

NEED FOR CLOSE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND AMERICA

Following is the postscript to be delivered after the nine o'clock news tonight by Mr. R.G. Casey, who will be leaving England shortly to take up his duties as Minister of State in the Middle East:

I am very glad to have the privilege of saying a few words to you - to the people of Britain, as well as to the people of my own home country - Australia and perhaps to others.

My wife and I reached this country only a few days ago from the United States, and after a short time here we are travelling on to the Middle East,

I hasten to say that I am extremely grateful for the chance that the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, has offered me to serve as a member of the War Cabinet of Great Britain and as its representative in the Middle East. Much as I regret leaving the direct service of my own country, Australia, for the time being, I would not be human if I was not proud to have been given this great opportunity. The most that anyone can ask, in these days, is a place in which to serve, however difficult the sphere - and, in my case, under conditions that undoubtedly will stretch one to the uttermost.

I am spending this brief period in England in meeting and getting to know my fellow members of the War Cabinet, Admirals, Generals, Air Marshals and others, and in trying to absorb as much as possible in the time from the many British Departments that are concerned with the Middle East situation.

My wife is coming with me to the Middle East. We have left our two children in America, where so many British children are at present. We will send them back to Australia as soon as it is more convenient for them to travel on the seas.

You will not expect me to say much to you about the situation in England or in the Middle East. All that I can claim to know much about at present is my own country, Australia, and something of the United States.

I have recently been two years as Australian Minister in America and have been in close touch with the President and the high officials of the American Government - and I think I know a little about their great country and its people. I like America and Americans. I felt at home there, and I like to believe that I made many good friends there.

You can rely on the Americans. They have their whole heart in the common struggle. Their strength is growing fast. Formidable American forces and large and ever growing numbers of American aircraft and tanks and other weapons of war will be impressing themselves on one or other of our enemies, alongside their British brothers, from now on.

As regards their personal lives, the Americans have already started very definitely to feel the pinch in respect of motor cars, refrigerators and nearly all other household appliances, building materials and the like - and this list is likely to grow rapidly by reason of the wholesale diversion of raw materials into munition making. There is as yet little or no shortage of food, so far as I know, except sugar and tea.

The American attitude of mind towards the war underwent, of course, a sudden and abrupt change on December 7th. The whole American population is now grimly intent on the most vigorous prosecution of the war - and once they start on an enterprise of this sort, they are an extremely robust and militant people. And they will stand no half measures. And their ability to wage war - and to help all of us to wage war - is growing like a mushroom.

It is true that there is some lack of appreciation in the United States of the British war effort - but I don't think that you should necessarily blame the Americans for that. When things go a bit wrong I think it isn't a bad plan to blame oneself rather than the other fellow. In this case I believe the super modest British habit of understatement is the basic reason - although of course not the only one.

I am one of those who believe that it is essential for the future of the world that the British peoples and the people of the United States should work in the closest possible harmony in war and in peace. I do not mean to exclude other peoples of goodwill, but, for short, I will speak of the Americans and British. I would ask you to believe that this is not merely a polite generalisation. It is my deep conviction.

Unless the British Commonwealth of Nations and the United States maintain close sympathetic contact and unity of policy, both in this war and after it, I would regard the future of the world with real alarm. This close working together between British and Americans isn't going to be easy to achieve. It will not be achieved by merely saying we want it. It will need great tolerance and generosity, it will mean a lot to give and take - on both sides.

I believe there are no two men more convinced of the necessity for close British-American collaboration than the Prime Minister and the President - and if I were able to tell you of the warm and heartening personal messages that I brought Mr. Churchill from Mr. Roosevelt, you would be proud and pleased.

My conviction as to the necessity for close British-American relations is not based on our own selfish interests. It is, in my mind, just as necessary for the Americans as it is for all of us. Together we can put the world on to an even keel and keep it there. If we work in separate compartments, the enemy will be able to work on differences between us - and divide us. Then the evil forces of the world would determine the future of the world - and not us. The old motto "United we stand, divided we fall," I am convinced, applied to American British relations with full force and truth.

As for myself, I am an Australian of the Australians - but my life has so turned out that I feel completely at home in my own country, in Great Britain and in the United States; and I count this as one of my greatest assets and advantages. In whatever sphere I find myself in the future, I'm going to make it a guiding principle to do all I can in a practical way to bring American and British interests into as close working association as I possibly can.

I don't mean treaties or formal arrangements, I mean that, as a British subject, I will regard America and Americans as my friends - and that in anything that we do or propose to do in all matters of consequence for which I am responsible, we should take into account how such action is likely to affect the United States - and I would hope that the reverse would also apply. It is my experience that in the long run you get what you give - and that the way you treat other people determines how other people treat you.

I have served Australia in various capacities for almost the whole of my adult life - for 22 out of my 51 years - in the last war, then afterwards as an Australian civil servant, in the Australian Parliament and as Australian Minister in Washington. Now I am a member of the British Government and as such I believe that I will be serving the interests of the British Empire as a whole.

I have had the advantage of having served, as an Australian public servant, in Britain for six years, from 1924-1930, sitting in the Offices of the Cabinet and the Committee of Imperial Defence, and maintaining close touch between the British and Australian Governments on a considerable range of public affairs. Many of the men with whom I had to deal in those years are now highly placed in the various branches of the Government and the Services.

I believe it is a good thing to change people round and put Australians and others from the other British countries into the Service of the Government of Britain - and vice versa.

For myself, I have long believed that the various British countries have been too much in watertight compartments. No two men looking out of the same window see the same scene. Differences of outlook and of experience are helpful, or so I believe, to the combined judgement that produces Government and policy.

And so I welcome this opportunity to serve in the British War Cabinet. It is a novel experiment, and I hope it will not be the last of such experiments. For myself, I can only say that I will do my utmost to try to demonstrate that Mr. Churchill was not grievously wrong in his generous invitation to me.

I have been tremendously impressed in this last week by the wholehearted spirit and consuming energy and the keen sense of national discipline shown by the Government and people of Britain. I don't mean just a nervous urge that keeps people doing something about the war all the time - but a burning conviction that every man and woman who is in a position to serve has to put his or her all, day and night, into the job of saving civilisation. This is the spirit and attitude of mind that will win this war - and the peace after the war. Nothing less will be enough.

This war is going to be over some day and our side is going to win it. Then will come the almost equally difficult task of reconstruction - the rebuilding of the broken lives of countless individuals - and of countries.

Great Britain and the British Dominions and the United States will be foremost in this great social and economic task - the greatest task of its kind that the world has ever faced - the task of building something better than we had before.

Considerable thought has already been given to this great job of reconstruction, principally of course in the two great centres of population - Britain and America - but with the war still to be won these great after-the-war problems cannot at this stage be finalised.

Our present task - the task of all of us - is to win the war, so that all our energies can, as quickly as possible, be directed towards what is the real job of all decent peoples - that of making the world each year a better place for the average human being to live in.

++++++

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION