

SIR UNCLE SAM, KNIGHT OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

By John T. Whiteford
1940

In these days of national and international confusion and conflict there is one issue on which the American people are substantially in agreement -- We do not want war.

This great desire to keep out of war is perfectly logical. We know the cost of war from bitter experience. We are no more responsible for the outbreak of the present hostilities than we were in 1914. We are not an aggressor nation and we have no designs on foreign territory. We have nothing to gain and much to lose if we again take part in foreign wars. We have enough vital problems at home that require all of our attention and efforts. When and if the time should ever arrive, we shall be fully able and willing to defend our shores against foreign invasion.

There are, indeed, a thousand-and-one good reasons why we should stay out of foreign wars.

With all the self-evident advantages of peace for America as against the horrors of war in Europe and Asia, and with an overwhelming majority of our people against war, there still remains the ominous fact that there is a definite danger of this country drifting toward war. Even as in 1914, we are again being deluged and directed by foreign propaganda, only to a much larger extent. Again we have no clear understanding of the real issues involved. In our confusion we are again taking sides, mentally so far, but that is a ripe condition for expert foreign propagandists to lead us toward active participation in the present conflicts.

I would like to say to every American, "There is only one side we can take, and that is the American side." With this in mind, let us try to find out what are the real facts behind these foreign made conflicts, what are the basic issues at stake, and what are the forces that are so desperately working to again involve the United States in a world war. Only by facing facts and clearing our minds from the fog of selfish foreign propaganda can we arrive at the right answer to the question, "What is best for America?"

For all our so-called civilization, the impelling force behind the present struggles in Europe and in Asia is still the law of the jungle --the survival of the fittest. Whether we like to admit it or not, that same force guided the early settlers of New England and Virginia when they had to fight for their very existence in a strange and hostile land where they were not invited. In the conquest of this new continent our forefathers proved themselves the strongest--the fittest--and the original owners, the Indians, lost. Only by the process of applying their superior fitness could our ancestors have built themselves a new home, gained their independence, and created a rich and powerful nation. We, as their descendants, stand ready to defend our country with all our might if ever the time should come when we are called upon to show our fitness to "have and to hold" what we have gained. .

The struggle of the building of America is only one example of the struggle of mankind since the beginning. The greatest example of all time is the building of the greatest empire in history -- the British Empire -- covering roughly one-fourth of the world's land surface and inhabited by a quarter of the world's population.

When we speak of the British Empire we must bear in mind a much larger picture than just 13,300,000 square miles of land and 500,000,000 people. It is a huge international institution of world production, consumption, and distribution, with all the related activities of commerce, finance, shipping, industry, and so forth. This vast undertaking is not limited to the geographical borders of the Empire. Its influence extends to every port of the globe, from Hong Kong to Durban, from Gibraltar to Cairo, from Singapore to Aden, from Melbourne to Montreal, from Bombay to Bermuda, from London everywhere.

The very vastness of the British Empire and its operations constitutes a constant danger to itself and to the peace of the world. Whenever any other nation feels the urge to expand, for whatever reasons and in whatever direction, it automatically comes in conflict with the broad interests of the British Empire.

In the Orient the Sino-Japanese conflict is not only a local matter between China and Japan. It is in reality, a threat to British interests in China; to British "concessions" in China; to the huge British investments in China; to British control of Chinese railways and revenues; to British trade and shipping and even to the British port of Hong Kong in China. It is a blow to British prestige and power in the Orient, with repercussions throughout the world. It is actually a challenge to the British Empire. It brought from Britain a cry of outraged justice while at the same time she tried to deposit the Sino-Japanese problem into the lap of the United States.

When Italy marched into Ethiopia, Britain again became highly indignant. This was not because of a profound love for the Ethiopians, nor because Ethiopia might bring Italy great wealth. If Ethiopia had really been very valuable, that country could have been , and probably would have been , annexed to the British Empire long ago. The real reason for Britain's agitation was the fact that Italy dare challenge British power in the Mediterranean and endanger British control of the vital Suez Canal regions.

