



The BOOK TRAIL

MORE POST-WAR PLANNING

"Let the People Know," by Norman Angell. Published by The Viking Press, 18 East 48 Street, New York City. 1943. \$2.50.

Not vested interests or powerful individuals but average citizens determine the course of history, says Norman Angell, since they as massed individuals influence the final decisions in politics. He believes they can apply their understanding of the broad principles of human association to international affairs if they are not misinformed by their leaders. So the former Nobel Peace Prize winner attempts to do his share in the process of education by answering the questions being raised by John Citizen today.

Let the people know, writes Angell, in effect:

That their sons will be fighting World War III—just as they themselves are fighting World War II, and their fathers fought World War I—unless they guarantee the right of the other fellow to life. In world affairs that means each nation prepared to defend the security of all other nations—

That practices arising from "neutrality" and "isolationism"—far from keeping would-be independent nations out of war—enable an aggressor to pick them off one by one and strengthen him for continuous conquest (note Hitler's successes)—

That the current war is primarily a political not an economic war, the result of non-cooperation by the separate nations in a world-wide political movement. Economic determinists to the contrary, it is no class war of capitalists against the laboring masses, the "haves" against the "have-nots."

Our self-styled socialist approves of the process of modification to which capitalism has been subjected in all countries for many years and he hopes for an extension of this tendency following the war so that all groups in all countries will have access to natural resources to keep unemployment to a minimum, with social security guaranteed by governments, where individual enterprise falls short.

While readers of THE FREEMAN at this point may begin their mental tirade against "planners," they will read with some approval Angell's clarification of the term "own" as applied, for instance, to the British Empire "owning" colonies. No doubt John Citizen does think of these colonies as belonging to the British government when, in fact, they yield returns to individual investors. The author makes clear that a change in the political setup would not alter title to the wealth of these "haves"—or make one American or any other non-Britisher richer, except as these latter are free to exchange their products with those of the producers in the Empire's colonies. Here, and again and again, Angell pleads for the elimination of trade barriers. He maintains that, following the last war, such non-aggressors as the Scandinavians were more greatly harmed by tariffs erected against their products by the United States and other "friendly" nations than was Germany penalized by her loss of colonies.

The basis for scapegoats is exposed, and great pains are taken to remove the sting of the Anglophile. One purpose of the book, obviously, is to allay the fears John Citizen, American, has of continued imperialism, particularly the British variety. Can't he see that the association of the dominions in the British Commonwealth is a happy, voluntary one? India? Angell believes that Britain may very likely give India her freedom at the close of the war, but only if the United Nations will guarantee that freedom so that Australia and New Zealand need not fear an enemy in India.

The enigma of Russia is not solved for us by this international good fellow. If we dislike the internal policies of Russia, the most he can say is that at present we have more to fear from the Axis than from Russia.