SECTION TWO: THE UNITED STATES

21 *America in the World Conflict*

AMERICA'S UNIQUE POSITION

The military conclusion of the Second World War will merely close the first phase of the world-wide struggle, for the issues of rehabilitation and reorientation which will confront the victors are even greater than the military problems. While the organization of a postwar settlement will obviously require the active cooperation of all the United Nations, the burden of responsibility will lie clearly at first upon the shoulders of the United States, Britain, and Russia. China, the fourth big power among the leading states of the United Nations, will hardly be able for an extended period to contribute more than her prestige and her moral support.

The question thus arises as to which of the United Nations may be sufficiently strong, both politically and economically, to assume the leadership as the *primus inter pares*, i.e., to help the needy nations by supplying food, clothing, and medical assistance; to mediate and conciliate antagonisms which manifest themselves in a score of problems between some of the United Nations; to give spiritual and intellectual comfort to social and political destitutes in all climates by offering them hope for the Four Freedoms.

It would be difficult for Britain to assume this burden. Her energies will be fully absorbed by the task of domestic reconstruction and the reorganization of the Commonwealth. Also, her past imperial record may not make her acceptable to a number of peoples. Humanity has grown weary of imperialism, and Britain's tendency toward deimperialization still does not carry conviction in many parts of the world. Psychologically, Britain is too homogeneous, too far removed from the melting-pot idea accepted in both the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union, on the other hand, will also hardly be in a

position to assume this leadership for the world at large even though its influence may become dominant in such regions as central and southeastern Europe. First of all, Russia will need a long time to rebuild her devastated areas and to develop her industrial and agricultural production to the point where she may reach the level of the Western democracies. Secondly, Russia's ideology, while acclaimed by the masses in many lands, is by no means universally accepted; in fact, the Soviets themselves have resolved to refrain from exporting ideological propaganda for the time being. Everywhere men are tired of dictatorships. They need solid, strong leadership, but they want to remain free to decide upon a way of life of their own choosing.

There remains the United States as a possible candidate for the tremendous task of leadership in universal rehabilitation. Blessed with a geographically advantageous position, much less exposed to the ravages of war than, for example, European countries, the United States possesses not only great natural wealth but, what is at least as important, the trained man power and the technical facilities to exploit its resources. It has ample living space; its population is large, its communication system excellent, and the organization of its industry and agriculture unsurpassed. America's role in the First and Second World Wars has been such as not to impair its basic economic strength.

In addition to its great material power, America is ideologically in an unusual position. It began its independent existence as a democratic republic, which it has remained ever since. There have been times when parts of the Union did not exactly honor the great heritage of humanitarianism and liberty as it was expounded by Washington, Jefferson, Jackson, and Lincoln. In our own time it is possible to point to serious shortcomings, but it is true nevertheless that the tradition of democracy is inextricably woven into the pattern of American life.

Through a century and a half the United States has proved that its political philosophy is not a mere theory. It has championed the cause of the oppressed and opened a haven for them. It has offered to humanity more opportunities than any other country. America has shown to the world that it is possible for people of many different nationalities to live and work together harmoni-

ously and has thereby shown by its example how unnecessary it is to introduce discriminations for the sake of a supposed national homogeneity.

By comparison with the great imperialistic nations of Europe, the American record has been relatively mild. The vastness of the American continent has made it unnecessary to look to the acquisition of overseas possessions and the tradition of aloofness from the outside world has militated in the same direction.

Likewise, the problem of minorities has been solved with success, or rather it has never been allowed to arise—among the white population at least. The fact that the country was settled from the first by refugees from oppression and that, until recently, immigration has been unrestricted, has given rise to a tradition of tolerance, national and religious, which has thrown deep roots into the American way of life. The fact that newcomers have on the whole been allowed to move freely, both territorially and socially, has produced among them a genuine desire for assimilation. To be sure, discrimination, on social or other grounds, is not entirely unknown, but it is true nevertheless that there do not exist national minorities in the European sense.

