War and Armament Economics

By LEWIS COREY

LET there be no mistake about the danger of war. In this, the twentieth year after the World War, the world is moving toward another war—more destructive, more barbarous, more menacing to civilization.

And again, as in 1916, America is preparing to participate in that war.

There is the concerted nation-wide campaign, organized by high government officials, to create a war psychology among the American people. There is the ear-marking by the War Department of 10,000 M-day plants for industrial mobilization and universal conscription. There is the billion-dollar appropriation for a navy capable of waging an offensive war. There is the subsidizing and building-up of the merchant marine to transport American troops to fight in foreign lands.

Twenty years ago, American troops were still fighting in foreign lands. No person of integrity now justifies that war.

It was called a war to end war. Yet today, there is danger of another and more destructive world war, with the nations now spending three times as much money on armaments as was spent in 1913.

It was called a war to make the world safe for democracy. Yet today, democracy is in greater danger than it was twenty-five years ago, imperialist reaction is bloodier and more savage, and the new reaction of fascism threatens to engulf the world in barbarism.

Beware of False Pretenses!

The ideals of the World War were false pretenses. Let no false pretenses again ensnare us into war!

It is important to recall the false pretenses of the World War because they are reappearing in the policy of military alliances and war that is misnamed "collective security." The advocates of that policy ask us: But do you deny that security must be collective? We answer: Of course, security must be collective! But war promotes collective insecurity. Your policy is actually one of military alliances, especially with Tory England, the greatest imperialist oppressor in the world today. Your policy moves towards war "to make the world safe for democracy against fascism," as in 1914-18 there was the false pretense of making the world "safe for democracy against militarism."

Moreover, let us consider the implications of that policy.

The policy of military alliances and war that is misnamed "collective security," abandons the struggle against imperialism, the final cause of modern war. Thus, the most vocal advocates of "collective security," while admitting that our own country is immune to invasion, demand the defense of American colonial possessions and American investments in China. The most reactionary imperialist interests are inflamed to promote military alliances and war.

The policy of military alliances and war that is misnamed "collective security", means greater armaments and militarism. But greater armaments must necessarily lower the standards of living of our people, because armaments mean a lower production of useful goods and services. And greater militarism means greater reaction, the encouragement of totalitarian forces to suppress civil rights and of authoritarian governments to control the independent organizations of workers and farmers — especially government control of labor unions. Greater armaments and militarism develop the preconditions of fascism.

War Leads To Fascism

And those preconditions of fascism may become fascism itself in the event of war. For war today is completely totalitarian and must be waged by means of authoritarian enslavement of the people. The war "to make the world safe for democracy against fascism" might end in the destruction of democracy and the triumph of fascism.

The struggle for peace means a struggle against war and the forces making for war. Hence the minimum six-point program of the Keep America Out of War Congress:

1. The immediate removal of American troops and marines from belligerent zones and the evacuation of American nationals who, if they stay, stay at their own risk; opposition to every expression of American imperialism.

2. No increase in the army and navy budget; work toward reduction of the present excessive military machine.

3. The democratic right of American citizens to vote on a declaration of war.

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where is it such an essential and controlling element in the existence and advancement of a political party as in the United States. It will not do to turn away from this problem with indignation or disgust. Patronage is a definite part of the political system and, if a labor party hopes to muster the practical political force it needs in its long, uphill fight, it must develop its own way of meeting and compensating for the patronage-politics of the old parties.

oor Unity

policy of resisting a Popular Front from within may be the better...."

The reference to the French Revolutionary Left and the Trotskyites really confuses the issue. The implication, no doubt, is that the latter is insignificant as a result of fighting the People's Front from the outside and the other is strong as a result of fighting from within. Now the attitude on and methods of fighting against the People's Front of the French Lefts and the Trotskyites respectively, can hardly be the full explanation of their respective influence and size. There were many other factors entering into the explanation. Besides, the Trotskyites also fought inside the French S.P. for a time. Strictly speaking, they did not withdraw. They were expelled. The same is now true of Pivert and his followers.

The French Analogy

Secondly, the analogy between what the French Lefts did and what the I.L.P. should do is hardly a strict one. The French Lefts, were not a party, but a faction of one. They couldn't help but remain inside. They were fighting to win the S.P. as a party over to their anti-People's Front viewpoint.

That was a correct policy— indeed the only policy possible. The I.L.P., on the other hand is a full-fledged independent party with a political line opposed to the People's Front.

The Trojan-horse policy of disruption from within is outmoded. It fools nobody. In addition, it is dangerous and politically inexpedient. The danger of political con-

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4. Abandonment of all existing plans for industrial mobilization and defeat of all new plans for universal conscription and regimentation, thus warning our militarists that the American people will not tolerate American participation in war abroad and war dictatorship at home.

5. No alliance or joint action with any nation or group of nations for war, or which is likely to lead to war, declared or undeclared, under any name or any pretext.

6. At home, concentration on the struggle against injustice, unemployment, bad housing and poverty, and a determination by means of that struggle to seek out prosperity rather than to find it in war trade. Abroad, increasing solidarity with the people of all nations in the struggle to abolish economic injustice and colonial oppression, and to remove the causes of dictatorial militarism.

In accordance with that final expression of international solidarity the Keep America Out of War Congress condemned the one-sided arms embargo on Loyalist Spain because this embargo favors the feudal military and fascist hordes of General Franco. The Labor Commission of the Congress, representing one-third of the delegates, demanded immediate lifting of the embargo on Loyalist Spain.

War And Economic Injustice

The struggle against economic injustice and unemployment and for constructive economic action is crucial in the struggle for peace. Because today it is the economic crisis that drives toward war and fascism. The fascist nations, dominated by reactionary interests, are trying to "solve" the crisis by means of rearmament, imperialism and war, and are thus making the crisis worse. They are providing work by means of a system of armament economics, which gears economic activity to the reactionary and destructive purposes of war, instead of concentrating upon a peaceful solution. Fascism inflames imperialism, while the older imperialism moves toward fascism.

That system of armament economics is becoming dominant in the imperialist "democratic" nations, England and France, and its beginnings are apparent in our own country.

The struggle for peace demands a struggle against the system of armament economics. We must use our economic resources and labor for peaceful economic and social betterment. We must build houses, improve farm lands, create new highways, reinvigorate economic activity and employment for the purpose of making our country a finer place in which to live. We must mobilize the progressive forces of labor and the forces of all progressive groups to realize that program and the social-economic and governmental rearrangements that may be necessary.

Danger Of Armaments Economics

And, along with that struggle for peaceful economic and social betterment, must go a struggle for peaceful world economic cooperation.

The American people must act to deny American munitions and American materials for munitions to all the arming nations. It is a scandal that American corporations are arming Japan, for example, while calling upon the American people to arm against the very Japanese menace they are helping to create.

The American people must make it clear to all nations that we are prepared to use our enormous economic resources in a program of peaceful world cooperation, on the condition, however, that those resources shall be used for the constructive purpose of peace and not for the destructive purposes of war. But that presupposes that the American people force the government to abandon militarist preparations and imperialist objectives.

The struggle against war is a crusade for peace and the works of peace. We must tread the road to peace clear-eyed and unafraid, uninfluenced by prejudices and false pretenses, resolved to tie up inseparably the struggle against war with the struggle for economic justice and reconstruction.

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(These paragraphs constitute the radio address delivered by Lewis Corey over WEVD on June 16 in a debate with Dr. Harry F. Ward.—Ed.)

Cinema Festival Benefit Planned

For the first time in the history of the sound film, its outstanding achievements thruout the world will be brought together in the form of an International Film Festival, to be held during the months of July and August at the Fifth Avenue Playhouse, 66 Fifth Avenue.

Sixteen different countries, including the United States, will be represented in the festival, and forty-four motion pictures, all of which have been acclaimed here