The Treaty of Versailles was in reality an instrument for the permanent elimination of Germany as a world competitor of Great Britain. For years after it's signing the Germany people chafed under this yolk, to the point where, defeated and discouraged Germany became dangerously close to becoming a communist soviet republic. Gradually German leadership took hold and pulled the people out of their spirit of defeatism and, as the pendulum swings, so has Germany again become a menace to Great Britain.

The great bear of Russia is also a definite threat to the British Empire, with it's communistic paws uncomfortably close to the Balkan and Suez Canal countries, to India and Burma, and already rearing heavily upon a large section of China.

Today, denuded of all propaganda, there is only one fundamental issue behind all the conflict in Europe and Asia -- the survival of the British Empire. That was also the real issue of the World War. It is the old challenge of Napoleon.

The most important international question before the people of this country and of the world is whether Great Britain can continue indefinitely to defend herself and her empire against all comers, singly or in combination, and prove her fitness to "have and to hold" her dominant world position. Therein also lies the key to the problem whether America may or may not again be drawn into a world war.

It seems to me that the answer to the above question is definite and indisputable -- Britain cannot win a major war in Europe and Asia without the active assistance of the most powerful of all nations, the United States. In their own interest the people of this country will have to make up their minds, soon and soberly and without being influenced by undue sentiment, whether America shall continue to gamble with her youth and her treasure to help defend the British Empire in every new crisis, or whether there are saner and better ways of insuring the peace of the world.

Today the greatest single menace to the peace of the United States is the same as in 1914. It can be summed up in one word - propaganda. Even as today, this country was neutral at the beginning of the World War and managed to stay out of it from 1914 until 1917. But during that time the foreign propaganda machines were working overtime to get us involved in a war that was decidedly not of our making. Finally, on April 6, 1917, America declared war on Germany and so became an active ally of Britain. In addition to the United States, the other allies were Belgium, Brazil, China, Cuba, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Italy, Japan, Nicaragua, Panama, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, and Siam. It is true that some of the Allies, like the United States, were active only during part of the war period while others were little more than benevolent bystanders. But against this powerful combination, the group of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria held out for more than 4 years, from August 1914 until November 1918, and the German group might have won the war but for the entrance of America into the conflict.

In the present crisis the only active allies of Britain are, so far, the British Empire units and France. If the conflict should spread into another world war Britain cannot again count on her former combination of allies; in fact, it is more than likely that some of these countries will be lined up against her. Therefore, the most powerful ally of all, the United States, must be kept in line by Britain against eventualities. That can only be accomplished through propaganda. And the British are past masters in the art of making gullible Americans swallow the bait of persuasive propaganda.

Few Americans realize the magnitude of British influence in this country. When I write frankly on this subject I fully understand that I lay myself open to the accusation of favoring Britain's enemies. That is not at all the case. I am only following the single track of being pro-American, and I would be grateful to any critics if they would join me on that straight road. I clearly see the menace of all subversive movements, as well as the great necessity of combating all these un-American activities. The point is that, in our justified agitation over communism, nazi-ism, and fascism, we are overlooking another subversive movement that has actually proven to be more destructive to our peace and welfare. In the past it has been largely responsible for drawing this country into the world war at a cost of thousands of our young men and billions of dollars and a long period of depression. It does not work openly and it is not generally recognized by the public. It does not yell from soap boxes in Union Square, call strikes, picket, or hold parades. It operates from the top down and so it reaches into every stratum of American life. It is the far-reaching power of British Propaganda to make this country subservient to the interests of Great Britain and the British Empire.

The scene is a banquet held at the Hotel Plaza, New York City, Oct. 25, 1939. This banquet was given by the Pilgrim Society of America in honor of the Marquess of Lothian, British Ambassador to the United States. It is an old custom of the American Pilgrims to extend this honor to every newly appointed British Ambassador, the same as the British Pilgrims invite every new American Ambassador to their midst at a banquet in London.

