

61455

All the proceeds from the sale of this pamphlet together with the profits from the newly published book of amazing revelations contained in State documents and hitherto secret papers about the war and conditions in Nazi Germany, for which Colonel the Right Hon. Josiah C. Wedgwood, M. P., D.S.O. has written a special foreword will go, without any deductions, to aid war relief and emergency work in Britain.

*Copies of the above mentioned book and pamphlet can be
be obtained, price \$1.00 from Moses Schonfeld,
55 Leonard Street, New York City,*



The Old World and the New in Common Cause

**One Family Seeking Truth
and Freedom Together**

**BY COLONEL THE RIGHT HON. J. C. WEDGWOOD,
D.S.O., M.P.**

**With an introduction from the Prime Minister,
The Right Honourable Winston Churchill, M.P.**

2128

The Prime Minister's Introduction Written for the
Right Hon. Josiah C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P., on
Publication of His Autobiography "A Fighting Life"

Were I asked for the best evidence of the virtues of our democracy I would cite the whole political life of my old and gallant friend Josiah Wedgwood. Had he achieved nothing more than the example he has set us of unselfish courage and constancy in the support of what he deemed the honour and interest of his fellow-countrymen, it would be enough.

But the distressed of the whole world have learnt to look to him and through him to Parliament, for a patient hearing and the redress of wrongs.

There have been occasions when he and I have differed; but I have never doubted his single-minded pursuit of truth and justice.

WINSTON SPENCER CHURCHILL.

THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW IN COMMON CAUSE

ONE FAMILY SEEKING TRUTH AND FREEDOM TOGETHER

By Colonel the Right Hon. J. C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P.

ONE of the foolish things about our otherwise excellent Government is its comic nervousness about what Americans will think and say. This will never do if we are ever to be one family or seek truth and freedom together. Listen to these:—

No matter whose the lips that would speak, they must be free and ungagged.—Wendell Phillips.

I announce as the glory of these States that they respectfully listen to propositions, reforms, fresh views and doctrines from all men and women.

—Walt Whitman.

The safety of our form of Government comes from the clash of conflicting opinions.—Senator Borah.

I happen to be a follower of Henry George, the prophet of San Francisco. I have preached his gospel all over America, as Henry George did all over the British Empire; as his son and Louis Post did on my election platform in Staffordshire.

Fools no doubt, being "touchy," said: "What have we to learn from foreigners? No propaganda!"

No doubt there are idiots in Scotland who object to being addressed by an Englishman, and their counterparts in England who resent propaganda from a Scot. If I prove that two and two make four, what on earth does my accent matter?

Anyway, I am not in the pay of any Government.

Something New and Great in History

First, then, "Thank you for the Lease-and-Lend Bill."

Last war, in lordly manner, *we* said "Certainly, charge it up to us. Our credit is good enough, thank God!"

This war you say "Oh! Cut it out. No thanks. We are damned sorry for you. Of course, this isn't charity. We are really doing this to help ourselves. Absolutely! Don't hesitate to ask for anything you want."

This is just plumb carelessness—or else something quite new and great in the history of the world. Great faith on one side, and as great need on the other. The "need" we can take as read.

The nearest approach to this was Churchill's offer of union to France.

Why do you feel like doing it. Your opinion of us was never lower than in the years 1934-9, during which we constantly surrendered to Hitler, Mussolini and Japan. Don't I remember Harold Ickes saying:—"Nations that still are powerful and once were proud, with heads humbly bowed, back meekly from the Presence."

That jab got through.

Mutual Trust as Never Before

Such contempt made you at least inclined to applaud, when we ceased to be isolationist. Now pride has taken the place of shame. We were out-of-date, old, cowardly and finished; and now, in a trice, you are proud of us.

More, you have faith in us. We reflect credit, not discredit, on the United States of North America. We are of one blood once more, and trust each other as never before.

While this natural reaction has played a big part in changing the picture, far more has been effected by three things—the Prime Minister, the Air Force, and the martyrdom of London.

Churchill and the Royal Air Force

Winston Churchill and his country stand alone—with upflung head. His courage in carrying on when France went out, his oratory, which restored courage and united this people, have been heard with mounting enthusiasm by you and us. It is inspired leadership. Cromwell, saint and soldier, had no such hold on England. Half American himself, I place first Churchill's share in the miraculous conversion.

[6]

Next, I must put our airmen. Just at the time when the whole world was gasping at German military efficiency, just when it seemed impossible that anyone could resist such might successfully, our airmen suddenly proved supreme.

