

RADIO BROADCAST, October 19, 1941

Good Morning, Friends:

Washington is calm over the threat of war with Japan. The calm may be ominous. Most officials recognize that there is real danger of war with Japan but they also realize that it is the moves by Japan which will determine the question of war or peace. Japan's motive is clear. They have waited impatiently for Hitler to knock out European Russia and turn on Britain so that they, the Japanese, can make a grab, like a scavenger, upon the rich strategic South Seas and upon Siberia. Hitler, in turn, has waited for Japan to start trouble with the United States in the hope that this would divert America's might and America's aid from Great Britain to the Pacific.

The change in the Tokyo cabinet is interpreted here as evidence that Japan thinks it is time for her to move. If she moves upon our life lines to rubber, to manganese, to chromite, graphite, hemp, tin, and other materials essential for our nation's welfare, then our duty is clear. The United States probably would not go to war to prevent Japan from closing the Vladivostok door through which the bulk of our aid to Russia must pass, but we would undoubtedly retaliate by stopping all shipment of oil and other things to Japan and this would probably prompt Japan to attempt to seize the Dutch East Indies, because the Japanese have very little oil and their military machine can not function without oil. Such a move would lead to shooting. There seems to be no doubt that the United States is ready and determined to defend her interests in the South Pacific. The starting of a war in the South Pacific rests upon the decision of Japan; and the calm which now pervades this nation's capitol is not unlike the calm with which a patient enters the operating room for a serious but necessary and unavoidable operation.

Washington learned of the torpedoing of the United States destroyer, Kearney, on Friday, but even in spite of this news, 138 members voted against

arming United States merchant vessels. Fortunately, 259 voted in favor of arming the vessels. The right to defend one's self - the law of self defense - is common to mankind. It is almost beyond understanding how 138 members of Congress would vote against arming our ships when they are being sunk upon the high seas. Certainly, this nation owes it to the seamen aboard these vessels to give them at least a chance to defend themselves. Bring this home to yourself. If you were going into an area which you knew to be without police protection and you also knew that there were desperadoes within this area who robbed and killed unprotected people, would you not, before entering such an area, fully arm yourself in order that you could defend yourself? Certainly you would.

The isolationists are trying to justify their stand by saying that an armed merchant vessel can not put up an effective fight against a submarine. Perhaps it is no match in fighting power, but you may be sure that no submarine is going to emerge from the briney deep immediately along side an armed merchant vessel and sink it with one pot-shot from a deck gun. If the merchant vessel is armed, the submarine will either keep its distance or fire its torpedo from beneath the surface from where, in either event, the aim is much less accurate.

The isolationists further attempt to justify their opposition to the arming of vessels by saying that this is the entering wedge for the repeal of the neutrality law. That is beside the point. The question at issue must be decided upon its own merit. Perhaps it is an entering wedge. Undoubtedly the Administration wants the whole Act repealed.

The Neutrality law, passed by Congress and approved by the President in 1935, grew out of the period of reaction which followed the first World War. The first big dent in the law came after the outbreak of the war in 1939 when Congress, being called into special session, lifted the embargo against supplying war materials to fighting nations and legalized our export of munitions of war on a cash and carry basis.

The second big dent in the Neutrality Law came when the Lend-Lease Act was passed last March. This had the effect of nullifying the cash and carry provisions. If the Senate passes the bill to arm our ships, it will be the third big dent in the law. There would still remain the prohibition against American merchant ships going into combat zones and into the ports of Hitler's enemies. The Neutrality Law assumes that the United States can stay out of war by having as little to do with it as possible. The Lend-Lease Act assumes that the United States has a stake in the survival of Great Britain and that the United States can best avoid war by assisting those nations who are fighting its spread. These policies are diametrically opposed.

By solemn enactment of Congress in the passage of the Lease-Lend Act and subsequent huge appropriations to carry out the purposes of the Act, the United States adopted the policy of aiding Great Britain and every other nation fighting against the spread of aggression. It may become necessary to carry these supplies in our own ships in order to get them into the hands of people who will use them in their own and in our own defense against this terrible wave of tyranny. If it became necessary for our own defense to deliver Lease-Lend goods in our own

ships, we could not do so because of the Neutrality Act - no matter how urgent the need. For that reason alone, if for no other, the Act should be repealed.