There are several curious things about these Pilgrims functions. In the first place there is present at these dinners an array of notables such as it would be difficult to bring together under one roof for any other purpose

and by any other society. The Lothian dinner was no exception. Presiding over this affair was Dr. Nicholas Murrey Butler, President of Columbia University, and Chairman of the American Pilgrim Society. Among the guests were John D. Rockefeller and J.P. Morgan, Thomas W. Lamont and other members of the House of Morgan, Frank L. Polk, Jeremiah Milbank, James W. Gerard (former American Ambassador to Germany), the French Ambassador to the United States, Lt. Gen. Hugh A. Drum, U.S.A., Maj. Gen. John G. Harbord (chairman of the Radio Corporation of America), the Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, and many other leading figures in government, diplomacy, politics, finance, banking, shipping, law, industry, insurance, and education. These men had come especially to honor Lord. Lothian and to hear him speak. Before this important audience Lord Lothian's speech could not merely be a light after-dinner talk of clever stories and witticisms. It was an important speech and as such and as such it was carried by the New York Times as front-page news.

As a highly experienced publicist, Lord Lothian opened his remarks with the naive statement that his country has no propaganda in America; that he would merely explain his country's position. The "explanation of his country's position" developed into the same old theme of most British statesmen, writers, lecturers, publicists, and other trumpeters for Anglo-American unity. It can be summed up in one stereo-typed formula : "For your own good and for the good of the world, these two great democracies, the British Empire and the United States, must stick together." What this plea to America really amounts to is this : "We have the largest empire in the world. Never mind how we got it. The trouble is that we may not be able to hang onto it much longer. America is rich and powerful and wants no more additional territory. You should help us out whenever we get into trouble so that we can continue to enjoy what we have."

Lord Lothian practically confirmed that message when he wrote in Foreign Affairs, 1936 :

"The situation of the last century cannot be re-created by Great Britain alone. She is not strong enough. But the United States, the South American republics, and the nations of the modern British Commonwealth could together re-create it. * * * They also are both democratic and territorially satisfied * * * "

And the morning after the Pilgrim dinner a front page headline in the New York Times read : "Lothian asks unity in democratic aims."

There is something magnetic about the word "democratic." It is very dear to Americans and it means much to them. Once they even went to war * * * "to make the world safe for democracy." They may again be fooled by an appeal to democracy. Knowing this, it has become a valuable vehicle for foreign propagandists, and its real meaning is lost sight of in the confusion. The Communist Party of America, for instance, has officially adopted democracy in its constitution, in its literature, in speeches, and generally as an appealing propaganda attraction in selling their un-American ideology to the American people. * * * All democratic workers must stick together. It is a favorable theme with the radical labor wing.

And now we witness the weird spectacle of titled British visitors, from Ambassadors to platform lecturers, using the same tactics in selling their story. * * * We great democracies must stand together.

What kind of democracy are we asked to adopt and to defend? The un-American brand of Marx, of Engels, of Lenin, of Stalin, of the Communist International. * * * Or the democracy of imperialistic Britain, of India, of Ceylon, of Burma, or Hong Kong, or Africa? * * * The democracy of the soap-box orators of Union Square, or the democracy of the Pilgrim banquets at the best hotels of London and New York?

Or shall we stand by our own conception of democracy, safe under the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, which still give us far more genuine personal liberty and opportunity than any other people in any other country of the world? If so, let us not forget that today, more than ever, the price of our liberty is eternal vigilance.

We must keep the bright spotlight of public opinion on all under-cover and un-American activities so that we may learn the truth and act accordingly. And we are entitled to know what the Pilgrim Society is, what it stands for, and who these powerful Pilgrims are that can call out the great to hear a British Ambassador expound to Americans the virtues of a united democratic front.

The Pilgrim Society originated in London, July 11, 1902, as an Anglo-American club of important Englishmen and Americans. An American branch was formed January 13, 1903, at the old Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York. Both Societies are commonly known as The Pilgrims.

An extract of the Pilgrim constitution reads :

"The object of the society shall be the promotion of the sentiment of brotherhood among the nations, and especially the cultivation of good fellowship between citizens of the United States and its dependencies and subjects of the British Empire.

