

Youth Demands Peace!

By ANGELO HERNDON

YOUTH DEMANDS PEACE, by James Lerner, published by the National Youth Committee of the American League Against War and Fascism. 5 cents.

HERE is a pamphlet of twenty-three pages written in terse and simple language that is a clarion call to America's youth to stand guard against the feverish preparations of American financiers to plunge us into another imperialist world slaughter. It exposes the hollow talk of "peace" and "neutrality" while at the same time the dealers in death are making haste to explode the poisonous gas and roaring cannons that will mean chaos, death and destruction of millions of young people.

Every effort is being made to blind the people through subtle and sometimes open war propaganda with the hope of creating illusions in their minds that wars are justified and necessary to save the world for "democracy" or whatever the slogan might be. The newspapers scream with startling headlines of: war in the far East—Hitler moves into Rhine—Italian troops closing in on Addis Ababa—America remains "neutral" and in the movies and over the radio the people are made to believe that as far as America is concerned the whole thing is just a joke.

BUT James Lerner looks on the other side of the picture and delves deeply into the whole situation that makes for war. During the last world war, as brought out by the Nye Committee, J. P. Morgan sold 70 per cent of the war materials to Europe. He bought for the British and French governments \$3,000,000,000 worth of material and received a commission of \$30,000,000. He floated loans of 2 billion dollars for the Allies. The du Ponts made \$285,871,625.03. In 1915 the earn-

ings of the firm were \$4,997,000. The next year they reached \$86,000,000. Millions of innocent people were killed and maimed and out of their blood and death the Morgans and the du Ponts reaped a harvest.

The more threatening war becomes the more talk do we hear about "national defense" and "keep America out of the war" and at the same time the government is appropriating billions of dollars for bigger and better battleships. Last year the budget of the Army and Navy was one billion dollars. The McSwain "Air Reserve Training Corps" bill which is supposed to be in the interest of "national defense," calls for the training of from 20,000 to 30,000 young boys between the ages of 17-24 as aviators in the United States army. Out of the relief funds they are building one hundred and fifty armories. The army budget which passed the House of Representatives asked for the taking of 1,000 R.O.T.C. men every year and giving them a year's training in the regular army. It called for 51 units in the R.O.T.C. and the addition of 15,000 to the C.M.T.C. camps.

LERNER points out that while billions of dollars are being poured out of the treasury of the United States the plight of the young people is becoming increasingly worse. In 1934-1935, 2,400 schools in eighteen states closed down because of lack of funds. Fourteen thousand other schools remained open only due to the fact that teachers worked without salaries. In eleven Southern States the yearly budget for Negro students is \$12.87 per student. For whites in the same states, \$44.31. In one Alabama county the figures are: whites, \$75.50 a year and Negro, \$4.82.

There is contained in Lerner's pamphlet, information that will arouse the fighting spirit and indignation of all who read it. And

I for one would urge upon all those who are against war and fascism and for peace, freedom and progress to buy a copy. It can be used as a very important weapon in the fight against the war makers.

We young people have before us tremendous tasks and responsibilities. As Lerner writes:

"National Defense is the cry of the war makers who want to defend their investments. Youth has a tremendous job of national defense of its own. It is defense of its right to life by working actively for peace; a right to happiness by working for jobs, vocational training and education in general. This is the national defense which is in the interest of the people themselves."

The pamphlet ends with a section: "What shall youth do to stop war?" It answers:

1. Secure the passage of legislation against military training in colleges and high schools. (The Nye-Kvale Bill in Congress in 1936 seeks the abolition of compulsory military training and deserves our support.)

2. Defeat legislation to establish aviation training (McSwain Bill). Secure the withdrawal of military officers from the CCC camps and substitute educators and vocational teachers.

3. Insist upon academic freedom and democratic control of educational institutions by opposing loyalty oath bills, disciplinary actions against teachers and students engaged in peace and anti-fascist activities and denial of the rights of students to set up their own organizations.

4. Join in the students' strikes and peace mobilizations (April 22; November 11) and youth peace activities and parades on May 30.

5. Aid in passage of effective neutrality legislation and stopping of shipments of munitions and all war supplies to war-making nations.