WHERE ARE WE HEADING?

BY SUMNER WELLES

AUTHOR OF "THE TIME FOR DECISION"

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For my grandson,
ALEXANDER WELLES,
with the hope that his generation may enjoy
the Four Freedoms
which we of today so painfully seek.

ON the following right-hand pages are reproduced two pages of the second draft of the Atlantic Charter, which Sumner Welles prepared, with President Roosevelt's corrections, and a handwritten letter from Franklin D. Roosevelt to the author regarding the principles contained in Article 4 of the final text of the Charter.

Opposite the facsimile reproductions of these documents are printed, for the convenience of the reader, the pages of the second draft of the Charter, as corrected by Mr. Roosevelt, and the text of his letter.

Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they hope that self-government may be restored to those from whom it has been forcibly removed.

Fourth, they will endeavor to further the enjoyment by all peoples of access without discrimination and on equal terms to the markets and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.

Fifth, they hope to see established a peace, after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, which will afford to all states and peoples the means of dwelling in security within

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Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they hope that self government may be restored to those from whom it has been forcibly removed.

Fourth, they will strive to promote mutually advantageous economic relations between them through the elimination of any discriminations in either the United States of America or in the United Kingdom against the imports of any product originating in the other country; and they will endeavor to further the enjoyment by all peoples of access on equal terms to the markets and to the raw materials which are needed for their economic prosperity.

Fifth, they hope to see established a peace; after the final destruction of the Nazi tyrrany, which by effective international organization, will afford to all states and peoples the means of dwelling in security within

their own boundaries and the means of assurance that human beings may live out their lives in freedom from fear. They likewise hope to see established by such a peace safety for all peoples on the high seas and oceans, and the adoption of such measures as will prevent the continuation of expenditures for armaments other than those which are purely defensive.

Sixth, because the future of peace is impossible if armament by land, sea and air continues in the hands of any nation which threatens or may threaten to use force outside its frontiers we believe that disarmament of such nations is essential. We say this in the hope that the whole world may be guided in spirit to the goal of abandonment of force.

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Fifth: Because the future of peace is impossible if armament by land sea and air continues in the threats of any nation which threatens or may threaten ~~[illegible]~~ its use of force outside its frontiers we believe that disarmament of such nations is essential. We say this in the hope that the whole world may be guided in spirit to the goal of disarmament of force.

U.S.S. Augusta
Mon. 2:30 p.m.
August 11

Dear Sumner:

Time being of the essence I think I can stand on my *own* former formulas—to wit: access to raw materials. This omits entirely the *other* subject which is the only one in conflict: discrimination in trade.

The fourth paragraph would then read "of access to the raw materials of the world etc."

For *me* that is consistent.

Yrs
F D R

U.S.S. Augusta Mem

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

2 30 pm
May 11

Dear Sumner —

Time being of the essence I think I can stand on my own former formulas — Revised: access to raw materials. This omits entirely the other subject which is the only one in conflict: discrimination in trade.

The 4th A would then read

"of access to the raw materials of the world etc"

To me that is unobjectionable

Yours
FDR

10-6

FIRST EDITION

I-V

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Chapter I

Progress Toward World Order

WE STAND confused and uncertain at the threshold of a new era. At the close of the greatest revolution which the world has known we have as yet no sure sign of what the future holds.

Man now has within his hands the means of destroying all life upon this planet. He also holds the means whereby humanity can be assured that the new day which is dawning will be a day of peace, of security, of human progress and of liberty.

At this moment of writing the prospect is obscured. There is no freedom from that fear which afflicted all peoples during the uneasy truce between the great wars. Greed and the lust for power are still omnipresent. The insane delusion that democracy and Communism cannot simultaneously exist in the world is rampant. Stupidity, reaction and timidity dominate the councils of the nations.

Opportunity after opportunity for understanding between all peoples has been lost.

Yet those who like myself believe that the ultimate end of man is good rather than evil must see those lost opportunities not as a cause for futile regret, but rather as an impelling reason for redoubled effort. We cannot recall them. But we can, through our understanding of past mistakes, better avail ourselves of the new opportunities to come.

