
THE ARMY AND THE PEOPLE

BY JOHN GATES

OCTOBER 16 marked the first anniversary of the Selective Service Act, which created for the first time in our history a mass conscript peacetime army. The situation in America and the world is radically different now from what it was when selective service first was put into effect. The growing menace of the Nazis to the independence and freedom of all countries, climaxed by the invasion of the Soviet Union, has transformed the war of rival imperialists into a just and progressive war for the defense of humanity against the Nazi drive for world conquest. This profound change has produced fundamental realignments in national and class forces in the world and in our country, altering the relationship between the people and the government, and consequently the army, which is the instrument of the government. This change requires a re-examination of the attitude of the working class and the nation to the army, and the formulation of a new approach.

Decisive Measures Are Demanded

The fundamental conflict in the world today is that between free-

dom and slavery, democracy and fascism. Humanity is locked in a life-and-death struggle with the Nazis and their jackal followers. The very future of mankind depends on the outcome of this titanic struggle. Whether we or they will win, whether we shall be free or enslaved, is being decided, and can only be decided, on the field of battle. We are living in the midst of war—a war which began with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931, and which has spread into a world war because the threatened nations and peoples failed to unite among themselves and with the Soviet Union for concerted action against fascist aggression. Now all future politics are being decided by war. He will win who has and uses superior force—this is the bitter truth that needs to be faced squarely by all Americans. Americans must realize the full gravity of the situation. Victory over Nazism can no longer be achieved as easily and cheaply and with such comparatively little sacrifice as it could have been when the fate of Spain and Czechoslovakia were at stake. The Nazis, aided by the Munichers, have become the most menacing

military machine bent on world conquest the world has ever seen. Past sins must be paid for now. Despite terrific losses to themselves, the Nazis continue to advance against, and are seriously weakening, the present strongest military power of the anti-fascist camp—the Soviet Union. Nothing will stop the Nazis from forcibly imposing their hateful barbaric rule upon the world except superior force. The world military relationship of forces has become such that we Americans can no longer avoid the inescapable conclusion—we can survive as a nation, we can make further progress, only if we defeat Hitler. We can defeat Hitler only by a joint war of Britain, the U.S.S.R., and the U.S.A. against Nazi Germany, in which Britain and the United States participate on an equal basis with the Soviet Union; in which the U.S.A. gives, not only of her resources and arms production, but also of her manhood; in which America does an equal share of the fighting.

This is the road that history now forces us to take. It is a road that means tremendous sacrifice; but it leads to a goal worth any sacrifice—to victory over Hitlerism. Failure to take this road now and quickly, delay and hesitation, will invite defeat, and will only mean that we shall have to make infinitely more costly sacrifices later on, under infinitely worse conditions.

The role of the United States is decisive in this world conflict. We are potentially the strongest military power on earth. Conscious of our historic responsibility, we must

transform the potential into the real. America must organize in record time the largest war production and build the largest army in the world. We must out-produce and out-fight Hitler. We must fight, we must master the art of war, or we perish. Every American who loves his country must burn this thought into his consciousness.

Although Americans are overwhelmingly opposed to Hitler, they are not yet sufficiently aware of the grave, immediate danger Hitler Germany spells for our country. They still hesitate to take the full, resolute, decisive measures that the situation demands. They still have the illusion that Hitler's defeat is possible without great sacrifices on our part and without the need for us to fight. Many organizations still pass resolutions pledging for the fight against Hitlerism their energies and lives, "if need be." They fail to see that events have already eliminated the "if," and that life itself has provided the answer. It is no longer possible to put limits on the all-out effort for the military defeat of Hitlerism.

There is a rising awareness of the need for full military action by the United States against Hitler. The national convention of the American Legion passed a resolution asking for the lifting of the restriction preventing the sending of an A.E.F. outside the western hemisphere. The national convention of the A.F. of L. pledged support of "all action, no matter how drastic." There is a growing movement for a declaration of war, expressed in statements by outstanding college presidents; edi-

tors of student newspapers; Fight for Freedom, Inc.; the Associated Leagues for a Declared War; many publications, among them *PM*, the *New York Post*, the *Nation* and the *New Republic*. And now there is an important movement developing for American participation in the opening of a western front.