Desperately outnumbered, recruited mostly from the common people, they seemed to surpass in courage all our previous history. You expected it no more than I did. Boys of a supposedly decadent race took a weight off all our chests.

Never, in the whole history of human conflict, has so much been owed by so many to so few.

Sympathy for the Martyrdom of London

Then, on the top of this, comes the martyrdom of London—nightly death and destruction; each morning more ruins and charred corpses; no chance of stopping the slaughter or of hitting back at fate.

After all the talk of the inevitable breakdown in the nerves of the civilian population, the civilians, especially girls and women, were actually "taking it" better than soldiers. They jeered at the lightning of Jove. Hitler little knows the glow given by survival after hideous danger.

To you it looked like martyrdom, and you sent across a wave of sympathy and affection such as we have never had, or even imagined, before.

"Plain Jane" and Her Last Chance

We were Plain Jane. You know—Plain Jane, plain and homely; nobody has ever kissed her. She just runs the family for years, doing all the work, getting all the cusses . . . just expecting nothing else.

Then someone comes along at last, and says, "Poor old Jane, you've had a rotten time," and puts his arm around her and calls her "My own old Jane," and says he's going to look after her in future, and she needn't ever worry, ever any more.

Well, at first she's a bit flustered, of course; and doesn't believe it; and she says "Shucks" and "None of your nonsense." And then her eyes begin to open wide, and she sees its her last chance of happiness, and gets pretty grim and determined about it.

Her "last chance!" She'll fight for it like a tiger cat.

Oh! We are grateful for your ships and planes and rifles, and for your good opinion; but far, far more for this revelation which warms our hearts and catches us by the throat.

[7]

Drawing Closer the Bonds of Love

Just when one felt like crying, some lines came over from Chicago, which thousands of us now say over to ourselves:—

*London Bridge is falling down
My dear lady!
Be it said to your renown,
That you put on your gayest gown,
Your bravest smile—and stayed in town,
When London Bridge was falling down.*

Sympathy from Chicago, of all places! Sympathy with the stream of little children arriving penniless, cast on the great charity and love of America.

What Churchill's leadership, or the young men in the air, had left undone, was achieved by love. The worse our plight the closer the bonds were drawn.

Friends still write from America, praying for our sake for the end of the "horrible" war. Horrible! My Goodness! They never knew the horrible peace of appeasement, when our governing class beamed upon dictators and we saw our freedom slowly ebbing away.

The War: "Grand and Exhilarating"

This is a grand and exhilarating war, and now in grand company. As for the killings, why, unexpected death does not matter. Last war, every man who went to France went terribly expecting death. This war, all have an equal chance of survival and cannot possibly avoid fate.

I hope you have faith in our resolution that we, like you, will never make peace with Hitler; that we shall never back out like France; that we shall not convert a crusade into Imperialism by a mean use of your help. May the Lord do so to us, and more also, if once we break that faith.

The Planners of the New World

As for peace aims, most of us would, I suppose, insist on the removal of the Nazi and Fascist Governments, and on adequate measures to prevent Germany from doing it again.

How? That will depend on you. You pay the piper, you can call the tune. You have a chance to think; you only can reconstruct the world. This is your "Rendezvous with Destiny"—not ours.

I am on the top floor; I am in the front line; I am disturbed by "alerts" and bombs and fears. I cannot think.

We have our job to do, to hold the fortress—at any sacrifice. If I know my Churchill, he doesn't mind what happens so long as we hold out for two, 10 or 20 years.

Let someone else get on with the planning of a new world. Only let the planners remember that the League of Nations failed for three reasons, and each adequate:—

- 1—America took no part.
- 2—It had no all-powerful police.
- 3—It was a league of fearful governors, and not of fear-free, unselfish peoples.

Hopes Pinned to Union With America

If I pin my hopes to union with America, it is because union is the strongest bond, leaving no loophole for evasion of duty in future.

I don't believe that it is any more difficult to get than was the union between England and Scotland in 1707.

Vested interests by the hundred, in both our countries, will no doubt oppose; but the need of mutual aid in arms, and of economic support afterwards, will become ever more obvious, even to the "interests," as the Mississippi "still just goes rolling along."

Can such Union of the English-speaking peoples not be extended by holding an open door for all democratically governed countries to come in? India and our Colonies—some as States, some as Territories under Federal rule—might find their place.

Holland, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, China, might well welcome such a Union, whose power would establish peace and safety, whose spaciousness would secure prosperity, whose admixture would fertilise the stock of freedom.

Free internally, bound externally, each democracy could combine freedom with fraternity, and an equal right to the use of God's earth.