The peoples of the world without exception passionately desire peace and security. In their majority they need no longer resign themselves to accept the consequences of the incapacity or the criminal ambitions of their leaders. For democracy has made it possible for men and women to control events. It will be owing only to their lethargy if they permit themselves now to be controlled by events. They possess the power to shape to their own

welfare, and to that of generations to come, the cataclysmic revolution through which humanity is passing.

After ten years during which I had been given some opportunity to take part in the conduct of this government's foreign policy, and consequently to know at first hand the inner working of international affairs, I have found myself during the past three years in the role of a detached observer of the scene.

Since the illness and death of Franklin Roosevelt the scene has darkened. Ancient antagonisms and new rivalries have made themselves felt, the knowledge of the discovery of atomic fission has spread like a poisonous miasma over the relations between governments. Popular confidence in the abilities of the leaders of the people has been gravely undermined. And hope that the end of the war would at once bring security and freedom has now vanished.

The record of these times is profoundly discouraging. Yet there are many reasons for realistic optimism. The greatest is that there functions today a new international organization forged in the fires of conflict. Fifty-one nations of the earth are joined together "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

So long as the United Nations continues, so long as the chance exists for it to draw all peoples into closer union and for it to enhance its authority as the agency of the countless men and women who demand that peace must be maintained, we have in it the surest promise of a new and better world to come.

In *The Time for Decision* I touched briefly upon the negotiation by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill of the Atlantic Charter. That declaration became the foundation upon which this new structure of international organization has been built. It is timely to throw more light upon the motives which led the chiefs of the two major English-speaking peoples to bind their countries to the principles set forth in the charter as well as upon their views about what those principles should be.

The only instrument which welded the wartime alliance between the Soviet Union and these English-speaking powers, as well as with the other countries joined with them in the struggle against the Axis—the United Nations Declaration—was based upon the Atlantic Charter. Every member of the United Nations thereby

subscribed to its provisions. The Atlantic Charter was the beacon which the English-speaking democracies held aloft to the peoples struggling for liberty, to light them forward to peace, to human progress and to a free world.

As I have earlier written, President Roosevelt since the autumn of 1936 had become ever more deeply engrossed with foreign policy. No matter how urgent the problems of domestic reform and recovery might be, he had long since recognized that neither recovery nor reform could be enduring in a world so rapidly rushing toward war. He was already obsessed with the dangers by which the United States was confronted. By the summer of 1941 the dangers had become imminent.

From what he said to me I do not believe that the President had ever felt, since the rejection by the United States of the Treaty of Versailles, that the League of Nations, as an international organization, could succeed in achieving the objectives for which it was created. Circumstances had permitted it to become more and more the tool of Great Britain or of France, to be employed in the furtherance of their occasionally joint, but frequently divergent, interests.

Franklin Roosevelt passionately believed that civilization could not survive unless an international organization was established. But he did not believe that a workable international organization could be built up upon the inadequate and weakened foundations of the League of Nations.

By the summer of 1941 the overwhelming issue was his need to obtain the support of the people of the United States, and of their Congress, for those measures which were indispensable if the United States was to be prepared to defend herself should she be drawn into war and if, in the meantime, she was to be able to render such assistance as was available to the British people then fighting alone against the Axis. Isolationist sentiment was still widespread. The Congress was so far from recognizing the threatening dangers that at the very time when President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill were meeting at Argentia the House of Representatives extended the operation of the Selective Service Act by a majority of only one vote.

President Roosevelt often said, "first things must come first." In the summer of 1941, the "first thing" was for the United States to prepare and for the Axis to be defeated. After that there would be time, he felt, to decide upon the precise nature of the international organization to be created, and upon the part which the United States should play in it. It should be added that the President had a further conviction which was typical of his temperament. This was that before any international organization could be effective, some policemen armed with the necessary force must undertake an extended cleaning-up job.

