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AMERICA AND THE WORLD

U.S. Professor Answers BBC Speaker

DEAN E. McHENRY, an American professor of Political Science who is spending a year in New Zealand, gave an address in Wellington recently in which he answered A. J. P. Taylor (Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford), two of whose BBC talks on British Foreign Policy were recently reprinted in "The Listener." We did not report Dr. McHenry's address at the time, but he went over the ground again for us in an interview a few days later. Dr. McHenry is an American citizen, but a large part of his teaching and research is in the British Commonwealth field. He is in the Dominion on Sabbatical leave to survey the results of 11 years of Labour rule.

HE began by reviewing briefly what Taylor had said: "In his first broadcast, Taylor stated the need for a new British foreign policy. The traditional assumptions on which that policy rested—balance of power and British naval supremacy—are gone; Russia is master of Continental Europe, and probably could push all the way to the Bay of Biscay if she were determined to; America rules the waves with a navy that Taylor says is six times as large as that of Britain. These are facts, however unpleasant, and the Oxford don performs a service in calling them to our attention with all the candour at his command. Sprinkled through his initial talk are hints that the new British policy should be based upon collaboration with Russia.

"The second broadcast was on British-American relations. It attacks, with extraordinary violence, the idea of English-speaking unity. The great power of the United States is analysed; she produces more than half the world's coal and steel; her people enjoy around 55 per cent. of the world's income. Taylor probably goes too far in asserting that the U.S.A. spends a larger proportion of its budget on armaments than Britain or Russia; American federal, state, and local expenditures must be totalled to get a proper base figure; Russia's budget covers both governmental and business enterprises, and therefore is scarcely comparable."

"I WAS quite shocked by his second broadcast," Dr. McHenry told us. "As an American I resented his suggestion of sinister motives. The typical American attitude is that we have no skill at all in diplomacy—that experts all get sold down the river by the wily British! I agree with Taylor's analysis of American policy, about 50 per cent.—he is right in saying that it lacks unity and determination and aggressiveness, but he is wrong in assuming that it will be 'selfish, harsh, and self-centred.' If he means that foreign policy will be based on the American government's conception of what is in the national interest, then he is right. Policy based on sentiment is likely to be unstable, changing with the swing of the political pendulum and the ebb and flow of public opinion. Policy based on the sound foundation of national interests ought to remain firm through changes of administrations and public fads. If he means American policy will be ruthless, with little consideration given to human

values, then he knows little of American psychology. Americans are 'suckers' for the underdog in most any situation.

"And then I didn't like Taylor's assumption that Britain is finished as a world power. I think he's quite wrong. He talks as if she is comparable now with Holland or Sweden. Holland and Sweden are delightful places—I know them well—but no nation that has stood what Britain has stood, with its Dominions as they are, self-governing but loyal, can cease to be a major power in the world. After all, there are 45 millions in the Homeland and 35 millions in the outer Empire. Taylor would cast Britain in the role of an innocuous and isolated neutral. This new 'Little England' would 'cast off the tow rope' that binds her to America. Taylor even commends the new economic agreement of Sweden with Russia as an example of a progressive nation ensuring itself against the economic storm which 'will blow from America.' Great Britain is not finished. She is a great power in her own right, not by 'pretence' as Taylor says. She is the hope of nations in Europe that look to her for leadership in resisting the forces of totalitarianism. She has the friendship of the United States, which has generally turned up in the year, if not the month, of greatest need. America has its Taylors too, but they constitute a very small minority. Britishers may be alarmed or offended from time to time by statements of irresponsible private citizens or even Senators, but those who know America well know that we tolerate many shades of thought. I think I know my country well, and I have no hesitation in declaring that no large country is held in more esteem than Great Britain.

"NOR did I like Taylor's assumption that war between the U.S. and Russia is inevitable. On this question he reaches a new low. In his preoccupation with the possibility of such a war, Taylor forgets all about the United Nations. He pictures the awful consequences to Britain and Japan, which will be used as 'aircraft carriers' in such a war. He thinks Russia will not be aggressive, and hints that the United States may be.

"If there is any danger, I think it will come from the leaders in Russia discovering that they can't give their people the standard of living of the democracies and can't keep them ignorant of those standards for ever. They may therefore be forced to do what Hitler did—try war. I don't know. The Russians are not sure of themselves,