Future Position of the German People

How about Germany? I refuse to believe that great people is welded to the cult of the bully. The old Weimar Republic showed no such sign. I refuse to believe that the hideous persecution and enslavement of Jews and Poles is the natural beastliness of the German people, or that even to-day they do not hate it in secret.

Once free, once they have exterminated Hitler and his gang, and wiped out his memory and his crimes, why should not they, too, come in and merge in the union of the free?

Would this be adequate to prevent Germany doing it again?

Union, whether federal or confederate, means, at the least, one Executive responsible to one supreme Parliament, controlling army, navy, air force and foreign affairs, with revenues to meet the cost thereof. Such a union would be too mighty for a Germany outside ever to attack. With Germany inside, as one of the confederate states, secession would be our only danger, and secession—well, I had better not say anything more about that.

Hope for Millions Now Under Tyrants

Union, with the open door for other free countries, offers to the millions now under tyrants, hope for after the war, hope for our victory.

That hope is the one bit of worth-while propaganda which must, in the end, break Hitler and restore to mankind peace, justice, security and that freedom under which alone mankind can march on to the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

This is indeed America's "Rendezvous with Destiny"—not alone their own destiny, but that of the human race.

You will greatly save, or greatly lose, for all.

By all means write and tell me that it is hopeless, or hopeful; but please do not think that I speak for the British Government or even for Parliament. I speak for myself. I see no reason to be afraid of America.

"The man," said Lincoln "who is not prepared to hear both sides of a question is dishonest."

Faith in Freedom

By the Rt. Hon. J. C. Wedgwood, M.P.

WE AND AMERICA have expressed our common faith in freedom. It is that faith which we have once more undertaken to defend with our lives. Now, I want to see whether that faith, that moral ideal, cannot be taught in schools and from the pulpit—as a way back to religion and conscience.

Freedom certainly needs teaching. When I exhort my electors, or any Labour audience, to be "faithful to death for your freedom and laws", I am conscious of a certain strain. For liberty is not obvious in their everyday life as it is in mine. It has not been stressed in public education; the long fight for freedom is not familiar.

Though all my Labour colleagues in the House of Commons regard Socialism as merely a stage on the road to that economic freedom which is our goal, yet dependence on the State ever grows. A new master replaces the old masters. I want people to depend on themselves—to be independent. As it is, the mountain top is obscured, and those who have no vision tend to become willing cogs in the new bureaucratic machine. This machine, the scaffolding of life, becomes a god whom it is blasphemy to criticise and criminal to obstruct. Moreover, the obscuring of the Celestial City of Liberty has affected all the teaching of history. The new history blackens Britain's past in an endeavour to belittle freedom and exalt authority. Thus a Fascist and authoritarian school denounces the inhumanity of nineteenth-century liberalism, so that we may forget older inhumanity of theirs from which our fathers freed us. English history and conduct is attacked with special vigour as the corner-stone of all they hate.

A Measure of Success

Now, lest it be too late and our sun should set—now, when we have become the butt of new doctrines and of upstart peoples—it is time to restate the case for Britain and for liberty. So far you will agree with me. Now, think—and differ from me if you can!

How would you judge the success of leaders of Church or State? Would you measure their success by how far they have increased the power or the wealth of their Church or State? Or by how far they have increased the nation's influence in other lands?

Or that they have kept their people safe, while others swept to ruin? Or even that they have made their own flock happy, comfortable and tolerant? No! I ask leaders of Church or State to measure their success not by these, but by this: How far have they made themselves unnecessary? How far have they increased the self-respect, the self-reliance, self-control and self-sacrifice of their people? How far have leaders—State or Church—made leaders un-needed any longer, because those they led have become, in the words of St. Peter, “as free as the servants of God”.

Coercion v. Freedom

Success in such a direction cannot be achieved by passing coercive laws “in the interests of the society” by outside control, by punishment and by domination. Man must have freedom of choice, even to choose wrong, if he shall ever learn to choose right. The materialist, seeing man as he is, feeble and imperfect, seeks to make him comfortable and contented with guides and rules and regulations. He invokes that “greatest good of the greatest number” which is consistent with injustice, with coercion, and with slavery. He bases himself upon that authority which shall well-order men as they are. That which is expedient becomes the materialist’s guide. Both Church and State have been too often at one with the materialist and have sought to regiment mankind.

The war has changed things and made the gospel of freedom easier. We are cheerfully engaged on self-sacrifice to a degree never imagined before: 10s. in the £. We are going back to a religion, which proffers as its only reward, blood and toil, tears and sweat, with iron self-control and now with newborn self-respect. Well, let’s cash in!

