

# The NEW AMERICAN

## EXPLAINING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 15, 1939

PRICE 2 CENTS

### MOBILIZE FOR PEACE

War is no longer coming. It is here. In Europe the conversation of statesmen has yielded to that of cannon. The day that seemed as though it would remain always a tomorrow has at last dawned—and become now a yesterday. It is hard to get used to this one awful and fundamental fact: War is here.

War is here and in our midst. Not simply as scare-headlines, tensed radio voices, and fantastic news-reel images. It is the transforming energy that has caused industry to speed forth panting like a greyhound after orders. It is the wild buoyancy of stock markets and the suddenly cavernous demand for wheat and corn and cattle and all other products of our agricultural states. And already it greets the housewife across the counter to snatch its extra-penny toll from daily necessities. War is here hungrily in our midst.

#### We May Not Want War. But . . .

We may not want to go to war. But with a speed eclipsing that of trans-Atlantic clippers war has come to us. It has come with no thunder of shellfire, no mutilated bodies, no bloody horrors. Not at all. Rather, it is here with gold in hand and the whisper and swelling rumor of more to come. And to this first wanton beckoning we who hate war have responded with blind rapture.

The warehouse wheat that could not feed our hungry, the storage cotton that could not clothe our ragged, the unused materials that could not house our slum-dwellers, the stagnant capital that could not employ our idle manpower,—all these things, as though touched by wonder-working magic, are astir with new life. They are on the move. And they are preparing to move beyond our borders.

Thus subtly, within a few days' time, has our economy been transformed. The monopoly-frozen industrial structure that for 10 years has resisted the most urgent needs of our own people has melted before the first fiery breath of war-born markets. It is alertly responsive once again. Ready

to Serve. Not our needs but those created by destruction over-sea. The war-boom has begun. The war-drift has begun. We may not want to go to war. But we have embraced the war that has come to us.

#### . . . We Have Joined Up

Nor are we to be neutral in this conflict. By the time this editorial is in print the drive to amend the Neutrality Act will be in full swing. Congress will be in session for the express purpose of repealing the arms embargo clause. It is perfectly evident that the motives for reestablishing what the President has called "true neutrality" are far from neutral. For example: "Senator Austin of Vermont," reports the *N. Y. Times* of Sept. 10, "endorses a return to the 'ancient' concept of neutrality. He wants all our power, both moral and economic, put behind France and Britain." And for example: The President, reports the *Times* of Sept. 11, has moved to limit Congressional debate on neutrality revision lest it "have an adverse effect on the morale of the Allied powers."

So it goes. Once again, with a swiftness putting the years 1914-17 to shame, America has hitched its wagon to the Allied star. Once again has the unholy alliance between world-saving crusaders and armaments-profiters been consummated. We are rushing headlong down the old, old road to war even as we announce that we shall stay out. Let there be no mistake about this. We have joined in the war and actively taken sides in the war.

#### Not Our War

Meanwhile an overwhelming majority of the American people don't want to go to war. Certainly not to this war. It isn't our war. Sure, we hate Hitlerism. But the lily-white banners of France and Britain are splashed with the blood of Republican Spain, smeared with the mud of Munich. These standards offer no promise of a world-order for the achievement of which we should willingly lift a finger. Crush Hitler—and then what? To this

question Chamberlain and Daladier have no answer.

If we want to keep American blood from being shed in this war, we must recognize why we have allowed ourselves to drift so dangerously close to it. The danger that we may be finally pushed over the edge comes from inside and not from outside our boundaries. It is a danger familiar that we are unapt to associate now with war.

#### Where the Danger Lurks

The danger? It lies in the millions and millions of Americans prevented from consuming enough to keep our capital factories, and themselves fully employed. For behind these millions are those latent resources and energies so rapidly and easily set in motion by the demands of

If we would keep out of war we first of all be in a position to control the flow of our goods and direct the energy of our labor. The reasons for this are simple. First, we can keep out of war only if we can keep our economy from being geared to the war markets abroad. Second, the economic and social well-being of the American people demands that production should be developed to the extent to meet the needs of home consumers. By gearing our production to the war market we can keep it from being geared to the war market. We must mobilize our economy for peace and for the restoration of our nation.