He frequently spoke of the waste resulting from the military establishments of the smaller European powers. In time of war, as he put it, these armies proved to be valueless against the modern military equipment of the major powers. In time of peace, the cost of these military establishments was a crushing burden upon the men and women who had to pay for them. I remember that he once showed me an estimate which he had had prepared which demonstrated that the budgetary deficits that the majority of these smaller countries had been incurring over a period of many years were almost exactly equivalent to the cost of maintaining their armies. Worst of all in his opinion the maintenance of these standing armies was the chief reason so many of the smaller countries were constantly embroiled in wars, as in the Balkans, which ultimately affected the interests of the major powers, and involved them also in the conflict.

In 1941 his general thesis was that before any durable and effective international organization could be set up, some policing powers must first undertake the task of disarming the smaller countries, thereby ridding the world of an unnecessary burden upon humanity as well as of a danger to international peace. Only the major powers, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States could undertake such a responsibility.

The way the mind of the President was running at that time is shown in some notes which I made on August 11, during the time of the Atlantic Charter meeting, of a conversation which I had with the President on the afternoon of that day:

I said I had been surprised and somewhat discouraged by a remark that the President had casually made in our morning's conference, which was that nothing could be more futile than the reconstitution of a body such as the Assembly of the League of Nations. I said to the President that, if he conceived of the need for a transition period upon the termination of the war, during which period Great Britain and the United States would undertake the policing of the world, it seemed to me that it would be enormously desirable for the smaller powers to have available to them an Assembly in which they would all be represented, in which they could make their complaints known, and in which they could join in recommendations as to the policy to be pursued by the major powers who were doing the police work. I said it seemed to me that an organization of that kind would be the most effective safety valve that could be devised.

The President said that he agreed fully with what I said and that all that he had intended by the remark which he had made in the morning was to make clear his belief that a transition period was necessary, and that during that transition period no organization such as the Council or the Assembly of the League could undertake the powers and prerogatives with which they had been entrusted during the existence of the League of Nations.

I further said that, while from the practical standpoint I was in agreement that the United States and Great Britain were the only powers which could or would exercise the police work, it seemed to me that it would be impossible to exclude from the responsibilities involved the other American Republics or, for that matter, such occupied countries as Norway, the Netherlands, and even Belgium.

The President replied that he felt that a solution for this difficulty could probably be found through the ostensible joining of those powers to Great Britain and the United States but that it would have to be recognized that this must be only ostensible, since none of the nations mentioned would have the practical means of taking any effective or at least considerable part in the task involved.

It will, of course, be noted that the President made no reference to the Soviet Union. But it must be remembered that in the early days of August, 1941, the Soviet Union had only just been invaded by the Nazi armies. The highest military authorities of the United States were continually advising the President not only that the Soviet Union could resist the German onslaught for but a brief period, but also that the occupation of the whole of Russia west of the Urals was inevitable. It must also be remembered that

relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, particularly during the period of the German-Soviet agreement, had been practically nonexistent. Our knowledge of the views of the Kremlin about the future establishment of world order or, for that matter, about any other aspect of Russian foreign policy was very slight.

President Roosevelt, before he had left Washington for the Atlantic meeting, had told me in some detail how he thought the approaching meeting with the British Prime Minister should be utilized to hold out hope to the enslaved peoples of the world. The English-speaking democracies both stood for principles of freedom and of justice. They should jointly bind themselves now to establish at the conclusion of the war a new world order based upon these principles.

He was firm in the conviction that equal opportunity to enjoy the world's natural resources must be available to all peoples. He was particularly impressed with the need to find co-operative methods through which standards of living would be steadily raised. He frequently discussed the most effective method of persuading the nations of the so-called "have" countries that an increase in the standard of living of the nationals of the "have-not" countries would redound to their own benefit by enlarging the purchasing power in foreign markets for the goods produced by the more prosperous and advanced nations.

Finally, the President had uppermost in his mind the fact that an agreement on principles between the British and American governments would remove the danger that the British government might enter into such secret arrangements as those concluded during the course of the First World War, which had rendered the subsequent task of writing a just peace so difficult.

There had been no prior exchange of views between the President and Mr. Churchill about issuing a declaration such as the Atlantic Charter. The initiative was taken by Mr. Churchill after his arrival at Argentia on the evening of August 9. On the following morning Sir Alexander Cadogan, the British Permanent Under Secretary, handed me a draft which Mr. Churchill had prepared. The text was as follows: