

# WHEN WAR COMES

Inexorable and pitiless, world capitalism is moving into another and more terrible World War. Already the capitalist press is trying to make it appear that it will be "far away" and to make workers believe that it will only "give them jobs."

These hellish ghouls lie! The whole world and its entire population—you here in America—will feel the iron heel of military autocracy a thousand times more than in the last war—which many of you do not remember.

"What will happen? What will I do?" These questions run through the brain of every worker who can foresee only vaguely if at all the storm of blood and carnage confronting his class.

The following article is the first of a series (compiled by the Social and Economic Dept. of the Red International of Labor Unions) which give in clear outline, the forecast of what war will bring, the conditions that will ensue and the historic developments that will mark the transformation of the capitalist war into civil war, developments in which every worker will find it necessary to act as an agent of that transformation. Let all understand, then, that the developments which are today but forecasts, will tomorrow be grim realities—which must be faced.—Editor.

## ARTICLE I.

THE characteristic features of future warfare, which are already becoming more or less clear, can be summed up, fundamentally, as follows:

1. Far-reaching changes have taken place in military technology, due partly to the appearance and development of completely new armaments and partly to the tremendous quantitative growth and concentrated action of the older armaments. The scope and scale of this development has been so significant that the great increase in general armaments has opened up new and wider fields of action.

All these new developments in military technology have their roots in the changes that have occurred in the running and organizing of industry, although in many cases they are forging ahead of them and are becoming their clearest and most perfect embodiment.

These new features can be seen in the tendencies known as mass production, mechanization, development of automatic appliances, standardization and simplification, developments in the chemical world, and the tremendous development and application of internal combustion engines on all transport services, etc. All these industrial developments during the so-called rationalization period are having a profound effect on all spheres of war and military preparations.

As in the rationalization of industry, the tendency is to increase to a maximum "productivity of labor," that is, to increase as far as possible "production" (read in the present case, corpses and devastation) without increasing the personnel.

The outstanding development is to be seen in the fact that, to a greater extent than the World War of 1914-18, the war of the future will be, so to speak, an example of "mass production" with an unprecedented grouping of basic capital and concentration of myriads of machines and engines of war.

### Expense of War

2. Present-day military developments are distinguished from their counter-part in industry in that war knows no capitalist "over-production." War provides, in itself, an almost insatiable market limited, theoretically, by the exhaustion of everything that can still destroy and exterminate.

The expense of war is covered not merely by all the accumulated resources of the country

with a grinding down of living standards to a minimum and increased exploitation of the working masses, but places a grievous burden on future generations. In war time there is a constant lack of armaments, ammunition, etc.; there is no "surplus" production, no "over-development" of the industrial apparatus, which is such a prominent feature of modern capitalism.

3. Hence, mechanization, rationalization and other similar developments in war technology do not during war lead (as observed in capitalist industry today in the chief countries) to a reduction of the absolute quantity of "labor power" used, e. g., the warring armies, but, on the contrary, no matter what increased "productivity" is shown by each individual soldier or group of soldiers, this growth tends to increase the quantity of armaments and, consequently, the manpower engaged.

In spite of all the theories (and many of the hopes and illusions of the automobile, aviation, chemical and other "Fullerists" (referring to the theory of a writer named Fuller, who tries to make war "pleasant" by saying it will be fought by machines, and not by men) the wars of the future will be mass wars on a greater scale than the war of 1914-1918, for the whole of the able-bodied population will be involved.

4. The mass wars of the future will require a great apparatus, and, first and foremost, mass production with supply, transport and communications organized on a similar scale.

This apparatus is of necessity so closely interwoven in the very fabric of the whole national economy that one can truly say that they are insolubly merged.

The whole of the able-bodied adult population will be called upon to shoulder arms. All will be involved, women, juniors, invalids and wounded men who have recovered; while various groups of "irreplaceable" highly skilled workers will be employed on war supplies in the factories, in the counting houses, in agriculture and transport. In the wars of the future such work for war needs will not only be considered just as important as the actual fighting at the front, but if anything will be considered even more important as having a decisive bearing on the outcome of the war.

### Mobilization of Industry.

From the military point of view there is hardly any substantial difference between a soldier handling his rifle and the worker or woman worker employed producing the rifle or the raw materials, semi-manufactures, fuel and food supply, etc., essential for the prosecution of war. The breakdown of any of these services will, one and all, benefit the enemy who is therefore out to drive his advantage home.

As we know, the very character of military operations (especially when waged by means of air-craft, submarine, chemistry and bacteriology) will strike the "peaceful" population just as hard as the men in the front lines. Today, the "peaceful" population can be "got at" and destroyed despite all the barriers set up, no matter how well-equipped, in spite of all the fronts.

The line of the demarcation between the army and the civil population which several military experts frankly admitted had "been worn dangerously thin during the last war," will be practically completely wiped away during the war of the future, for war operations will inevitably involve every family, every economic unit, every individual.

The significance of what bourgeois writers call the "moral" condition of the troops and population, is therefore clear. All progressive military experts now include the "general mood" and other "imponderables" in the so-called "potentials" of war, regarding this to be one of the most important factors.

(To Be Continued.)