#### The Road to Peace

Mobilization for peace means the mobilization of our resources for a new, greater and richer America. It means resolute forcing open of American markets for American goods. But this involves a final declaration of war against the enemies of the American people. A declaration of war against those financial and monopolistic owners who too long have choked American enterprise in their grasp and who have held the full fruits of American industry beyond the eager

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# THE NEW AMERICAN

Published Twice a Month;  
August and September  
Once a Month by  
New America  
6140 Cottage Grove Avenue,  
Chicago, Ill.  
Post Office Box 1311,  
Chicago, Ill.  
Subscription price  
50c per year

Entered as second class  
matter October 7, 1937, at  
the Post Office at Chicago,  
Illinois, under Act of March  
3, 1879.  
Vol. 4 No. 10

## EUROPE GOES TO WAR

Europe's long armistice is ended. The "white" of desperate diplomacy, nerve-shattering and unresisted conquests has become a war of hammering armies and mass slaughter. The beginning of military action does not mark the real war. It merely opens an accelerated and more terrible phase in the relentless conflict of imperialist powers that has absorbed the world for more than a generation.

### Nazism—Child of Versailles

The Nazi drive to dominate Europe has precipitated the conflict. However, this aggressive drive has been the creation of the policies followed by the British and French governments more than twenty years. The period from the end of the last World War to the beginning of the world economic crisis saw France dominant in Europe. The repressive conditions embodied in the peace of Versailles aggravated the already unstable economic positions of most of the European peoples.

These conditions, maintained throughout by British and French force and diplomatic Germany and other nations in a economic collapse and political frustration. These conditions formed the immediate background for the onslaught of the world economic crisis. Out of these conditions during the rise of German Nazism. The depression and the growth of Nazi power began the eclipse of British and French power in Europe. And then France and Germany, having created the Nazi frankenstein, sought to make him strong. The repressive conditions of Versailles was abandoned for the policy of retreat, conciliation and appeasement, embodied in the Pact of Munich and the German occupation of Czechoslovakia last March.

### The Issue—Imperialism

In the light of this record, the issue of the present conflict is plain. It is not Danzig and the Polish corridor nor Hitlerism. It is not Democracy versus Fascism. It is the old struggle between Britain and France on one side and Germany on the other for control over Europe and influence in the world. The record of events leading up to this war ends conclusively the illusion that under the capitalist world order peace is possible. In the world of yesterday and today the only peace is the enforced domination of one group of nations over all the rest. And this peace of peace only prepares the way for more terrible war.

What is the situation in the first days of war? The striking, of course, are the unexpected alignments. The Soviet Union, which has long taken the most active line of opposition to Nazi aggression, retired suddenly into neutrality on the eve of the conflict. On the

other hand, the Nazi-Soviet pact has caused the speedy evaporation of the anti-comintern lineup and brought about the isolation of Japan. With Italy striving to maintain neutrality, even the ironclad Rome-Berlin axis seems to have undergone a modification.

### Nazi Aim: Peace Without Poland

Germany in the first days of war continues with the policy laid down in the crisis. The German aim is to localize the conflict, overwhelm Poland, and offer Britain and France peace without Poland. Hitler does not want to engage in a direct conflict with Britain and France, and, most significantly, the German people do not want to fight Britain and France. The Nazi dictatorship, by repeatedly announcing that it has no quarrel with the powers of the west, hopes to leave the way open for peace, and what is more important, to present the British and French governments as the aggressors in the eyes of the German people.

The opening of military action placed the Reich temporarily in a strong position. Soviet neutrality on one side and the Westwall on the other have given the Reich the opportunity to crush Poland before British and French pressure becomes effective. The possibility of access to Soviet goods as well as the goods of southeastern Europe encourages Nazi expectations of maintaining economic strength despite the British blockade.

### Outlook for the Allies

This time, in place of Munich, France and Britain have chosen war. What factors led to this reversal of position since last September? Most important has been the continuous pressure of Nazi aggression, heading up into the seizure of Czechoslovakia and provocation of the Polish crisis. These moves nullified all that the British and French governments hoped to gain by the Munich settlement. They demonstrated the illusory character of the appeasement policy. And they resulted in the sudden hardening of attitudes on the part of both the people and the ruling circles of the capitalist democracies.

The Allies are embarking on war better prepared than they were last year in two respects. Britain in particular has taken great strides in armaments and the perfection of home defenses. But public opinion is also better prepared. In both countries it has had time to solidify behind the war.

However, as regards the general situation in Europe, the Allied position is probably not as strong as it would have been last year. Most important, they might have had the assistance of the Soviet Union in defense of Czechoslovakia as they do not in defense of Poland. At present there are enormous difficulties in the way of direct Allied cooperation with Poland. The system of guarantees to Greece, Turkey, Roumania and others has so far shown no indications of being converted into an active front in defense of Poland.

Allied objectives in this phase of the war are limited to the blockade by sea and the slow forcing of the German west wall. These lines of attack can show results only after long and tedious operations. Meanwhile Germany may overrun Poland and thus terrorize all of Eastern Europe into yielding to her economic and political hegemony once and for all. Or Poland may be but the opening phase of a thoroughgoing German drive to the southeast.

### Poland a Police State

And what of Poland? This little dictatorship, the immediate catalyst of Europe's disaster, offers little to kindle the enthusiasm of either the partisans of democracy or the crusaders for international morality. Poland has been a po-

lice state practically since its rebirth in the last world war. Here a coalition of feudal landowners and new industrialists and merchants has ruled with the iron hand of military dictatorship. This regime was favorable to the Nazis on all grounds down to the very eve of the present crisis. The anti-Semitism of Germany has had its counterpart in Poland. In line with its policies Poland assisted the Reich in the Czech crisis and gobbled up its own small part of Czech territory. Today it is Poland's turn. Within the first week of war Polish resources and most of Polish industry has been sucked up by the swift-moving German war machine.

### Italian Neutrality

The outbreak of war puts Italy on the spot. Although Italian neutrality at this point is consistent with German efforts to localize the conflict, there is plenty of reason for the Italian dictatorship's desire to preserve Italian neutrality to the last moment. Italy has little to gain and much to lose from throwing in her lot with either side. The Axis partnership so far has yielded to Italy little except the picture of growing German economic penetration of Southeastern Europe and growing German political power across the Brenner pass. Furthermore, if Italy moves with Germany, the chief military action of the war is likely to take place on Italian coasts and frontiers. Italy's aims in the Balkans, the Mediterranean, and Africa bring her equally into conflict with Germany, Britain and France. Only the inevitable pressure from all sides will bring Italy into the war, and she will go to the highest bidder.

### Allied War Aims Inadequate

As the slaughter begins, the announced aims of Britain and France in this war are two—to stand by Poland and to overthrow Hitlerism. These stated war aims must be criticized as decidedly negative in character. What do the British and French ruling classes propose in place of Hitlerism? What arrangements do they contemplate for a lasting and a just peace? How do they propose to restore an expanding economic life to the people of Germany? How do they propose to create the basis for stable democracy in Europe? These are the questions that must be answered in any constructive and meaningful statement of war aims. We may safely guess that the Allied governments will not answer them. Because, in terms of British and French imperialist objectives, there are no answers.

## Mobilize for Peace

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of our people. In no other way can we come to control our economic destinies.

The core of a realistic program against war must be to gear American consumption with American production capacity in an expanding economy. Only when this has been undertaken will we be in a position to decide consciously and wisely our relationships with other nations. For only then will we be in control of those unseen factors which today are controlling us. In this grim light of war may we come to see those domestic tasks which too long have remained undone.

The time is short.