use whatever to us as guides to find our way in this new world. We are going to have to draw together all men and all groups with intelligence enough to see the overwhelming importance of this issue, to understand that upon its correct solution depends the fate of our country and the fate of civilization throughout the world.

We shall have to be prepared to break with anyone that refuses to support and fight for the realization of the Teheran Agreement and the Anglo-Soviet-American Coalition. We must be prepared to give the hand of cooperation and fellowship to everyone who fights for the realization of this coalition. If J. P. Morgan supports this coalition and goes down the line for it, I as a Communist am prepared to clasp his hand on that and join with him to realize it. Class divisions or political groupings have no significance now except as they reflect one side or the other of this issue.

This is the great issue for 1944. This is the all-decisive problem the country has to solve. Every other problem depends upon it, and the

solutions of all other problems stand or fall according as this main issue is settled.

At the present moment we do not know just how the issue is going to be presented to us for the 1944 campaign in terms of parties and candidates. We do not even know whether Franklin Roosevelt is going to be a candidate for President in the 1944 elections. But I think it is clear to almost all working men and to most intelligent people of this country of all classes, that the only way this issue can be presented to the country clearly and sharply, with the maximum expectation of a correct position, is, if the people of America are able to raise their voices with sufficient clarity and volume to convince Mr. Roosevelt that he must be the candidate for President in 1944.

The problem is whether, in this country and in Britain, we have the character and the intelligence to rise to the supreme opportunity presented to the world by Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill: whether we will make good with the full force of our country the agreement that they reached at Teheran.

I hope that this meeting will be only one of tens of thousands of meetings at which this question will be discussed throughout America, so that before we even reach the period of the election campaign next year, America will be so thoroughly united on the maintenance and the full realization of the Teheran program for the world, that anyone who stands against it will be driven out of American public life.