This trend, however, is far too slow in view of the critical military situation. The steps taken by our government, such as the manning of Atlantic bases and the patrolling of the ocean, the order to shoot at German submarines on sight, the present move to arm our merchant ships—are all good steps in themselves; but they fall far short of what the situation demands. They add up to America's playing a secondary role in the war, the role of an arsenal for democracy but not a fighter for democracy. The people of our country, and in particular the trade unions, must set up a great cry for decisive measures by our government, for military collaboration with Britain and the U.S.S.R. on an equal basis.

In addition to being too slow in taking a position for military action, many labor and people's organizations have committed other serious errors. The American Youth Congress in July went on record for aid to Britain, China and the Soviet Union, but opposed an A.E.F. and has not yet reversed itself on this now vital question. Similarly, the automobile workers' convention opposed an A.E.F. The failure of a single labor organization outside of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League to take a posi-

tion in favor of the extension of the draft (only the American Legion and Administration spokesmen came out in favor), led to the bill's passing by the skin of its teeth—by one vote. This was interpreted by Hitler as a victory for him and a sign of the disunity and confusion prevailing in the United States. The defeat of the bill would have been a catastrophe; it would have meant actual demobilization of the army at the moment of greatest danger to our country. Finally, there is the tendency, which still persists even in labor ranks, of doing everything possible to escape the draft, a tendency that was never correct, even during the period of imperialist war, and which represents fundamentally a flight from the struggle.

How can these extremely serious mistakes be explained? First, by the failure to understand really the changed character of the war brought about by the invasion of the Soviet Union; that labor and the people now have just as much as, and even more, at stake in the war than the bourgeoisie; that every class in America now has a stake in the war; that the fate of the entire nation is at issue; that the entire nation must therefore be interested in taking every measure necessary to win the war; that this necessitates revaluation and reorientation on the question of the armed forces. Secondly, by the failure to grasp the tremendous danger confronting our nation as a result of the attack on the U.S.S.R.; by the rise of a feeling, on the contrary, that the involvement of the Soviet Union

lessened the danger to us; by the underestimation of the enemy's resources and strength, coupled with the feeling that the Red Army by itself could defeat the Nazi war machine. Thirdly, and by no means least in importance, by underestimating the activities and the influence of the appeasers, the isolationists, pacifists and Trotskyites—all of whom are actively serving the cause of Hitlerism. These reasons led to disunity and passivity on the part of labor and other progressive organizations.

Pacifism in the Service of Hitler

Pacifism, the ideology of opposition to wars in general, to all wars, has been one of the most useful weapons in Hitler's arsenal since his advent to power. Hitler could not have armed himself to the teeth but for the nefarious work of the Munichers and Fifth-Column "pacifists" who rendered nation after nation defenseless and prevented each from offering resistance when Hitler chose to attack it. Such has been the story of one Hitlerian conquest after another, up to his invasion of the Soviet Union. Under present-day conditions, pacifism is the most dangerous threat from within to the defense of our nation; it is, in fact, the best ally that Hitler has. Pacifist ideology, deliberately fostered by the appeasers, serves to disarm the people at the moment when our national existence is imperiled.

The role of Fifth Column for Hitler in our country is played by the America First appeasers, the Nor-

man Thomas "Socialists," the Trotskyites, and the professional "pacifists." All these people play upon the honest peace desires of the masses in order to prevent America from taking the measures that will wipe the chief source of war, Hitlerism, from the face of the earth. They want us to be at "peace" so that Hitler may have no obstacle in his path of conquest. In the name of peace they would assure the conquest of the world by Hitler and perpetual war. The blunt truth is—in actuality they are not at all against all wars; they are for war against the working class and the American people, for war against the Western Hemisphere, for war against the Soviet Union. The logic of pacifism is best illustrated in the following quotation from a recent column by Dorothy Thompson:

"Marcel Deat, the Left-wing pacifist politician and journalist, who reminds one strongly of Norman Thomas, was isolationist toward Czechoslovakia and Poland, and wrote the famous article in August, 1939, 'Why Die for Danzig?' Deat, who contributed to defeatism and internal division of France, is now reported to be trying to get volunteers for the crusade against Russia. The pacifist who would not fight for France and her allies is now prepared to fight for Hitler!"

