TODAY and TOMORROW
By WALTER LIPPMANN
American Foreign Policy in the Making:
Senator Nye and Mr. Stimson

EVERY one must agree that we had a clear foreign policy. But there is a reason why we do not have one. It is that we are trying to fit together the remnants of several different foreign policies and to reconcile a number of conflicting and inextricable elements. The difficulty can be studied in the matter of the Spanish embargo and of the neutrality acts. We are not yet, I think, completely prepared to make up our minds.

Here, for example, is Senator Nye, who has done more than any other American to explain the people that if they export munitions to a country that is at war they will eventually be drawn into that war. In the summer of 1936 a civil war broke out in Spain. But it was a civil war which was not in part also an international war, with England supporting one side, Italy and Germany the other. Now the neutral law then in force did not apply to a civil war, as it would to a foreign war. In January, 1937, the Administration voted for an embargo on munitions. Senator Nye voted for the motion to adopt the embargo by a vote of 411 to 1. The Senate after the storm died down, let the embargo die by a vote of 18 to 0.

But last spring Senator Nye introduced a resolution to lift the embargo in order that the Madrid government might get arms. He announced that he regarded Spain "the greatest of all the democracies of the earth, and so the sooner we stop aiding the Fascists the better off will we be." And then he complained in a broad cast to the nation that we do not have a consistent and clearly defined foreign policy.

A much more impressive example of the contradictions that have to be resolved if we are to have a clear policy is to be found in the position of Mr. Anthony Eden of Great Britain. Mr. Eden has always wanted to arm the English colonies, declaring that he wanted to arm the Spanish colonies.

Moreover, unless we are greatly mistaken, Mr. Stimson did not object to the Spanish embargo when it was adopted two years ago and probably favored it. For Mr. Stimson believed in collective action and the embargo was said to be in cooperation with Mr. Anthony Eden in England and M. Leon Blum in France.

I assume that Mr. Stimson was in favor of co-operation. For in October, 1935, at the time of the League of Nations against Italy in the Ethiopian affair, he was in favor of giving the President the power to prohibit exports to Italy in cooperation with the League. In October, 1936, he was in favor of a collective embargo against Japan, and he still favors it.

Now the Spanish embargo of January, 1937, was, though many have now forgotten it, an attempt on the part of the United States to co-operate with Britain and France in localizing the Spanish War. The reason why Congress was undecided for the Spanish embargo is that it is a question of whether Mr. Nye and Mr. Stimson are in a position to cooperate against aggression, and the believers in collective security say it is a form of practical co-operation with Britain and France.

Mr. Stimson says today that the Spanish embargo was an expression of international law. And of course it was. But it was in 1937 from a point of view that was entirely in collective security, believed that international law had been radically amended. And it is not clear what Mr. Stimson still believes in, for he has been silent about the Japanese aggression in China.

I do not see the difficulties of Mr. Stimson's position because I know how to solve them. But in order to illustrate the inherent difficulties of the problem. When a man is high-minded as Stimson, and as

What we are trying to do is to combine several different theories, each of which makes a strong appeal to American interests and American sentiment. We should like to maintain our traditional neutrality acts, to which we have been committed by our foreign policy, with Japan supporting one side, Italy and Germany the other. But the fact of the matter is that we cannot have all of these things at once, and the clash of all of them and more of the benefits of one or another theory.

If we try to have a policy in Spain on the theory that collective action is a failure, and a policy in the Far East on the theory that collective action will work, we shall, with little fear, get ourselves into trouble both in 1936 and at the present time. We lift the embargo on Spain, we shall antagonize not only the English and the French governments as well as the Spanish government, but we shall be giving foreign countries an advantage in the other war. We provide more encouragement to the loyalists, and we shall be doing much more to create complete confusion in the Far East than in Spain, and we shall antagonize not only the English and the French governments as well as the Spanish government, but we shall be giving foreign countries an advantage in the other war. We provide more encouragement to the loyalists, and we shall be doing much more to create complete confusion in the Far East.

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