There are other inconsistencies in the Act. For example, ships flying the American flag can go to Newfoundland, Iceland, and Greenland, but cannot go to nearby Halifax. Ships flying the American flag can go to the Red Sea or to Vladivostok but can not go to Australia or South Africa. United States-owned ships flying the Panamanian flag can be armed, but United States ships flying the American flag can not. American naval vessels can legally convoy British ships into combat zones, but American merchant ships can not go into these zones. American ships are not permitted to carry war materials to Britain but this country is making war materials as fast as she can to aid Britain.

The Lend-Lease policy and the Neutrality Act are antagonistic to each other. The isolationists would continue these incongruities. The isolationists propose: (1) that we continue to play into Hitler's hands; (2) that we keep the shipping arm of this nation tied so that we could not use it swiftly and decisively no matter how urgently needed for our own defense; (3) that we refuse to make effective the Lend-Lease Act which is the declared policy of the United States; (4) that we continue to waive our right to the freedom of the seas even though it may become vitally necessary for the defense of this nation; (5) that we must use a horse and buggy concept of defense; (6) that we isolate ourselves economically, politically, and militarily. That is the heart and core of the policy which they propose for this nation!

The outcome of the struggle for freedom of the seas may determine the outcome of the war. We have often referred to the fact that we are protected by the Atlantic on our East and the Pacific on our West. The oceans do afford protection to us, but if control of the oceans falls into the hands of our enemies, they could then serve as a broad thoroughfare over which enemies could approach our shores, blockade our ports, and cut us off from ~~free~~^{friendly} nations, both in and out of the Western hemisphere, ^{and} ~~to~~ cut us off from strategic supplies which are absolutely ~~needed~~ essential to our industrial life. It is, therefore, of foremost concern to us that control of the seas does not fall into the hands of our aggressor enemies. This can not be said too often.

No true American would like to see an American vessel sunk, and for that ^{is} reason, many Americans prefer that our ships be kept out of the war zones; but our ships are being sunk now thousands of miles from the war zones. With the development of the combustion engine and the airplane, distance itself can not be assumed to be a permanent barrier to aggressor's designs. ~~Example therefore~~ When, therefore, America views the world as ^{so} much more closely knit by the new means of warfare and communication, it is more essential that our Neutrality Act be reexamined in the light of present and potential dangers. Until modern methods of warfare ~~developed, Iceland was~~ developed, Iceland was regarded as of little or no benefit as a defensive outpost for the United States. And certainly Greenland was not considered as a dangerous base from which an enemy attack could be launched until the long-range bomber came to be a devastating instrument of attack. We come back then to the undisputed fact that the British navy controls

the gateways through which the aggressors must pass to gain control of the Atlantic. Great Britain has a navy, second only to our own. She is a naval power, and for decades has been a partner with the United States in control of the Atlantic and the Pacific. It is vital to our own defense, then, that Great Britain remain as a great naval power, and it may become necessary that our ships go to the ports of Great Britain in order to save them from starvation and subjugation. Such is not now the case, but if such should become the case, we would be prevented from taking these necessary steps for the survival of Great Britain which is truly in the interest of our own defense by the Neutrality Act.

There is neither rhyme nor reason in turning our nation into an arsenal for the anti-aggressor nations and then not seeing to it that what we produce is delivered where it can be used. It is imbecility to use our navy to keep the sea lanes open and refuse to allow our merchant ships to travel these lanes, ^{when + if} ~~where~~ there is dire need for them to do so. It is folly to protect some of our merchant ships against Nazi pirates with naval escorts but refuse to arm the merchantmen as protection against the ~~suspect~~ same peril. Until we get rid of the ^{so-called} "neutrality" law restrictions, the United States is like a man who is driven to defend himself against a powerful enemy, but insists on keeping one hand tied behind his ~~hand~~.