

The Proposed C. P. Changes

By Robert Minor

"What if our President were defeated at the coming elections and a reactionary elected was to refuse recognition of the Tehran decisions?"

We don't think the President is going to be defeated and we don't think the United States is going to fail to carry through the Tehran agreement.

But, since many strange things can happen, and since whatever happens will depend upon the clarity of mind and the action of the people of the United States between now and November — we must take the question at face value. We take both of its "ifs" quite seriously, knowing that they are asked in good faith. And if in tracing out the consequences of these "ifs" we reach some rather startling results, it will answer the question all the more effectively.

We must not deceive ourselves by trying to make a distinction between the Tehran agreement and the act of our country in making war against Nazi Germany. The Tehran agreement is in itself the full expression of the policy of making war in the only manner in which it can be made, by the strengthened coalition. Extension of the coalition into the future and beyond the period of military action, for maintenance of peace and the corollary economic cooperation "for many generations," is an inseparable part of the agreement to fight together. To cancel this common purpose of the military struggle would be merely the logical manner of withdrawing from the military struggle.

If the United States cancelled or failed to carry out the agreement made at Tehran by President Roosevelt and at Moscow by Secretary Hull, the results would obviously be:

The coalition, as far as the United States is concerned, would be dissolved.

If the defeat of Germany had not been accomplished prior to the inauguration of a Dewey or a Taft in the Presidency, we have to suppose that the attitude of Dewey as he last expressed it—is confirmation this year of what he had said on Jan. 20, 1940, that a coalition of this sort would be a "fantastic partnership with Russia," that "we need no such partnerships," and that even the recognition of Soviet Russia was a "departure" from sound policy—would indicate the course that would be followed. Or, if it were Taft in the Presidency, the obvious support of Hitler's "Peace Now" movement in the United States by Mr. Taft, not alone through his wife's direct participation, but by Taft's own support of the essential slogans of that movement — would indicate that the desire of such an administration would fully accord with Hitler's and Tojo's present effort to crack the coalition and to bring about what is called "a negotiated peace."

That this would mean throwing the world into a new chaos is obvious.

We are obliged to admit that if a candidate representing opposition to the Tehran agreement became President next January, with the war in Europe still in progress—this would be the greatest triumph that Hitler would have achieved since his conquest of Western Europe and the installation of his supporters at Vichy, France. We cannot undertake to speculate on whether the withdrawal of the United States from the coalition would result in the revival and triumph in Great Britain of the anti-war forces led by the British twin souls of Dewey and Taft and Farley, and we must be excused from

speculating upon the obvious problem as to a "withdrawal" of Great Britain from the coalition, which would in fact, of course be identical with the "withdrawal" of France in 1940, spelling the downfall of Great Britain as it spelled the downfall of France. At any rate, the withdrawal of the United States from the coalition would beyond doubt strengthen the chances for Hitler to survive and would increase his capacity to make war.

The only thing that would be certain, in that event, would be that Russia will not be defeated. Soviet Russia's capacity to make war has already proven that as between Russia and Germany, Russia will be the victor in any event.

We will make no prophesies as to whether the hammer of the Red Army would be able completely to exterminate the Nazi government of Germany if and when the American anvil was withdrawn by a Dewey or a Taft.

The Tehran agreement is a vast arrangement for the winning of a war and for long-time military security. With a repudiation of Tehran, the security of the United States would be an appalling problem.

If the complete crushing and extermination of the German Nazi machine were not accomplished, it is obvious that the Hitler axis would continue, and in all probability Japan would be able to hold most of her Pacific and Asiatic conquests. This is so, whether or not the example of a Dewey or a Taft would have the corollary effect on England.

Every authority — no matter of what political school—knows that the continuation of the existence of the Axis would be the preparation for the next war, and all know that it would necessarily be directed to the purpose of removing from the path of Germany and Japan the most powerful of their competitors. That this most powerful competitor is the United States is proven by two world wars and none but Hitler and Hearst would even equivocate about it.