"The members shall be citizens of the United States or its dependencies or subjects of the British Empire, and others prominent for their sympathy with the objects of the society, who shall be elected by the executive committee, and membership in the London Pilgrims shall ipso facto constitute membership in the New York

society, and vice versa, without additional dues. The membership shall be limited to 900. The number may be altered by the executive committee."

Nothing is more needed in the world than a "sentiment of brotherhood among the nations. Nowhere is the promotion of that sentiment more urgently and desperately needed than in Europe and in Asia. This was so even in 1902. But the group of eminent men who formed the Pilgrim Society in London did not step across the English Channel to hold out the hand of brotherhood to the weary nations of nearby Europe. Instead they preferred to reach out across the Atlantic for the special purpose of cultivating "good fellowship" between leading British and American citizens. This beautiful sentiment rose to a climax in 1917, when thousands of American good fellows crossed the Atlantic to fight other people's battles, and when the United States Treasury opened wide its purse to the Allies and lent them whatever they wanted. Then, indeed, Uncle Sam, became the good knight of the British Empire. But when the battle was over -- over there -- and when the same Uncle Sam timidly suggested repayment of some of the billions of dollars of war debts, he was immediately dubbed "Uncle Shylock" by these same Allies. "Good fellowship" is difficult to define, like friendship, but whatever the definition is it should work both ways.

Who are these good fellows that are so deeply interested in British-American friendship and in "united democracy"? They are none other than the 900 of British-American aristocracy. They represent, as a body, the most powerful combination of men of wealth and influence on both sides of the Atlantic. They, the Pilgrims' membership in America and Great Britain, have included and still include men in the highest position of government, in diplomacy, in finance, in banking, in education, in the church, in literature, in publishing, in commerce, in industry, in shipping, and in practically all other important fields of national and international activities.

The president of the British Pilgrims is His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught, great uncle of the present King. As vice presidents are listed : The Most Reverend His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury; The Right Honorable Viscount Hailsham, P.C.; the Lord Desbrough, K.G., G. C. V. O.; Sir Harry E. Brittain, K. C., L. L. B., O. O. C. The membership of the British Pilgrims reads like an index to British leadership.

The president of the American Pilgrims is Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University. Dr. Butler has worked long and faithfully with the British. A United Press dispatch from London, December 6th, 1939, stated : "In the 1940 edition of the British Who's Who, appearing today, the longest biography is that of Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University, who occupies more than a column and a half of small print -- the equivalent of the combined biographies of Mussolini, Hitler, Prime Minister Chamberlain, and President Roosevelt."

Vice presidents of the New York Pilgrims are :

Herbert L. Satterlee (brother-in-law of J.P. Morgan), James W. Gerard, G. C. B. (former American Ambassador to Germany), the Right Reverend James DeWolf Perry, Elihu Root (deceased).

The executive committee of the New York Pilgrims consists of : Thomas W. Lamont, Franklin Q. Brown, George W. Burleigh, John H. Finey, Frederick R. Coudert, Edward F. Darrell, James G. Harbord, K. C. M. G. , D. S. M., Theodore Hetzler, the Right Reverend William T. Manning, Gates W. McGarrah, Bryce Metcalf, Frank L. Polk, William Shields, Myron C. Taylor, Harry Edwin Ward, Charles S. Whitman, Owen D. Young.

As honorary members of the New York Pilgrims are listed :

H. R. H. the Prince of Wales, K. G., H. R. H., the Duke of York, K. G., the British Ambassador to the United States, His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of State of the United States, the British Consul General in New York City.

