ANTI-RUSSIAN TALK ASSAILED BY ICKES

Why Should U. S. Want to Fight Recent Ally, He Asks at Dinner to Mann

AUTHOR WARNS OF POWER

It Is Easily Used Selfishly, He Says—Frankfurter Among Others Paying Tribute

Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, speaking last night at a dinner to Thomas Mann, Nobel prize winner in literature, assailed those who conduct a "whispering campaign" against Russia designed to make us "auspicious and nervous." Asking why we should prepare to fight our recent ally, he declared that Russia's paramount need was for peace and that she had no reason for war with the United States.

Sponsored by the Nation Associates, the dinner was held in the grand ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel to mark the seventieth birthday on June 6 of Dr. Mann, who found a haven here from Nazi oppression.

Chairman of the dinner committee was Robert E. Sherwood, playwright and overseas director of the Office of War Information, and other speakers included Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, Dr. Mann, Dr. Juan Negrin, Prime Minister of Spain's last Republican government; William L. Shirer, foreign correspondent and commentator, and Freda Kirchwey, editor of The Nation.

Russia Called Vital to Peace

Referring to Russia as "that great nation, without whose cooperation there can be no peace," Mr. Ickes declared:

"What Russia needs more than anything else in the world is peace, a peace that would allow her time to develop her enormous resources, to build up her ravaged industry and to restore her devastated lands."

The whisperers in the campaign to "stir up suspicions and foment fear and hate" of Russia, Mr. Ickes asserted, were the same pseudo-patriots who before the war "went up and down the land 'Lindberghing' that Hitler not only had no felonious designs upon us but that he could not attack us even if he had such intentions."

He acknowledged that in the working out of the terms of world peace, "we will have honest differences of opinion with Russia, as well as with other countries," but declared that would be no difficulties that could not be overcome by "patience and understanding and by adhering at all times to the principle of that great utterance embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, 'Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you.'"

Mr. Ickes said there were those among us who were bent on preventing the peace from being more than a short-lived armistice, but that instead of openly avowing their purpose they posed as "patriots undefiled."

"They love America so tenaciously," he said, "that they cannot find any other country that is fit to associate with America, even in the interest of a peace that cannot be forged or endure except upon the basis of association and mutuality."

Mr. Ickes said the "first and greatest task" confronting us in the making of a lasting peace was the punishment of those responsible for the bestiality which befouled the whole of Europe for so long." But this, he declared, should not blind us to the fact that even the Germans were deserving of our help in the coming winter crisis.

"Cold and hunger will stalk through western Europe this fall and winter," he warned. "Unless we move quickly and vigorously a million or more people may be expected to die of privation in Switzerland, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Scandinavia and Italy the coming winter."

Mann Eulogizes Roosevelt

Bespeaking his gratitude and love for the late President Roosevelt, "that great statesman whom we mourn and whom we shall never cease to mourn," Dr. Mann said he was turning his adress of thanks into a tribute "to him who for all of us incarnated the hopes of mankind in a great personality."

America today, as the preponderant world power with Russia, stands at the crossroads, Dr. Mann declared.

"Let us not evade this fact," he said. "Such an immense military potential always involves a great danger and a great temptation. It can e used in the old selfish spirit of economic exploitatio nand oppression, that is to say, in the spirit of imperialism—or it can be conceived as a mandate to leadership and to the service of the common cause of mankind."

Dr. Mann envisaged defeat for representatives of the "old order," those who, he said, were attempting to frustrate America's "humanitarian leadership," and saw ultimate victory for those who desire to go forward in the "development and fulfilment" of democracy.

Expressing pride in his recently acquired citizenship, Dr. Mann said:

"I am no longer a guest in this country, I am one of its citizens. I say 'we' when I speak of America, and I say it with pride. I suffer when 'we' occasionally create the appearance that we want at bottom to preserve the fascism that we have defeated—as a bulwark against the imminent socialization of democracy, of which we are afraid. I know that such an appearance is not according to the will of the American people, the nation of Roosevelt; it does not wish to retrogress from democracy, but to go forward in its development and fulfillment. And as this people wills, so will it be."

Justice Frankfurter declared that Dr. Mann symbolized events

and principles "that can hardly fail to remain forever among the great stories in the destiny of man." He argued for the inseparability of art and politics, stating his view that "for artists to be unpolitical is to surrender to those who reject the rights of free inquiry and of the free play of the mind, the determination of the direction of society."

On the subject of Americanism, Justice Frankfurter said President Roosevelt's reminder that "we are all immigrants" was not the least part of the heritage he left.

"There are humorous folk," he said, "who are under the delusion that, merely because some of these immigrants came to these shores on earlier ships, their descendants have superior virtues.

"To make Americanism turn on blood instead of on completeness of devotion to the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and the Second Inaugural, and the Four Freedoms, is to come dangerously near the abyss into which Nazism finally fell. To differentiate between Mayflower descendants and the Sidney Hillmans, Charlie Polettis, the Commander Stassens, the Al Smiths, the Booker Washingtons, the Wendell Willkies is to sap the most precious force in the American fellowship — regard not for the accidents of birth, but the inherent moral worth of the individual.

"The essence of the democratic faith is the equal claim of every man to pursue his facilities to the humanly fullest—for his sake, but no less for the sake of society. For nature is the greatest of democrats. She endows men with the noblest gifts, heedless of genealogy. Greatness always remains a mystery—but what is more fitting than that Lincoln should gradually but securely have become the uncontested symbol of America."

Negrin Assails Snobbery

Dr. Negrin paid tribute to Dr. Mann as "a great symbol in the fight against snobbery and noxious prejudices, in the struggle to preserve the higher values of our civilization, which have never been so traduced in the course of history as they have been, and I may say still are."

Citing the need for leaders with character and wisdom in what he said was one of the most difficult periods of mankind, Dr. Negrin warned that "against the poison of totalitarian agression no country is immune; the trend to domination and jingoistic chauvinism is not exclusive to any race or nation."

Dr. Negrin recalled his plea to President Roosevelt when the Spanish Loyalists were "in a desperate battle not only against the vicious power of their enemies, later your own foes, but tattered and asphyxiated by the pretended neutral and officially friendly countries."

The "light" he hoped for, Dr. Negrin said, did not come in time for Spain, but "it came later in time to save the whole world."

Mr. Sherwood, referring to Dr. Mann as "this eminent citizen of the world," said that before the first Japanese attack on Manchuria in 1931 "there was hardly a writer in this world who did not owe a profound debt of gratitude to Thomas Mann."

He urged that the nation look forward to new horizons "rather than backward toward old rubble," and advocated that we "continue to be heavily armed for as long in the future as may be necessary."

"But physical power," Mr. Sherwood cautioned, "however vast, will be as unsubstantial as was the Maginot Line unless it is the instrument of people who have the capacity for spiritual greatness and the will to use that greatness forever in the cause of justice and peace."