For all these reasons, when the time comes to help and comfort exhausted peoples, when man in all corners of the earth will ask for better living, the historic task of leadership may well fall to America because America seems best in a position to help. Having established a modern democracy in conjunction with its independence, the United States will be in a position, if it wishes, to assume the leadership in extending the democratic principle over large sections of the earth.

This does not mean, however, the imposition of an "American Century" upon a weary postwar world in so far as the phrase has connotations of an American ideological imperialism. The government and politics of the United States remain an internal matter; their theory and practice may or may not be adopted by other nations. If there is an "American Century" in the making, it must only be in the sense that American political philosophy, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights —and their modern version, the Four Freedoms—will become widely accepted by other nations; in the sense that the century fol-

lowing the French Revolution could be called a "French Century" from the influence of that revolution abroad.

There need be no senseless imitation of the American governmental system. All that is suggested is a consideration of the worth of the political ideals developed in America during the past century and a half: a philosophy of humaneness based on the value and the dignity of the individual. This philosophy advocates the principle of the individual right to the pursuit of happiness; it is flexible and adaptable to different times and circumstances. It does not matter that America itself has not yet reached this goal: it has at least pointed the way, established a procedure of travel, and commenced the voyage ahead of others.

If America is to accept the opportunity as well as the responsibilities of postwar leadership, it must also make provision for domestic reforms, mainly of a social and economic nature. In the following, some suggestions for a reinterpretation of American democracy will be examined in brief. But a short sketch of America's present political status must precede this discussion.

THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

1. *Preliminary Observations.* Environment strongly determines man's character and thinking. The political ideal of democracy which was tried out now and again in Europe since the days of Greece's aristocratic democracy and of Palestine's theocratic democracy acquired a different aspect in the New World. The burden of century-old traditions which hampered the most radical European reformers was more easily cast off in America. The great Thomas Jefferson was for all practical purposes a far more successful rebel against political traditions, so far as result and duration were concerned, than Marat, Robespierre, and Danton put together. His Declaration of Independence, America's first "New Deal," adopted by the Philadelphia Congress in 1776, was a decisive departure from all existing political precedent. It is this Declaration, whose first paragraphs have remained so surprisingly young, which has given the United States a philosophy of its own, American yet universal. For the principles of Thomas Jefferson are not nationally limited. They are deeply humane and hence applicable throughout the world.

The thirteen colonies had managed to unite—up to a point—in the effort to secure independence. But independence once secured, the task remained of welding a nation out of discordant interests no longer held together by an immediate common purpose.

The solution was the acceptance of the federal idea. The young nation needed a strong central government but the states that formed the Union desired to remain independent to the greatest possible extent. The Constitutional Convention of 1787 adopted a federal system which the great British statesman Gladstone called "the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man." [1] The final form of the American Constitution was an excellent piece of original statesmanship which has proved its power by surviving many other constitutions. It was by no means an easy task to induce the states to ratify the Constitution. The final ratification, after one of the most critical periods of American history, was a manifestation of remarkably sound political sense.

Even the bitter contest between the Federalists and the anti-Federalists turned out to be beneficial. Those who feared too strong a central power secured as the price for their support the first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights adopted in 1791. This American Magna Charta, once again showing Thomas Jefferson's concern for the preservation of popular rights, became an additional asset of American political philosophy by completing and codifying the spirit of the Declaration of Independence.

It is highly significant that each period of major crisis in American history produced leaders who were permitted by the people to guide the fortunes of the nation safely through the storms it had to weather. Washington was the first. During the era of consolidation, it was Jefferson, and later Jackson, who stabilized the gains of the American Revolution. Monroe set forth a wise foreign policy suitable to nineteenth century conditions and America's lack of naval power. Then, years later, it was Abraham Lincoln who saved the fundamentals of American democracy. In a period of prevalent and universal imperialism and militarism, Theodore Roosevelt waved the "big stick" to ensure the world's respect for American

[1] Gladstone in *North American Review*, CXXVII, 185, quoted by W. B. Guitteau, *The History of the United States*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1942, p. 181.

power though remaining essentially a liberal in domestic policies. After the First World War, it was Woodrow Wilson who clearly recognized the futility of isolationism and opened the minds of the people of the United States to the dangers inherent in such a policy. In the crises following the great depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt guided the country through the dangers of a world beset by totalitarian revolutions. It is a measure of the vitality of American democracy that it has been able to produce and retain the leaders it needed.

The general aspects of American democracy have universally influenced the social and political evolution of democratic thought. They have helped to maintain the morale of oppressed peoples. They will continue to offer a hope and an example for the universal reorganization following the Second World War. In their fundamental greatness, they need no rejuvenation: what they need is a new interpretation and application to present day circumstances.

2. *The Constitution of the United States.* Twelve years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, in 1788, the Constitution was ratified by nine of the thirteen states. On a few pages, the machinery of democratic government was set up, supplemented by charter provisions, especially the Bill of Rights.

There are six fundamental principles which characterize American constitutional philosophy. First, American government is *representative government*, as any democratic government should be. This principle remains as valid as it has ever been. The people as a whole should be represented and not only certain sections or classes; there can be no other interpretation of the principle of representative government. Second, the principle of *dual government* expresses the idea of a federal system in which the rights of the national (central) government are limited to definite fields while the state governments have their own rights upon which the Federal government is not permitted to infringe. Certain powers of the national government cannot be curtailed by the states, for example, decisions of foreign policy; others may not be touched by the Federal government, for example, trade within the states.

Third is the principle of limiting the power of government by guaranteeing *inalienable rights of the individual*, such as were proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence by the founding fa-

thers of America, and then again in our era in the Four Freedoms. Fourth is the principle of the *independence of the judiciary*, the Supreme Court of the United States and the other Federal courts which remain independent of the executive branch (the president) as well as of Congress, and whose members are appointed for life. Fifth is the *principle of checks and balances*, a doctrine first advocated by Montesquieu when he warned that there could be no liberty when the legislative and executive powers were united in the same person or in the same body of public officials. American government is separated into three branches: the executive (the president); the legislative (Congress); and the judicial (Supreme and Federal courts). Each of these branches performs its tasks independently of the others, and can act as a check upon them, thereby safeguarding the people against a concentration of too much power in the hands of one of the branches.

The sixth principle demands *joint power of the president and the Senate in the determination of foreign policy*. The people, represented by the Senate, are to have a voice in shaping the relations of the United States with outside powers. The decision of the president, who may negotiate treaties, is not binding. It will be remembered that the Senate refused to ratify the League of Nations Covenant and the Treaty of Versailles. It should also be pointed out that the Atlantic Charter has never appeared as a piece of legislation before the Senate and therefore has not the binding character of law for the United States.

The success of the Constitution surpassed even Thomas Jefferson's expectations. He believed the Constitution would be adhered to and government remain virtuous so long as the country remained largely agricultural; but he had no faith in the durability of the Constitution should urban life develop along European lines when "governments will become corrupt as in Europe."[1] This pessimism has proved unjustified. On the other hand, the changing conditions of life and economics, reflected in political and economic crises of an increasingly serious nature, especially after 1918, have given rise to a demand for reinterpretations and readjustments of the original framework of government.

[1] Thomas Jefferson, *Writings*, P. L. Ford, ed., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1894, Vol. IV, p. 479.

It is reassuring, and characteristic of the American spirit, that the discussion of such reinterpretations and reforms is taken for granted, just as it is significant that the Constitution has so successfully ridden all the storms that it has met. "This stability is the more remarkable when the profound and revolutionary change that has taken place in the social life of man since the Constitution was adopted is taken into account." [1] Indeed, the actual text of the Constitution still stands as it was originally adopted, yet its practical application has undergone changes without impairing its spirit. Chief Justice Marshall's opinion on this flexibility of the Constitution was clearly expressed when he said that it was "intended to endure for ages to come and consequently to be *adapted* to the various crises of human affairs." [2] Perhaps one of the reasons for this phenomenon is the fact that the powers of government are merely enumerated instead of being closely defined in the Constitution.

The movements for reform of governmental machinery center on the demand for a change in the executive branch of the government. Some want to introduce cabinet government such as exists in Britain. This system is held to be more efficient in times of emergency and crisis because it permits quicker action. It is also considered more democratic because the prime minister may be dismissed at any time by parliament if his policies are not endorsed. In the United States, it is claimed, the president is hampered by a slow-working congressional machine; he remains in office for four full years and can be removed only by impeachment. Would-be reformers refer to no less a witness than President Woodrow Wilson who, in his doctor's thesis, had commented on the president's office in these words: "Nothing short of a well-nigh impossible impeachment can unmake a President, except four successions of the seasons. . . . A Prime Minister must keep himself in favor with the majority, a President need only keep alive. . . ." [3]

This is not the place to discuss the possible advantages and disadvantages of this reform or of proposed changes related to times

[1] James M. Beck, *The Constitution of the United States*, Doubleday, Doran, and Company, Inc., New York, 1941, p. 174.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 177.
[3] Quoted by Henry Hazlitt, *A New Constitution Now*, Whittlesey House, (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.), New York, 1942, pp. 28–29.

of war and emergency, such as better electoral methods, or the much-fought-about abolition of poll taxes; of the liquidation of the spoils system and the appointment of judicial personnel on the basis of merit rather than political connections; of the abolition of merely historical institutions such as the Electoral College; and last, but not least, of a revision of the prerogatives of the Senate.

Much more difficult and controversial are problems of interpretation which may affect basic principles of the Constitution. For example, how far can dual government be preserved in a time when a greater centralization of government becomes an imperative prerequisite for the efficient prosecution of the war and for the readjustment to peace? How far will the individual states be obliged to yield their prerogatives if and when central planning, both at home and in the international field, begins to function? How much of the system of "checks and balances" can be retained if it should paralyze the war effort or hamper a vigorous foreign policy that must be flexible and capable of quick decisions? How much will the concept of individualism have to be sacrificed to the needs of a future cooperative society?

There is no doubt that greatly changed conditions make reinterpretations necessary. In view of the magnitude of the changes connected with the World War and its aftermath, the ideological adjustment of any democratic Constitution is liable to limp behind the changes that occur. If an equilibrium is not established, conflicts will arise which may endanger the whole system upon which the possibility of adjustments is predicated. That is why, for a considerable time to come, ideological reinterpretations are more urgent than changes in governmental machinery. It is the spirit rather than the technical apparatus which will decide the progress and development of American democracy.

3. *Educational Philosophy.* Every analysis of American democracy which does not consider American educational philosophy and practice fails to take into account one of the most significant traits of this democracy. Conversely, "in any realistic definition of education for the United States, therefore, must appear the whole philosophy and practice of democracy." [1]

[1] Charles A. Beard, *The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy*, Educational Policies Commission, Washington, D. C., 1937, p. 89.

American philosophy, as a whole, never exhausted itself in abstract speculations; it rather stressed the practical aspects of social living and education in a democracy. John Dewey, although somewhat one-sided in his pragmatic point of view, was the pioneer of this trend. Even if today some of his theses do not entirely fit the needs, he, more than any other American educator, has helped to clarify American social philosophy. He recognized the necessity of a school system and methodology reflecting democratic life perhaps even more clearly than his great predecessors, men like Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, or G. Stanley-Hall. The desire to "socialize the individual" or, in other words, to make social beings out of new members of the community, has from then on been a dominant influence in determining democratic character formation in the United States. This cannot and must not be understood as an education for life in a crystallized society, once established and never abandoned. While it is necessary to uphold certain standards of behavior as a cultural basis of mutual relationship, the members of a democratic community should be free to create new standards whenever they find that the old ones are no longer satisfactory.

This school of thought is reflected in American educational philosophy which, liberal and progressive, for the most part rejects the immutability of theories. As democracy itself goes through a continuous process of growth, so education for democracy must remain subject to the influences of the manifold currents of life. Such mental and political growth can be achieved through social experience by which man enriches his understanding and broadens his horizon. Once the child has been "socialized" in school, instead of having been merely drilled and indoctrinated, he will quickly become aware of his duties toward society. "To say that education is a social function, securing direction and development in the immature through their participation in the life of the group to which they belong, is to say in effect that education will vary with the quality of life which prevails in a group." [1] It is evident that the "quality and quantity of the socialization depends upon the habits and aims of the group." [2] If this group happens to be

[1] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916, p. 94.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 96.

democratic, and therefore adapts itself to the continuing changes which take place in the life of the community, education itself becomes of necessity flexible and its goal is likewise flexible.

Translated into practical application, this philosophy will determine the nature of a school system fit to serve a democracy. The American school system is on the way to solving the problems raised by so complex a society as is democracy. There remains, however, much to be done. Educational reforms will have to be considered for the elimination of obstacles which are still in the way of a total equality of opportunities.[1] Since an "educational ladder" has been established in the United States which enables the child to follow through his studies in a unified organization of free elementary and high schools, and which prevents class education and intellectual snobbery, a solid foundation exists upon which equal educational opportunities can be offered to all students, regardless of their families' social or economic standing.

Furthermore, compulsory elementary education does not cover the needs of the training of future members of a democratic society. The goal must be a free universal compulsory high-school education. The desire to keep young people in school until they are seventeen or eighteen years of age has made headway for moral, political, and vocational reasons. Various types of academic or vocational high schools could easily take care of the individual aptitudes of students. Two or three years of junior high school, as a period of transition between the elementary and high-school courses, may provide ample opportunities to determine the most suitable type of studies and to guide the adolescents into the academic or vocational branches of their last years of secondary education.

However, care must be taken to avoid a one-sided utilitarian training for jobs as the focal point of education. If postwar planning succeeds in diminishing the menace of economic insecurity, liberal education should come into its own again. Opportunities should be provided for occupational training but the ultimate aim of education in a democracy must remain the development of the personality of each individual student. The higher the cultural

[1] Cf. George S. Counts, *The Selective Character of American Secondary Education*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1922.

standard of citizens, the higher the level of the democratic society which they will constitute.[1]

Under a future system of socioeconomic planning, the financial problems of education can and must be taken care of by society as a matter of national honor and self-preservation. Democracy, if it is to work efficiently, needs more than a set of rights and duties; it needs the creation of a high ethical motive power among its citizens. The schools must regard it as their foremost duty to cultivate such standards in each student. Once the worst economic injustices are remedied, the goal of democratic education will have to be an appreciation of civic ethics rather than the ideal of money-making.

For the decades to come, no nation may evade the responsibility of establishing high-school education for all, just as it should provide for free tuition and maintenance of all those gifted students whose logical destination is the college or the university. In the United States, these principles may have to become binding for all the states of the Union. Control of education is one of the prerogatives of the states, and not all of them have lived up to the ideals of American democracy in their educational programs. Dual government still has its great merits but it should not paralyze the growth of a consolidated American democratic ideology which is needed for internal and external purposes. The leading position of the United States in the world should exclude regional exceptions within the nation. The aim to be achieved in the international sphere must also be accomplished within the country itself.

In addition to the principles and system of democratic education, the problem of methodology has been hotly debated ever since the beginning of the twentieth century when John Dewey started his experiments in "progressive" education. The unfortunate fact that activity teaching and progressive education have been greatly misunderstood and misused has made them the target of old-school adherents. However, it should be made clear that the most liberal-minded educational methodology, the most elaborate type of activity instruction for smaller children, cannot be divorced from social and mental discipline. A compromise will have to be

[1] Cf. Mark van Doren, *Liberal Education*, Henry Holt & Company, New York, 1943.

made between the authoritarianism of traditional schooling and the democratic independence of "learning by doing." Democracy needs the development of self-expression on the part of its future members; but it also needs individual discipline and knowledge of one's civic responsibilities. Democratic education does not want to mold the child into traditional patterns of thinking and behavior; it gives its individuals the opportunity of free growth and mental flexibility. Yet if each child is left to do what he wants without an understanding of the importance of social requirements, he may mistake liberty for license and endanger democracy. The liberalism of a cooperative society is broad and deep but it demands self-control and self-discipline. There is no reason why progressive education should not be able to teach the child such virtues informally instead of by coercion—and that is the great advantage of progressive methods if used by skillful teachers.

The elements of success for democratic progress are all present in the principles of American education. The organization of an educational-ladder, the relatively wide range of educational opportunities, and the free play of controversy about educational methodology have created admirable achievements since the beginning of the present century. This is why one may look forward with optimism to further successful reforms as soon as the financing of education has been recognized as an issue that transcends local or regional limitations. Bargaining, bickering, and saving money by slashing educational budgets should be regarded as a sin against the spirit of democracy. There is no need for extravagance, but it must never be forgotten that the continued success of democracy is absolutely dependent upon an adequate education. There must also be created safeguards against the interference of local politics in education. In the words of Charles A. Beard: "When the process and ends of our democratic society are placed above the exigencies of partisan politics and the immediate advantages of power, then it becomes evident that education as a safeguard and preparation for democratic living must not be subjected every hour and in every way to the unrestrained control of men and women lifted into political office for a brief term by the fortunes of campaigns and elections." [1]

[1] Beard, op. cit., p. 118.

4. *American Economy in Transition.* Roughly speaking, American economic history, before the upheavals of the twentieth century initiated a new era, may be divided into two periods. At first, the economy of the young United States was based upon agriculture; individual self-sufficient farmers were its pillars. The scene changed gradually, particularly after the Civil War, when the Union became industrialized and industrial individualism replaced agricultural individualism. One was as "rugged" as the other; both contributed essentially to the amazing growth and wealth of the young nation. During the second period especially, wealth was accumulated by ruthless exploitation of natural resources. Yet the productive power of the country was developed tremendously, thus creating the preliminary conditions for general prosperity. During the "roaring" twenties it seemed as if the economic millennium had arrived; in reality, the sociopolitical conditions required a complete change of economic and social organization.

When America found itself on the verge of economic collapse, when the expectations of ever-increasing prosperity rapidly changed into defeatism, many people became convinced that the nineteenth-century era of unrestricted economic individualism was over. The deep changes which took place in the political and economic systems of the world after the upheaval of 1914, affected America as well. The depression during the late twenties and the early thirties was not an isolated American phenomenon; it encompassed almost every country, helping to put in power "national" revolutions which promised the people a way out of the chaos of insecurity.

The arrival of the New Deal in 1933 opened the way to long overdue social and economic reforms. While the preceding emergency measures of the NRA (National Recovery Act) were blocked by believers in traditional conceptions of American social and economic life, the subsequent reforms became firmly entrenched in the minds of a majority of Americans. Inevitably, the changes suggested and adopted involved a certain degree of control by the central government over the business of powerful groups who claimed that it was up to them to take care of economic recovery, although they had not been able, before 1929, to stem the tide of economic disaster. While they did not decline the help of the

Federal government, they balked at its "interference" in their affairs. But the development of a new economic policy could not be held back and the government, on the whole, disregarded these objections, for further delay in reform might have produced conditions ripe for serious upheavals.