A few prominent Pilgrim members, past and present, are listed below :

J.P. Morgan, Russel Leffingwell, Henry P. Davison, John W. Davis, John D. Rockefeller, Percy Rockefeller, Ogden Mills Reid, Henry Morganthou, Otto Kahn, Robert Fulton Cutting, James B. Clews, John B. Trevor, William Fellows Morgan, Henry W. Taft, Adolph Ochs, James Speyer, Charles H. Sabin, Sir Ashley Sparks, George F. Trowbridge, Philip Rhineland, Andrew W. Mellon, Albert H. Wiggin, J. W. Hill, John F. O'Ryan, Frank L. Polk, George L. Goethals, Julius Ochs Adler, Alfred L. Aiken, Herbert L. Aldrich, John Whitney, W. B. Whitney, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Vincent Astor, Julius S. Bache, Robert Low Bacon, Ansell H. Ball, David H. Bittle, Robert W. Bigelow, Irving T. Bush, Newcomb Carlton, Joseph. H. Choate, William M. Chadbourne, Walter P. Chrysler, Thomas W. Lamont, George F. Baker, John Bassett Moore, Dwight W. Morrow, George W. Wickersham, John George Milburn, Mortimer L. Schiff, Paul M. Warburg, Paul Outbridge, Ivy Lee, Chauncey Depew, Charles M. Schwab, Frederic R. Coudert, Marshall Field, Paul D. Cravath, Edward S. Harkness, Oliver Harriman, Edward L. Dodge, Frederick H. Ecker, Harry Harkness Flagler, George L. Genung, Walter S. Gifford, Cass Gilbert, Edwin H. Gould, Duncan William Fraser, Robert Erskine Ely, Harry Alanzo Cushing, Frederick W. Budd, Henry Holt, J. G. White, Henry Johnson Fisher, Edward Harrick Childs and

William Phelps Ely.

The present membership in the American Pilgrims, and those who have passed away, represent the leadership of America in many important fields. We find among these a candidate for President of the United States, a Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Attorney General, Ambassadors, Solicitor General, Senators and Congressmen; presidents of the largest banks and financial institutions; presidents and directors of the United States Steel Corporation, and many other large industrial corporations; of the American Telephone and Telegraph Co.; of the Radio Corporation of America; of insurance and shipping companies. Here are also to be found the members of the leading law firms serving these banks and industries, as well as the interpreters of international law; editors, publishers, and owners of America's leading newspapers; experts in publicity; social and financial leaders and generally the group of men whose influence is capable of exerting great pressure on government and public opinion.

At the outbreak of the present hostilities in Europe, President Roosevelt expressed himself strongly on the necessity for maintaining our neutrality and he promised to do all within his power to keep this country out of war. That is also the great hope and desire of the American people. The Pilgrims and Dr. Butler disagree with this.

At a dinner in New York, at the Biltmore Hotel, February 9, 1928, in celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Pilgrims, Dr. Butler said in a speech :

"Among other things the great war has proved conclusively that in a contest of those colossal proportions there were no neutrals * * * if the world should ever again become engulfed in another titanic struggle there would be and there could be no neutrals."

At this particular dinner, during which Dr. Butler expressed these sentiments so contrary to the real hopes and wishes of the American people, three telegrams were received and read to the celebrating American Pilgrims. One came from the King of England, one from the uncle of the King, and one from the Prince of Wales, the future King, now the Duke of Windsor.

The message from King George V was read by Sir Austin Chamberlain :

The King has pleasure in congratulating the Pilgrims of the United States on the occasion of their twenty-fifth anniversary, and His Majesty takes this opportunity of conveying to them his good wishes for the future."

The future, according to the Pilgrims, does not include neutrality.

The message from the King's Uncle, the Duke of Connaught, read : " * * * The cause of promoting cordial friendship between our two great countries is one on which the future happiness of the world in a great measure depends. Ever since I have been president of the British Pilgrims I have realized to the full the success of the work carried on by the two societies with this common object in view."

Here again we have the same old story, whether it comes from an uncle of the King, from a British Ambassador, or from a platform lecturer * * * friendship * * * two great countries * * * common object. Here democracy was not mentioned, nor the promotion of brotherhood among the nations.

The message from the Prince of Wales read :

"As a Pilgrim of nearly 9 years' standing I am very glad to send my brother Pilgrims in New York my warmest congratulations on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the club's inception in the United States. There have been many changes in the world during the past quarter of a century but ties which unite the Pilgrims on each side of the Atlantic remain firm as ever * * * (signed) EDWARD."