This man, recently shot by one of the men he recruited to fight against the Soviet Union, has now joined Pétain and Hitler in war against the French people and against the countries fighting Hitler.

These people din into our ears,

day in and day out, denials that America is in danger. They strive to lull us into a false sense of security with claims that we are bordered by two oceans and try to divide us by racial discrimination and anti-Semitism. Demagogically, they seize upon just grievances of the masses, to hinder the national defense effort.

The appeaser-pacifist arguments that "we cannot serve democracy by taking part in foreign wars," and that "war crushes democracy" are, of course, dangerous lies. It is true that some wars crush democracy, as for example the war that Hitler is conducting against the world. But it is also true that there are wars which advance the cause of democracy. Notable historic advances of democracy were made in consequence of just and progressive wars. In fact, our country was founded as a result of such a war. Our democracy took a giant leap forward in the Civil War. A victory for the anti-Hitler forces would result in the greatest expansion of democracy the world has ever seen, whereas a victory for Hitler in this war would result in the crushing of democracy throughout the world.

By refusing to take the side of democracy in this war, the appeasers help Hitler. In the name of democracy and opposition to war, they would bring about the triumph of Hitler, the wiping out of democracy, and the further spread of war.

Pacifism is not a working-class ideology. The working class can defend itself and achieve its aims only through struggle. Workers have

never hesitated to fight for their rights and to give their lives, if need be, in the true interests of the nation. Nor is pacifism the ideology of the big bourgeoisie, although the bourgeoisie may make use of pacifism within a nation to disarm the working class, or the fascist bourgeoisie may make use of it to disarm a nation it wishes to subjugate; but the big bourgeoisie itself will fight to the death and in fact builds a military machine in order to maintain its rule. Pacifism as an ideology arises from the middle classes, who have vacillating, shifting interests, who tend to run away from problems requiring forthright solution, who tend to compromise instead of fighting. Pacifism runs contrary to the interests of the working class and the nation; it disarms the nation. Its poisonous influences must be ruthlessly combated and rooted out of the ranks of the American people as inimical to the defense of our country.

The American people are not pacifist. We must under no circumstances fall into the error of lumping the honest peace-loving masses, who are misled and confused by the propaganda of the appeasers and pacifists, together with these agents of Hitler. We need patiently but firmly to convince the people by explaining to them the stark reality of the danger that faces us, that the only road to peace and democracy now lies along the path of the military destruction of Hitlerism. The history of America gives us confidence that the program of its appeasers will be branded for what it is—a program to disarm

and disunite the people, a program of surrender to Hitler, a program which would condemn the world to a future of fascism and war.

An Army of National Unity

The people of America must master the military art. Military training must become an everyday, essential part of our life, like the right to vote, and compulsory education. We need the biggest and best trained army in the world in order to defeat Hitlerism.

The entire nation is intensely interested in the new American army of a million and a half men. Since selective service is a democratic way of raising an army, practically every family in America has some personal tie with the men in the army. The main reason however for the great concern of Americans over the army is that it constitutes the bulwark of our defense in this crisis facing our country.

To guarantee that the American Army will become the force needed to defend our country's interests, basic changes in the evaluation of the Army must be fought for and achieved. Today the U. S. Army is no longer a relatively small body, composed of men driven into its ranks by unemployment and inability to earn a living in civilian life.

Today the U. S. Army is a mass organization of nearly two million Americans, of all walks of life—representing a cross-section of the talents, courage and love of liberty of the people in every hamlet, village and city of the nation.

History has placed before the

United States Army the opportunity of serving by its might and love for liberty the cause of the nation and of mankind against the immediate most ferocious enemy of the United States and of all peoples—Hitlerism.

The social composition of the United States Army and the main task before it make possible and imperative a basic reorientation in the attitudes, not only of labor and the entire people, but also of the War Department and the government to the army and its role.

The United States Army and Navy must become a mighty fighting force—disciplined, skillful, and politically enlightened. This only emphasizes the need for the fullest utilization of the creative talent and initiative of every man in the ranks.