War departments of all nations necessarily calculate the probable relationship of forces in any coming military contest. All of our military men see that—in case the Axis were to survive this war and Japan to retain most of her present conquests—then practically all of the manpower, arms and naval power of all of Europe and all of Asia—with only the exception of Soviet Russia — would be at the disposal of the surviving Axis for a final contest with us. We leave out consideration of its effect on South America. It would be a ratio of strength of at least 10 to one in manpower, enormous superiority in arms, and at least two to one superiority in naval strength, against us.

All of which helps to show why the Tehran agreement was made by President Roosevelt.

But suppose the victory of the United Nations over Germany is won this year—as we think it will be—prior to any possible change in administration. If, in accord with the terms of the question, we assume that an anti-Tehran American administration were to come into power after this victory over Hitler Germany—this itself would have results hardly less catastrophic for the United States.

It would mean a renunciation by the United States of the economic and political cooperation by the Tehran agreement of the United States with the whole European continent and Great Britain. (We leave out for the moment the consequences to the war with Japan.)

In this case the whole of continental Europe, freed from the occupation armies of Hitler, together with Great Britain presumably, and certainly with the Soviet Union, would proceed to set up their own terms of economic cooperation to

the best of their ability, for the rehabilitation of Europe and of continental Asia through the cooperation of a huge system of states embracing the three-fourths of the population of the world that live in Europe, Asia and Africa, independently of the United States.

And "if" this happened, the United States would slip back into a position no longer representing the progressive development of the world, but the opposite.

It is not our "if." We don't think it will happen. But we must follow that "if" to its bitter end.

It was under the conditions of 1918, in the midst of the first World War that the proposal of the establishment of a "United States of Europe" drew from Lenin a condemnation on several grounds, in stating which Lenin said:

"In comparison with the United States of America, Europe as a whole implies economic stagnation. On the present economic basis, i.e., under capitalism, the United States of Europe would mean the organization of reaction to retard the more rapid development of America."

But under the conditions after the victory of the United Nations and destruction of Hitler, a coalition for economic and political cooperation of all of the states of Europe (and it would now include also the continent of Asia) exclusive of the United States would not in any sense whatsoever be a reactionary coalition. It could not be described as Lenin put the matter in 1918, as a reactionary coalition directed against a progressive United States of America.

But what would be the consequences to our country of its withdrawal from such a coalition? It would not even be possible for the United States to be effective in the role of a reactionary force hostile to such a progressive coalition. The consequences would be economic catastrophe for the United States with all of the inevitable political convulsions that would result from having tens of millions unemployed in this enormously developed and wealthy nation shut off from the world and the world market. Under modern conditions we, a country of 130 million people, cannot exist isolated in a world of 2,160 millions.

But what would keep the United States from forming a different kind of a coalition? A coalition with whom? Is there anyone who dreams that such a coalition could be made with any powers of the European continent excluding Soviet Russia or England—either or both? Or does anyone dream that such a coalition could be made successfully with any portion of Asia, not including Soviet Russia, and, in fact, also the British Commonwealth? There is no such possibility.

Our question has taken us on a dizzy flight. We didn't begin it. It is those "ifs." We had to take them at face value in order to show that a rejection of the Tehran agreement by the United States would constitute such a policy of national ruin that it is extremely unlikely that the hard-headed people of the United States — businessmen, bankers, farmers, intellectuals, conscripted American boys and their home folks, and, most solid of all, 13,000,000 members of the trade unions and their voting relatives, will follow such a course.

"Please explain the significance of Russia's recognition of the Badoglio government in Italy." . . . "Should we support Badoglio and Victor Emmanuel, or should we support the position of the Italian Communist Party?" . . . "How would you reconcile the recognition of the Badoglio government by the Soviet Union with our hope of truly democratic government in all countries of Europe?"

Answers to Questions