The British Royal family certainly shows an extraordinary interest in a group of American citizens dining in New York. Since that time tremendous changes have occurred to Edward personally, as well as to the world, but he was right in his prediction that the Pilgrims ties "remain firm as ever."

Since we are dining so exaltedly, let us go to London and look at a dinner at the Savoy Hotel, April 12, 1917, of the Pilgrims of London "on the occasion of entry of the United States into the Great War of Freedom." The guest of honor was His Excellency, the American Ambassador, Walter Hines Page.

The speeches at the dinner gave a clear expression of the "ties that bind" the American Pilgrims to London and confirmed Dr. Butler's conviction that "there were no neutrals" in the World War.

Sir Harry E. Brittain, chairman :

"I should like to read two cables which have arrived within the last few minutes from New York. The first is from our good friends and fellow members, the Pilgrims of America, and it reads as follows :

"At last the Union Jack and the Stars and Strips are nailed to the same staff not to come down until the job is done. Our boys in Khaki are anxious to rub shoulders with yours in France and share your struggle and your triumph in Freedom's cause. The Pilgrims' dream of 15 years at length has come to pass. (Signed) George T. Wilson, chairman." (Loud Cheers.)

"The other message is from one who has been frequently and deservedly called the "Allies" best friend in

America, that very excellent Pilgrim, James M. Beck. His cable reads :

"Joyous filicitations to the British Pilgrims now assembled to celebrate unity in blood brotherhood of English-speaking races. The day which Prussia did not want has come, when the flags of Great Britain, France, and the United States float together in defense of civilization. All hail the greater Entente which opens a new and more resplendent chapter in the history of our common race. To all who welcomed me so kindly last summer a cordial greeting at this great hour. (Signed) James M. Beck." [Loud and prolonged cheers] (James M. Beck, prominent attorney, born in Philadelphia; United States Attorney for eastern district Pennsylvania; Assistant Attorney General of the United States 1900-1903; Solicitor General of the United States, 1921-25; Member of Congress, 1937.)

Good fellows, these American Pilgrims, or shall we say British colonials?

The Pilgrims dream of 15 years turned into a nightmare for our boys in Khaki, but the unity in blood brotherhood is still the goal of this one-way friendship between British and American aristocracy.

Viscount Bryce, former British Ambassador to the United States, spoke as chairman of the London Pilgrims May we never have such a speech again. He said, in part :

"When the United States of America, renouncing the isolation which it had cherished since the days of Washington, obeyed the supreme call of duty and set herself in arms beside the free nations of the world in order to save the future of humanity, she took a step of full solumn significance for all the ages to come.

"And now, gentlemen, what is America going to do in this war? She is already doing what those who know her best expected from her. She waited long enough to be quite satisfied that honor and duty called her to arms. After long forbearance, when she was satisfied that the German Government was resolved to persevere with it's barbarous and insulting policy, and that the whole feeling of the Nation had been aroused and concentrated as to be virtually unanimous, then America stepped to the front; then she barred her strong arm; then she began to throw all her resources, all her energy, all her inventive versatility, into the development of every possible means for the vigorous prosecution of the war.

"Gentlemen, America is in the war now for all she is worth [hear, hear] and how much that means those best know who know America best. (Cheers), She will persevere to the end, for she knows what a sucessful end means to the future welfare of the world."

No one knew better than Lord Bryce how much America was worth as an ally of Great Britain. With enormous British hypocrisy he made it appear that America bared her strong arm to save the future of humanity and the welfare of the world, when in reality America came to the assistance of only one-quarter of the world, the British Empire.

Lord Robert Cecil was less diplomatic. Considering that the Pilgrim meetings in London have almost the status of official functions, owing to the important attendance, Lord Cecil overstepped the limits of diplomatic decency when he said at this dinner in honor of the America Ambassador :

"May I add one word about the staff of the American Embassy? [Hear, hear] Many of us have had personal relations of a very friendly kind with several members of that staff, and they have always preserved the most accurate and correct neutrality in talking with us (laughter) but, somehow or another, after after a conversation with any of them, we went away feeling as one does, after having recieved a hearty grasp of the hand from a friend and an earnest and heartfelt wish of Godspeed to our cause. [Cheers.]

"Well, gentlemen, neutrality is no longer necessary [Hear, hear], and we all say thank God for that." [Hear, hear.]

Dr. Butler was right. There was no neutrality, not even in the American Embassy, before this country went into war. It was a joke to Lord Cecil and the Pilgrims.

The guest of honor, Walter Hines Page, spoke before this London group of British -American notables in his capacity as United States Ambassador to Great Britain, representing the American government and the American people. He said, in part :

"As for the particular aspects of this great subject with which this club has from it's beginning had to do -- the closer sympathy of the two branches of the great English-speaking peoples -- next to the removal of the great menace to free government, which is the prime purpose of the war, this closer sympathy will be to us the most important result of the victory. It will be important not only to us on each side of the Atlantic, but also to all other free nations."

And then Mr. Page made one of the strongest admissions that any diplomat could make under the circumstances. It is taken from the Pilgrim records as are all these quotations.

"Seven years ago an admiral of our Navy, Rear Admiral Sims, who sits now at this table, declared in the Guildhall that if ever the English race were pressed hard for ships, every ship that the United States had would come to the rescue. A great prophet as well as a great seaman, he has not been rebuked for that on this side of

the water. [Cheers.]

"For my part I am stirred to the depths of my nature by this American companionship in arms with the British and their Allies, not only for the quicker ending of the war, but, I hope, for a moral union which will bring a new era in international relations.

"My lords and gentlemen, your generous and great compliment to me by making this large gathering in my honor is your way of expressing appreciation of the action of the Government and people that I represent and of the President at whose high command I have the honor to be among you in these historic and immortal days. I thank you with deep emotion."

It would have been more appropriate for the British to thank Mr. Page, with or without emotion, and to show their appreciation of America's participation in the great war of freedom in a more substantial manner than by getting together an imposing array of British notables for Pilgrim dinner. It is interesting to note that among those who accepted the invitation of the Pilgrims so to honor Mr. Page were none other than Neville Chamberlain and Winston Churchill who are now leading another war for freedom, while the British Ambassador to Washington is leading another campaign in this country for unity of democracies.

In the nature of their exclusive membership and activities, the Pilgrims may be termed the wholesale agency for promoting the interests of Britain in this country. It is strictly a Tory organization. The retail outlet is the more widely known English-Speaking Union, which has for its avowed purpose :

"To draw together in the bond of comradeship the English speaking people of the United States and of the British Empire by (a) disseminating knowledge of each to the other and (b) inspiring reverence for their common institutions."

It is interesting to note that the English-Speaking Union originated in London in the fateful year in 1917, when America bared her strong arm in defense of democracy. Like the Pilgrims, the English-Speaking Union has a British organization with headquarters in London and an American branch with central offices in New York. The purpose of the two organizations are virtually the same and there is an interlocking directorate and membership.

The patron of the English-Speaking Union (London) is His Majesty the King. The honorary president of the American English-Speaking Union is the prominent Pilgrim, John W. Davis, successor to the late Walter Hines Page as America's wartime Ambassador to the Court of St. James. Presidential candidate in 1924, and member of J.P. Morgan and Co. As treasurer of the American English-Speaking Union is listed Harry P. Davison, also a Morgan partner, whose father was instrumental in having J.P. Morgan appointed exclusive purchasing agents for the British Government in America during the World War. Another director of the English-Speaking Union is Maj. Gen. James G. Harbord, chairman of the Radio Corporation of America, and also a member of the executive committee of the Pilgrims.

As a valuable retail outlet for British propaganda, the English-Speaking Union of the United States covers this country with branches and correspondents in the following cities : Baltimore, Md.; Boston, Mass.; Buffalo, N. Y.; Chautauqua, N. Y.; Chicago, Ill.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Cleveland, Ohio; Columbus, Ohio; Dallas, Tx.; Denver, Colo.; Des Moines, Iowa; Indianapolis, Ind.; Lake Placid, N.Y.; Lincoln, Nebr.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Louisville, Ky.; Milwaukee, Wis.; New York, N. Y.; Minneapolis, Minn.; New Orleans, La.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Princeton, N. J.; Providence, R.I.; Richmond, Va.; St. Louis, Mo.; Salt Lake City, Utah; San Diego, Calif.; San Francisco, Calif.; Santa Barbara, Calif.; Savannah, Ga.; Seattle Wash.; Sewanee, Tenn.; Spokane, Wash.; Tacoma, Wash.; Washington, D.C.

The English-Speaking Union seeks to "draw together in the bond of comradeship" the people of this country and the British Empire. But let us not forget that in 1917 the Pilgrims spoke of "blood-brotherhood" and "comrades in arms." And now, when Britain is again at war, Sir Evelyn Wrench, C. M. G., LL. D., chairman of the English-Speaking Union of London (also a Pilgrim member), addresses his fellow members of the union in *The English-Speaking World*, October 1939, with the warning call :

"The English-Speaking Union was born 21 years ago during the Great War and it has an even greater function to play in the present crises. We know we can count on your support."

The founders of the Republic speak to us today through the immortal words of George Washington :

"Against the wiles of foreign influence * * * the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since experience and history prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government."

And yet, such are the times and such are the forces a century and a half after Valley Forge that many Americans, including many leaders of America, are advocating policies and ideologies foreign and contrary to the very fundamentals on which this nation was founded. There is indeed a new Declaration of Independence and a rededication to the proven principles of our form of government.

In our position as a rich and powerful nation we can no longer avoid the responsibility of leadership in a

wilderness of foreign conflict. President Roosevelt, in his message to Congress, January 2, 1940, said that "in almost every nation of the world there is a true belief that the United States has been, and will continue to be, a potent and active factor in seeking the reestablishment of peace."

If we are to accept and to act the role of peacemaker, the first requisite should be to stand before the world with clean hands and a cool head, fair and impartial to all, and free from any taint of favoritism and prejudice. Without this we would hold out false hopes to a war-weary world; we would not be entitled to the respect and cooperation of the embattled nations; the sincerity of our motives would be justifiably questioned, and we would fall, to the detriment of all concerned, including ourselves.

As a "potent and active" factor for world peace we cannot in this meantime accept the one-sided doctrine of "unity" between the United States and the British Empire"; we cannot honestly and decently pose as an impartial apostle of world peace and at the same time act as the guardian angel of the British Empire; we cannot look fairly at the world through the meshes of the network of British propaganda; we cannot again allow our statesmen, our ambassadors, our leading bankers, lawyers, industrialists, churchmen, educators, and publishers to sway the sentiment of our Government and our people in favor of one side, a foreign side, inherently and basically non-American.

We have before us a costly lesson from the past to the present as a guide to the future. Let us remember 1914, and not forget in 1940 that a rising tide of war hysteria completely engulfed our government and our people. The climax came on April 6, 1917, with an American declaration of war, approved by an overwhelming majority of a joint session of Congress. Only 56 out of 518 Senators and Representatives voted against war. Of the members of the Senate only 6 dared cast their votes against the tides of war. One of these few, Senator Robert La Follette, Sr. addressed the President from the floor of the Senate with words that might well be repeated today :

There is always lodged, and always will be, thank the God above us, power in the people supreme. Sometimes it sleeps, sometimes it seems the sleep of death; but, sir, the sovereign power of the people never dies. It may be suppressed for a time, it may be misled, be fooled, silenced. I think, Mr. President, that it is being denied expression now. I think there will come a day when it will have expression.

"The poor sir, who are the ones called upon to rot in the trenches, have no organized power, have no press to voice their will on this question of peace or war; but oh, Mr. President, at some time they will be heard - there will come an awakening; they will have their day and they will be heard. It will be as certain and as inevitable as the return of the tides, and as restless, too."

Today, with a warm heart full of sympathy for all the suffering in the world, we must firmly maintain our independence of thought and action, free from all foreign influence and entanglements so that we may think and speak and act as unimpaired Americans. Only then can we give the best answer to the question, What is best for America?