The Trotskyite agents of Hitler put forward the slogan of so-called "workers" control of the army. This fake radical catchword is contrary to the interests of the working class and the nation, and serves only to mask the pro-Hitler activities of the Trotskyites. When national unity is essential for victory, they would set the working class against the nation, would promote internal disunity and confusion, and pave the way for a Hitler victory. The Trotskyites are playing the same Fifth-Column role for Hitler that they played in Spain. There, the Trotskyite P.O.U.M. fomented an armed uprising against the Spanish People's Front government, at a time when the Spanish people were fighting with their backs to the wall, on the grounds that the Republican government of Spain was

a "bourgeois" government. Through the use of false, revolutionary-sounding slogans, they stabbed the workers of Spain in the back, and helped fascism to conquer Spain. American labor must be ever vigilant against this fascist-Trotskyite scum.

This is not a class war. It is a war for the preservation of American independence against Hitler. All sections of the American people have a common stake in this war. Class differences and the class struggle, of course, continue, but these become subordinated to the national interest. An all-inclusive national front against Hitler must be created, and the army must reflect this national unity. The role of the working class in this situation is not to fight for control of the army, but to collaborate with all other sections of the people for the building of a bigger and better army of national unity. Just as labor is vitally concerned in the expansion of defense production, and asks for adequate representation in defense production machinery in order to help bring this about, so the working class, which makes up the bulk of the army, is vitally interested in building the army, and will cooperate with all groups to do so. The policy of national unity and a united effort to build the army are essential for victory.

How good is the new army? How is its morale? These questions can be answered only when one understands the various stages through which this army has passed, and the many difficult problems it

has had to solve. This mass army, democratically selected and therefore constituting a good cross section of the American people, came into being when the war was still an imperialist war in which the people felt they had no stake, at a time when a great popular movement against the passage of the Selective Service Act as a step toward involvement in an imperialist war had been developed. Consequently, many men entered the army unwillingly, with a great deal of distrust and suspicion of the entire program, and with the idea of getting the thing over with as quickly as possible and returning to normal life. Thus, the source of the original problem of morale was that the men felt that the imperialist war was not their war and they wanted no part of it, although they deeply hated Hitlerism. The policy of the government and the army was in conflict with the true interests of the masses.

The change in the character of the war created an entirely new situation in the army. The soldiers overwhelmingly sympathized with the Red Army and felt that for the first time the Nazis were being fought effectively. However, their immediate reaction was to breathe a sigh of relief and relax, based on the belief that the invasion of the U.S.S.R. by the Nazis eased the danger to the United States. It was at this moment that the proposal was made for the extension of the service. Since an adequate explanation of the proposal was not made, it created great resentment among

the men, who felt that promises made to them about one year's service had been broken. This was seized upon at once by the appeasers, who posed as "champions" of the soldiers, and who exaggerated the problem out of all proportion to its real extent. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the labor and progressive movement did not resolutely support the proposal and did not explain its absolute necessity. The appeasers seized upon every grievance of the men to develop resentment in the ranks against the government and the army command.

This was the great "problem of morale" that occupied the attention of the country for several weeks. The appeasers, demagogically, seized upon and exaggerated the issue, not because they had any intention of raising the morale of the troops so that they could the more effectively fight Hitler, but in order to demoralize the soldiers. Gauging the situation better than the Administration and the progressive forces, the appeasers developed wide agitation to the effect that our country was no longer in danger now that Hitler was bogged down in the Soviet Union, and that therefore we could slow down and relax our defense preparations. They could be successful in this only so long as the Administration failed to impress the army and the nation with the increased danger to America resulting from Hitler's attack upon the U.S. S.R.

It must be admitted that many people, organizations and publications fell victim to the appeaser

plot against the army, and helped to spread alarmist stories about low morale, mass desertions, and one-sided pictures of bad training, conditions, etc. All this played into the hands of the appeasers, who said: "You see, look how bad our army is. How can we take further steps against Hitler and risk war with such an army!" But then, instead of acting to strengthen the army, they used the situation to work for its demobilization.

Basically, many grievances notwithstanding, the morale of the men was good. The men were anti-Hitler and very happy over the fact that the Red Army was putting up such a good fight. What made it possible for the appeasers to make capital out of the situation was the failure of the Administration and the army command, as well as the labor and progressive organizations, to educate the nation and the soldiers as to the increased gravity of the situation and the need for service extension in order to strengthen the army. When they began to do this, the situation improved considerably.

Labor and Army Welfare

Labor and the people have a great responsibility toward the Army. For never before in American history was a conscript army formed in peacetime, and because at times the army was used against labor and the people, a definite historical separation between the army and the labor movement developed. The critical situation facing our country demands an indissolubly united army and people, and a total mobil-

ization for the defeat of Hitler.

General Lear, the "hero" of the unfortunate "Yoo-hoo" incident, which was exaggerated beyond its importance and used by the appeasers to undermine the authority and prestige of the army command and to weaken army discipline, has correctly stated that the major factor explaining any weakness in army morale is civilian morale (although he wrongly exonerated the army of responsibility for any shortcomings). Labor bears a great share of the responsibility for whatever weaknesses exist in army morale, and for whatever headway the destructive, defeatist work of the Lindberghs, Wheelers and Thomases has made in the army.

Labor is the strongest organized force in our nation, comprising more than 11,000,000 organized workers. Labor is the bulwark of the nation, the backbone of our production, and it makes up the bulk of the army rank and file. Labor must understand how vital is the army to the defense of the nation, and throw its full enormous strength into the building of the biggest and best army in the world—in size, in weapons, in training, in morale, and in unity with the people.

Labor should take the lead in mobilizing the people to adopt the army as its own. Labor should be concerned, not only with its own members in the army, but should take patronage over, and develop warm fraternal relations with, whole sections of the army, camps, regiments, battalions (of course, under army supervision). The trade

unions have begun to do this, organizing army welfare committees and conferences, dances and affairs for the soldiers, donating gifts, cigarettes, etc., to the army. All of this has had a very good effect, but it is not being done on the necessary scale. The unions should realize that to fail to do this is to shirk their responsibility, weaken the army and therefore the nation, and leave the army a prey to the treasonable influences and activities of the enemy.

For Strengthening Our Military Preparedness

Nor should labor be concerned only with the welfare of the soldiers, although this is extremely important. It should also be deeply interested in the strength of our military preparedness itself. This means that the trade unions have before them the task, not only of giving every support to selective service, but of leading and stimulating a great movement of volunteers into the armed forces. The unions must prove in practice that the most important thing at the moment is to fight for our country. Military preparation, which should be the first concern of the American people, is not only a question of direct entry into the armed forces. Labor has a vital role to play in producing the weapons of warfare. It can and must also take part in premilitary training together with the rest of the people, learning the elementary principles of warfare, rifle practice, R.O.T.C., Junior Naval Reserve, all aspects

of civilian defense, etc. Modern war is total war and every individual in our nation has a role to play. Our whole nation must train, and it devolves upon labor, the strongest, most organized force in the country, to take the lead.

The army command, of course, has the direct responsibility for the building and training of our army. Due to incorrect past policies on the part of our government, the army had to start practically from scratch a year ago to build a mass modern army that could successfully defend our nation. Despite very great handicaps, complacency, conservative and reactionary traditions and standards, lack of equipment, lack of trained and experienced officers, and sabotage by America First agents of Hitler, an army is beginning to be whipped into shape. Drawing from the lessons of modern warfare, the army command has begun to reconstruct our army on military-progressive, up-to-date principles. This process is reflected in the maneuvers now going on, as well as in the weeding out of incompetent officers.

The army cannot be satisfied with these small gains in view of the continuing progress of the Nazi war machine. Secretary of War Stimson has stated correctly that the present army of a million and a half is the irreducible minimum. Walter Lippmann draws a dangerous conclusion when he advocates that in order to intensify shipment of war materials to the countries fighting Hitler, we should reduce the size of our army. Certainly, our present army of a million and a half can

scarcely be reckoned a mass army in the light of current experiences which conclusively demonstrate that a modern army must be both a highly mechanized and a mass army. We need to double and triple the production and shipment of arms, but we also need to double and triple the size and power of our army simultaneously. Hitler can now be defeated, America can be defended only if we become not only the arsenal but also the fighter for democracy.

Economic and Social Needs of the Army

The American people cannot afford to be complacent. The many just grievances of the men in uniform must receive immediate and sympathetic attention. The enemies of democracy, the stooges and fifth columnists of Hitler must not be given the opportunity to seize upon and exploit the grievances which arise daily—and which must be speedily rectified.

A number of important obstacles are impeding the progress of the army. One is the lack of a program of systematic education as to our national policy, as to what we are fighting for. This is a new kind of army. It is unlike the old, small professional army. It is an army that has within its ranks former trade unionists, literate, educated people. Such people cannot be treated in the same way as the old army. The perfect soldier is no longer all brawn and no brains. The new army of national unity must be a well-trained and well-educated army, conscious of what it is fighting for.

The government and the army command need to break boldly with ancient custom that prevents us from developing the most effective kind of an army.

Planned education should be developed on the national policy of our government. In Spain, for example, when the government issued its war aims, the famous 14 Points, so wide a campaign was developed that every soldier and civilian knew each point by heart and what it meant. This was achieved through classes, discussions, posters and the press. Yet when Roosevelt and Churchill issued their 8-point declaration, nothing was done to inform the soldiers as to their significance. Secretary of War Stimson spoke to the army, and the men in many camps did not even know he was on the air. A national army newspaper, dealing not only with camp gossip, but with the foreign and domestic policy of the government, should be published. America has the greatest educational facilities in the world—the movies, the radio, the press—and we should make full use of them to strengthen our army. Of essential importance are the ferreting out and bold exposure of the propaganda and activities of the Fifth Column in the armed forces. Lindbergh showed the true aim of the appeasers by resigning his commission, thus deserting the army at a time of great peril to our nation. But not all who follow the Lindbergh-Hitler line have resigned their commissions. Many prefer to continue their work of treason inside and not outside the armed forces. The nation

and the army command must not and cannot, if we do not wish to risk defeat, remain silent and inactive concerning these enemies of our people. Dorothy Thompson has correctly stated: "That the Military Affairs Committee of the Senate should be headed by Senator Reynolds is worth ten divisions to Hitler. Senator Reynolds is the nearest thing to a Nazi that we have in the U. S. Senate." The informing of the enemy by Senator Wheeler that American soldiers were on the way to Iceland was definite aid and comfort to the enemy. Nothing can strengthen our defenses more than cleansing the army and public life of these agents of Hitler.

Since one of the chief problems of the army is lack of personnel, a more widespread and systematic system of promotion from the ranks would help greatly to weld the unity and strength of the army. This is an army representative of all sections of the people, and no class should be allowed to monopolize the officer corps. To permit the army to be constituted of upper and middle-class elements in the main as officers, and working people as the rank and file, is not in keeping with the democratic cause this army must defend. The authority and prestige of the officers must be unquestioned and unconditional, but it would greatly increase the confidence of the men in their command if democratic promotion were encouraged and organized.

The army should moreover take steps to improve the material conditions of the soldiers. Men who are going to give their lives for our

country surely deserve more adequate pay than they now receive, not because Americans must be paid great sums before they will serve and fight for their country—*we will fight for our country without pay if necessary*— but because our country is rich enough to provide adequately for its defenders. Reduction of railroad fares while on leave, exemption from payment of taxes, a much improved and expanded recreational and sports program, the speeding up and realization of the impermissibly retarded U.S.O. program, are just and legitimate demands of the soldiers that deserve the support of labor and the people, and should be met by the army.

Negroes and the Armed Forces

Finally, one of the most serious problems confronting the army is that of the integration of Negroes into the armed forces. The policy of segregation and discrimination seriously weakens the army. This policy is contradictory, for this is an army built to defend democracy, yet practices the undemocratic policy of Jim-Crowism. The "explanation" of the army command for clinging to this policy is that it would be detrimental to morale to eliminate Jim-Crowism and discrimination. Events have proved on the contrary that these undemocratic practices are demoralizing and tend to disunite the army and render it less effective.

The policy of the army toward Negroes is still what it was during the Civil War and the First World

War. But since then the struggle for Negro rights and equality has made great advances. Since there is no Chinese Wall between the army and the life of the nation, the question naturally arises: How is it possible for discrimination against Negroes to be broken down without detriment to morale (in fact, improvement) in civilian life, but not in the army? How is it possible for Negroes to be integrated into defense industry and government employment as a result of Executive Orders by the President, but for this to be impossible in the army? The answer is that there is no reason why like policies cannot be carried through in the army, other than reactionary tradition and custom. This naturally does not help to arouse an enthusiasm among the Negro people for serving in the army. In the interests of national unity and of releasing the great potential strength of the Negro people, and consequently of building a stronger army, the army command should initiate a policy, as the President has done in civilian life, of more closely integrating Negroes in the army and eventually eliminating Jim-Crowism and discrimination completely.

