

The Next War

By Bertram D. Wolfe

2. How Disarmament Conferences Disarm

(concluded from last issue)

How America Proposed to Reduce

And what did the United States delegation want from the Conference? Twelve hundred more or less naive pacifists, including among themselves both knaves and fools, cabled to the American delegation at London a petition for naval reduction. Stimson's answer was to call in the reporters and give them official "dope" as to the American position. Here are a few choice selections from this official propaganda interview of March 3, as cabled to the *New York Times*:

"As for the plea for reduction, it is felt that emphasis on that demand is rather unfair to the American delegation here . . .

"As for cruisers, Britain has fifteen 10,000-tonners and America has two. President Hoover agreed tentatively . . . that the United States should have eighteen. It is rather embarrassing that 1,200 citizens should demand that Secretary Stimson come down on cruisers . . .

"In airplane carriers, the United States has three and Britain six . . .

"America's destroyers are not very good and will soon be out of date. If America is to have destroyer parity with Britain in 1936, she must build some of them. The same applies to submarines if America wishes to get out of third or fourth place . . ."

Small wonder that the *Times* correspondent wrote:

"It has been settled that battleships are not going to be done away with. It is settled that submarines will still submerge . . . and reduction has gone so far into limbo that . . . the chief result of the London conference will be one of the finest naval construction programs the world has yet seen."

Even Will Rogers was wrong when he wrote that the delegates "will agree to scrap everything they want need in the next war." He means the big super dreadnoughts which are now recognized as antiquated for fighting purposes, but the United States even refused to scrap them.

Fruits of the Conference

While the conference for "reduction and limitation" was so notoriously breaking down and so nakedly showing itself to be a speed-up contest in the mad armament race, all the big powers and the capitalist press and radio and pulpit and school kept up a regular barrage of peace talk, disarmament, limitation, "achievements," steps towards peace etc., etc.,—a veritable gas attack to cover up what was happening.

When the tumult and the shouting ceased and the smoke of battle cleared the achievements of the disarmament conference proved to be the following:

1. Italy refused to agree to less ships than France, thumbed its nose at the

conference and began work on the laying of the keels of 29 new ships for this year. This was reported in the *Evening Telegram* of May 3, under the cheerful title: "Naval Race Sure, Paris Believes."

2. France thumbed its nose at the conference, shook its fist at Italy, laid plans for even further enlarging its submarine and air fleets and even prepared to build a huge 27,000-ton cruiser as part of its new building program. The "Five-Power Conference" was thus reduced to a three-power conference.

3. Japan was obdurate and England and America were compelled to yield her the 70% ratio demanded or the pact would have been reduced to a two-power pact.

4. But the biggest "gainer" by the conference was the American navy.

The *New York Times* London cable of April 15 sums up the result for the United States as follows:

" . . . the United States, after its success in limiting navies, will have to spend nearly seven times more next year on the construction of warships than it did in 1928, the year following the failure to reach an accord at the Geneva conference . . .

"Moreover, to achieve in the life of the treaty that parity which has been the keystone of the American policy here, it is asserted that the United States will have to spend six times more on naval construction in the six years following the limitation agreement than it did in the six years preceding it. These calculations are based on Navy Department figures . . ."

The *Times* dispatch then proceeds to show that this program will cost over a billion dollars, and that "limitation" or no limitation the United States could not possibly build faster than it now plans to since the program of "reduction" resulting from the London "Disarmament" Conference will tax American ship yards to their maximum building capacity. Here is the concluding portion of the *Times* dispatch:

"The execution of a billion-dollar six-year parity program . . . according to naval experts . . . probably will tax to capacity the country's shipbuilding facilities and its resources in the necessary skilled labor."

Such are the fruits of the London "Disarmament" Conference! President Hoover explained that parity means that England and America have stopped their naval race. By the same theory when there are two express trains neither going faster than the other, they are not racing either tho each is rushing at full speed.

As if that were not enough to make clear the role of the London Conference as a huge leap forward in war preparations, the three signatory powers adopted a "safeguarding clause" entitling any one of the three to build still faster if it decides that it needs to because of the size of the fleet of any of the countries

blockade against nations carrying out policies against international public interest."

This is no loose talk. These are the sober words of a responsible financial authority. The World Bank is only another instrument in the hands of the imperialists against the Soviet Union and the colonial masses.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN DETROIT

Detroit has been hailed the world over as the symbol of the "New America." Detroit is the city of mass production, efficiency, speed-up, Henry Ford and General Motors. Here American capitalism has reached its pinnacle to date. Here, if anywhere, you would think that Hoover's plan of speeding up governmental construction and public utilities would show some results. But don't let anyone talk thru his hat. Nothing of the sort is the case. Listen to the Report of the Detroit Mayor's Labor Committee on Unemployment:

"The present methods utilized to only alleviate unemployment are obsolete . . . merely to speed up governmental construction and to request our railroads and our public utilities to expedite their programs to alleviate the present situation is only a temporary expediency, and does not in any way approach the final solution of the periodic unemployment situation in so far as Detroit as a municipality is concerned, or the Nation as a whole."

And if Detroit suffered so much in 1929 under record production, little imagination is necessary to picture the misery in store for the workers in 1930, with much reduced automobile production.

who didn't sign the agreement.

In brief, then, the London Conference, like Washington, like Geneva, like Locarno, like each of the conferences of the last decade, is only a step in war preparations. They disarm no one but the masses who should be struggling against the war preparations. They are part of a system of international maneuvers in preparation for war, each country talking peace and preparing for war, each country trying to make it appear that all the other are warlike and it is peaceful, each country threatening the others and arming at full speed. The only agreements they come to at their international conferences, are, as we shall see in a subsequent article, agreements for common military action against the workers' republic, the Soviet Union.

NOTE:—The above is the second in a series of articles on "The Next War." No. 1 was entitled: "How is it Being Prepared." The next article by Comrade Wolfe will be: "What Causes War." No. 4 will tell "What the War Will be Like," a description of the "improvements" that modern chemistry will introduce into the next war. No. 5, "Proposed Methods of Abolishing War" and No. 6, "What to do about it."

The article already published will be mailed to anyone on receipt of a 10-cent stamp or free to any worker who subscribes for the paper for three months or longer.