CONVOY
A FUNERAL TRAIN

AMERICA FIRST COMMITTEE
General Robert E. Wood, Acting Chairman
National Headquarters
141 West Jackson Boulevard
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
CONVOYS mean war — a shooting, bloody war.

Senator Walter F. George, during the debate on H. R. 1776, admitted as much. William Allen White, as Chairman of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, wrote on December 23, 1940:

"The story is floating around that I and our committee are in favor of sending convoys with British ships or our own ships, a silly thing, for convoys, unless you shoot, are confetti and it’s not time to shoot now or ever."

Just what is a convoy? A convoy is a protecting force, an armed escort, accompanying ships transporting munitions, merchandise and money to a nation at war. And what is a convoy for? It is supposed to fight off ships, submarines and airplanes that attack the supply vessels. And how does a convoy do that? By using its heavy guns, its torpedoes its anti-aircraft fire and by sinking the attacking ships and their crews.

In any man’s language this means war, and an offensive war at that.

The Neutrality act of 1939 was passed during comparatively calm days when we knew we would need a wise policy for excited, emotional times such as we are now experiencing. This law prohibits our merchant vessels from entering zones defined by the President as combat areas.

This prohibition was written into the law at the insistence of the President himself. The President regarded this prohibition as the first objective of his policy. In the course of his message on September 21, 1939, to the special session of Congress which enacted the Neutrality law of 1939, President Roosevelt said:

"With the repeal of the embargo this Government clearly and definitely will insist that American citizens and American ships keep away from the immediate perils of the actual zones of conflict."

Both the opponents and proponents of the bill recognized that incidents which would certainly involve us in war could not occur if American vessels were kept out of danger zones. There is good, American common sense in such a policy.

The Neutrality act does not apply to the Navy. But if it is sound to keep our merchant ships out of dangerous waters it is twice as sound to keep our fighting ships out of these zones. When our vessels, both merchant and naval, do not sail into war zones, the possibility of embroilment in war abroad is radically lessened. The fact that not a single incident involving American ships has occurred on the high seas in this war shows the wisdom of this policy.

Almost every public man in the country, including Franklin D. Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie has pledged his opposition to “sending our boys abroad.” This is also a pledge against naval convoys. Our warships are manned by American boys. American planes, piloted by American boys, will be needed to make the convoys effective. With our Navy and Air Force in the war, our Army will not be far behind.

The dictionary gives as one definition for convoy, “a funeral train.” That is just what it will be for the United States if we permit our Navy to convoy supply ships to Britain. It will be a funeral train for millions of our boys killed in an unnecessary war and a funeral train for the remains of a democracy murdered in a foolhardy venture.

Americans, after all the hysterical propaganda, are still 83 per cent opposed to entry into war. By the same percentage, Americans must be opposed to convoys.
AMERICA FIRST COMMITTEE
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PRINCIPLES

1. Our first duty is to keep America out of foreign wars. Our entry would only destroy democracy, not save it. "The path to war is a false path to freedom."

2. Not by acts of war abroad but by preserving and extending democracy at home can we aid democracy and freedom in other lands.

3. In 1917 we sent our American ships into the war zone and this led us to war. In 1941 we must keep our naval convoys and merchant vessels on this side of the Atlantic.

4. We must build a defense, for our own shores, so strong that no foreign power or combination of powers can invade our country, by sea, air or land.

5. Humanitarian aid is the duty of a strong, free country at peace. With proper safeguard for the distribution of supplies, we should feed and clothe the suffering and needy people of the democracies of Europe.

MEMBERSHIP
Membership in the America First Committee is open to all American citizens. We exclude from our rolls Fascists, Nazis, Communists, and their sympathizers.

Send me more information about the America First Committee, 141 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois.

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