Faith and Conscience

They say that the British have no faith, but only a double dose of conscience. It has seemed to me that, as faith weakened, conscience went too. The Chinese, the Spaniards, the Jews, the Africans, the Czechs called to us for help in vain; while the Fascists cried: “Britain, mind your own business”, and others echoed Cain: “Am I my brother’s keeper?” No faith! no conscience! Nonsense! If it did become dim and dull, it has now revived as never before, as a faith in freedom involving duty and sacrifice. It is upon that faith that we should now build. This war is the “way back to religion”; the way back to self-control and self-sacrifice. I see nothing horrible in a war which restores the soul; nothing horrible in men, women and even children dying for such a faith. A Greek said proudly

the other day: “We taught mankind how to live. We will now teach them how to die”. I salute that Greek; I acclaim a comrade. I can only add that dying for one’s faith is even easier than dying for one’s country.

What Is This Faith?

What is this faith which demands death? On what is it founded? How can it be spread? I think it is founded on the Bible; but each individual can answer as he pleases—it may be the lessons you learnt at your mother’s knee, or history at school, or experience in life. But what is this faith? I believe that under freedom man can indefinitely improve his nature; that freedom from fear is the beginning of wisdom. I believe that human nature can be perfected under such religious influence. We see mankind, as it were, improving throughout the ages, from the animal to the divine. We know that freedom to choose for ourselves is essential to any such progress; that any such development can only take place in an atmosphere of freedom. To bring the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, freedom is as necessary as the air we breathe. This is the essence of the religion of self-sacrifice and self-control.

However, it is not enough to say that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. Liberty is much more expensive than that. Not “safety first”, but willingness to take risks—that is the real price of liberty. That price we must continually pay anew. With faith and confidence in its rightness, as God gives us to see the right, then self-sacrifice for that faith becomes easy; and then the conscience of mankind can throb and respond once more. There have been many occasions when truth has been obscured for a time: but all through British history, liberty and justice have seemed to some to be more desirable than safety—even to be in some measure worth the supreme self-sacrifice of death.

Prophets of Liberty

This love of liberty—or hatred of oppression—has failed to win again and again; but the struggle has created a tradition, a literature and a moral ideal. For the sake of this moral ideal we have gradually curbed the authority of kings, aristocracy, Church and State. Much remains to be done, but the trend of this religion is visible throughout a thousand years, and the prophets have been greatest where the English tongue is spoken.

We owe much to the Greeks, to the Jews, to the French; but, above all, the prophets of liberty have spoken in English. Democracy owes its name to the Greeks, but its growth and survival we owe to the preachers in our own language, and to the statesmen who learned

wisdom and vision from them. Now, with our backs to the wall, let their names be our rallying cry. "Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us: Burns, Shelley are with us: they watch from their graves".

In Parliament, a generation ago, members salted their speeches with more or less appropriate Latin quotations and allusions to the classics. The success of a quotation or allusion depends upon its familiarity to the audience. Men sit up, saying "I remember that when I was a boy". So the bulk of our quotations were then taken from the Eton Latin Grammar. Now that Latin is pronounced in the Italian way, weeks pass without a single tag from the classics. The Bible and various childhood books from America and England supply the quotations instead. Our whole conversation is salted with names and phrases, obscure to the uninitiated, but familiar to the family. I want to make the prophets of liberty as familiar as is the Bible or *Alice in Wonderland*. To secure that, quotations must be made familiar by being taught to the young. So can we get "back to religion" and forward to a faith. Both are needed as never before. This is the morality needed to save mankind from Hitler's slavery of the mind.

We are in stormy weather now. But we have been there before, and ever a firm faith has seen us safely through. In that faith we shall conquer, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against freedom.



A NOTE FROM COLONEL WEDGWOOD, M.P.

To spread these ideas, Professor Allan Nevins of Columbia University and I have produced an anthology in prose and verse, taken from the great writings and speeches of Englishmen and Americans. We have arranged them chronologically so as to illustrate the great landmarks in the progress of freedom. It is called "FOREVER FREEDOM" and is published by Penguin Books in England, at 41 East 28th Street, New York City, at 25 cents. I shall be very glad to receive any correspondence on this book or on this pamphlet. While I am in America such correspondence should be sent to MOSES SCHONFELD at 55 Leonard Street, New York City; and after I return to England in August it may be addressed to the HOUSE OF COMMONS, Westminster, London, S.W.1.

Jonah C. Wedgwood

New York, June 10, 1941