No matter how critically one may look upon some of the New Deal's policies, its domestic reforms, introduced since 1933, must be regarded as the first attempt to adapt American democracy to the changed conditions of the twentieth century. Considered somewhat revolutionary at first, a good many of the New Deal's provisions were in reality long overdue reforms which have since been absorbed by the American body politic. They have, within a few years, deeply modified social conceptions among large groups of Americans. Yet they should be regarded as merely transitional. Being a strictly temporary device, the New Deal is but the connecting link between older and newer conceptions of national and global economy. When compared with the economic individualism of the nineteenth century, it may seem revolutionary; when compared with the postwar planning of a country like Britain or the social legislation of Scandinavian countries, it appears elementary and mildly conservative.

When the results of the presidential election of 1932 indicated the desire of the American people to try a new way, the incoming administration, in view of the magnitude of the task which confronted it, sought and obtained a wide extension of Federal power. For example, stricter supervision was imposed upon banking. Protection of depositors went hand in hand with preventive measures against fraudulent speculation with other people's money. Banks outside of the Federal Reserve System were permitted to borrow from Federal Reserve banks if they were able to put up acceptable security. Furthermore, the Agricultural Adjustment Act was devised to bring back more prosperity to the farmers, as the National Industrial Recovery Act was intended to help industry. These acts were pronounced unconstitutional by the Supreme Court after having been in force for two years, but substitute acts were introduced in their place.

A vast program of relief in the form of public works paralleled other measures of economic planning, such as the famous Ten-

nessee Valley Authority and other large projects designed to increase electric power potential, make waste land productive, and reduce the price of electricity to consumers. A National Housing Act looked to the organization of a new building program. A Social Security Act will prove to be one of the most important precedents of postwar planning; the same is true of unemployment insurance provisions.

The American people indicated its general approval of the reforms just mentioned when President Roosevelt was reelected in 1936 with an unusually large majority. Further reform and relief measures were introduced during his second term which was called by many the "Second New Deal." Labor legislation became particularly prominent and enhanced the influence of the trade unions. The Fair Labor Standards Act falls into this category as does the Wagner-Steagall Housing Act for the improvement of housing conditions. Further planning for agriculture and public utilities was introduced, pointing to an increasing centralization of governmental responsibilities.

During the last months of President Roosevelt's second administration, the volume of social and economic legislation suffered a sharp decrease. Attention became increasingly focussed on the grave international situation. It became necessary to introduce the Selective Service Act against the wishes of many of the administration's most ardent supporters. The nation as a whole had not yet fully realized the danger in which it found itself as a result of its refusal to build up its strength to match that of the aggressors. The various Neutrality Acts, from 1935 to 1939, reflected the desire of the country to isolate itself from the conflicts which had already broken out in various parts of the world. Only the cash-and-carry provision enabled the Allies to buy war materials while America still remained neutral. Later, in March, 1941, the Lend-Lease Act, one of the most ingenious pieces of legislation ever conceived to circumvent obsolete yet persisting statutes, helped to maintain the strength of the attacked nations until America itself became involved in the Second World War.[1]

After December 7, 1941, the entire productive capacity of the

[1] Cf. Edward R. Stettinius, *Lend-Lease, Weapon for Victory*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1944.

country was turned to rearmament so that it could become the "arsenal of democracy." War agencies like the War Production Board and the Office of Price Administration were established in order to determine the character of the industrial output, to decide on the distribution of raw materials, to restrict the manufacturing of civilian goods, to protect consumers through price ceilings and to increase agricultural production.

The war did not altogether put an end to the controversy raging over the successes and failures of the New Deal but relegated this controversy to the background. In the words of President Roosevelt, the "New Deal" had become a "Win the War" movement. But many basic issues still remain unsolved while, abroad, the impact of warfare will have speeded up the process of radical change with the result that Americans have become intensely aware of the necessity for postwar planning in both the domestic and international fields. Some aspects of planning will be sketched in the following chapter.