One thing must be guarded against however, namely, the elimination of Jim-Crowism in the army must not be made a precondition for support to, and service in, the army. To do this would be disastrous to the cause of Negro rights itself. The same logic could be used by workers who would say, Give me a wage increase, or I won't fight against Hitler; or by the Jew-

ish people who would say, Wipe out all anti-Semitism before I fight Hitler. If every class or group put its own immediate interests before those of the main issue and placed its narrower demands as preconditions for support to the broader struggle, then the result would be disaster to the National Front for the defeat of Hitler.

The war against Hitler is a just war for the preservation of our hard-won gains and must be supported by us unconditionally; but equality must be fought for within the framework of the anti-Hitler struggle in order to win the war against Hitler. The history of the Negro people in America is very rich in this respect. During the Civil War, when Negroes were allowed in the army, but without pay, Negro leaders who saw the logic of the struggle said: Pay or no pay, let us volunteer! When the Civil War began, the issue did not appear to the leadership of the North as the liberation of the Negro, but only as the saving of the Union. Nevertheless, like Marx and Engels, Frederick Douglass, the great Negro abolitionist, believed and said that "the mission of the war was the liberation of the slave, as well as the salvation of the Union. Hence from the first I reproached the North that they fought the rebels with only one hand, when they might strike effectively with two—that they fought with their soft white hand, while they kept their black iron hand chained and helpless behind them—that they fought the effect, while they protected the cause, and that the Union cause would

never prosper till the war assumed an Anti-Slavery attitude and the Negro was enlisted on the loyal side."

Douglass well understood the need to support unconditionally a war that was fundamentally against slavery, even though the leadership of the North did not realize this in the beginning. He knew that the very logic of the war would force the freeing of the slaves because that was the only way in which the war could be won. Douglass fought for integration of Negroes into the armed forces, for equal rights, and for emancipation, not as preconditions for Negro support of the war, but to facilitate the winning of the war and the victory of the anti-slavery forces.

Negroes have a like stake in today's war against those who would return us to slavery, a war which, as is true of every just, democratic war, must inevitably be accompanied by expansion of democracy within as the only road to victory. It is not only that democracy will take a giant leap forward after victory over Hitler; it is already expanding now, in the course of the fight against Hitler. The Executive Decrees of the President regarding the integration of Negroes into defense industry and Federal employment are a great step forward, although they still need to be fully enforced. Even more important are the first steps taken in the army toward the elimination of Negro inequality—the removal of the commander of Fort Bragg because of his responsibility for the disgraceful anti-Negro incidents

that occurred there, the increase in the Negro military police and their arming, and the inclusion of many prominent Negroes in the Morale Division of the army. These are slight yet historic steps, for they indicate the beginning of the breakdown of the traditional army policy of discrimination. Of course, this process of democratization will not take place by itself. The role of labor and the Negro people is not to wait passively for the process to unfold, but to organize a movement for the equal integration of Negroes into the armed forces as an essential step for a united nation and a 100 per cent united and effective army, to make this fight an integral part of the supreme fight against Hitlerism.

Conclusion

The world justly admires the fighting mettle and the morale of the Red Army. When London sent a mission to Moscow soon after June 22 to assist and to teach the people of Moscow how to defend themselves against air raids, the mission stayed for a short while, and,

on returning to London, stated: "We have nothing to teach the Russians—they can teach us about air defense!" The whole world is learning about and from the Red Army. In fact, no nation can adequately defend itself against Nazi aggression unless it learns from the Red Army.

What specifically, in addition to military and technical experiences, must we learn from the heroic resistance of the Red Army against the Nazi hordes? The unity of the Army with the people and the Government; the fundamental understanding on the part of each soldier, sailor, and airman—in the ranks and in the command—of the issue at stake; and the ruthless destruction of all Fifth Columnists and agents of the enemy.

The American people, increasingly alert to the deadly menace of Hitlerism, must do all in their power to guarantee that the American army will become a decisive military force, which, in direct collaboration with the fighting forces of the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain, will achieve the annihilation of Hitlerism.