

A Reader's Guide to the Warfare State

IN AN EDITORIAL titled "Defense and Smart Money," the New York Times commented last February 14, "All the talk by the Nixon Administration about reordering national priorities from a wartime to a peacetime economy has not caused Wall Street to lose sight of the fact that—if the President has his way—the defense budget will actually be going up by \$6 billion in budget authority for military and military assistance programs in the next fiscal year."

The editorial pointed out that in the two months spanning the end of 1970 to February 1971, shares of all aerospace companies climbed by 27.2 percent, compared with the 5.1 percent rise of all industrials listed in Standard and Poor's Index. General Dynamics stock has risen 52 percent since January, Litton is up 95 percent over its 1970 low, and McDonnell Douglas rose 111 percent from its 1970 low.

While investors understand that the Nixon Administration has shifted resources, not from military to human resources, but from military manpower to military hardware, liberals in Congress talk gallantly about conversion—the dramatic shift from war production to the production of civilian-oriented goods. Clearly Nixon's FY-72 budget does not present grounds for optimism on the part of conversion advocates. Not only is the request for obligational authority for military procurement up \$6 billion, but the budget contains funding for weapons systems that will eventually cost taxpayers billions of dollars. The January 23, 1971, issue of the *National Journal* lists 36 major weapons systems that will require almost \$60 billion in additional funds in the coming years. Another 100 weapons

systems on which no accurate cost figures are available will probably add billions more.

A NEW STAGE IN the arms race has already begun with the installation of MIRVs in Poseidon submarines and on Minuteman missiles. Weapons systems in the development stage such as the B-1 bomber, ULMS (undersea long-range missile system) [see RAMPARTS, September 1969] and hardening of missile silos, will fuel the permanent war economy in the coming decade. The SALT talks, even if successful (which is unlikely), would not halt the madness. According to the New York Times of December 7, 1970, "High administration officials do not expect significant cutbacks in the Defense Department's \$8 billion-a-year budget for strategic arms as a result of any arms limitation agreement that may be signed with the Soviet Union." (emphasis added)

In the area of conventional forces the Nixon Doctrine aims to reduce American manpower involved in the Third World, replacing that presence with military aid to native armies.

Such a program will not come cheap. Calculations from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee put the figure for military aid this year between \$4 billion and \$7 billion, and there is little reason to think the figure will be lowered in the future. The Army has embarked on development of an electronic battlefield which Senator Proxmire estimates might cost \$20 billion. The Air Force is developing "instant" air bases that are collapsible and can be quickly transported from the U.S. to overseas staging areas.

Moreover, since the U.S. continues to maintain its policy of containing China and supporting right-wing regimes in underdeveloped countries, it is likely that Nixon's low profile strategy will fail, necessitating the use of American forces in overseas interventions when U.S. client armies are unable to defeat an insurgency.

Together, Nixon's strategic and conventional force strategies mean a continuing high level of defense expenditures through the '70s. So long as this remains policy, conversion to a peace-oriented economy remains a pipe-dream.

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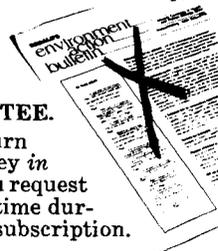
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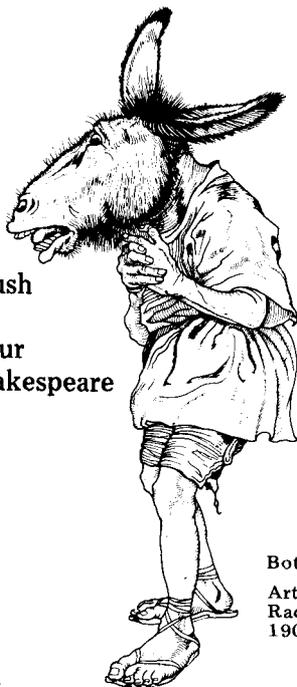


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TO UNDERSTAND under what circumstances conversion becomes a real possibility (conversion is really the process that takes place when disarmament and a dismantling of the American overseas military presence actually occur), one must consider the dual role that defense spending plays for the U.S.

First, defense funds go to finance the American overseas military presence. The sustaining force behind U.S. policy is not simply the mechanistic drive of capitalism to acquire scarce resources and maintain markets for goods produced in the U.S. The American economy could survive quite well without imperialism; valuable minerals could be acquired through trade—though perhaps at much less favorable terms. What then keeps American policy one of containing communism?

The answer seems to be the policy-makers' fear of socialism. The men who make American foreign policy, as studies by Richard Barnett and Gabriel Kolko have demonstrated, are a small elite who represent the privileged business interests of the country. These men oppose the triumph of any

socialist regime abroad, because they fear that an example will be set for other countries and for the U.S. Thus the NLF and the North Vietnamese are seen as threats to the international capitalist network: American policy-makers fear that any change in the world balance of forces between socialism and capitalism threatens the whole structure on which American "security" is built. American statesmen in the twentieth century have always used the excuse of "a threat to national security" to attack radical groups in the U.S.

American foreign policy is a direct expression of the country's privileged class's desire to protect the status quo and their favored position at home. However, as has been shown by numerous congressional investigations, defense spending is greater than is needed to maintain even the present foreign policy. There is a tremendous amount of waste, graft and inefficiency. Why?

The answer lies in the second function of defense expenditures: prevention of depression at home without large expenditures for public works.

AS MOST ECONOMISTS now admit, the Depression of the '30s was ended not by FDR's New Deal but by the aggregate demand created by World War II. Employment rose to new highs; money became available for expansion of private plants; and the government built billions worth of new facilities. The pent-up consumer demand of the war kept the economy going in the immediate post-war years when defense spending declined for a time; then came the Cold War years, when defense spending came to average over half the federal budget.

In theory, the U.S. economy could get along prosperously without defense spending. Reports from the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency by Professor Emile Benoit of Columbia and others have detailed the policies necessary to maintain employment and growth in a peacetime economy. However, these policies involve a substantial increase in public spending, which would directly challenge private enterprise. Defense spending is not threatening to business interests because the money goes to private firms, and the products—weapons—do not compete with other commercial enterprises. This

would not be the case if the federal government, as Walter Reuther suggested in 1946, turned defense facilities into TVA-like operations to produce low-cost housing and high-speed transportation.

If this analysis is correct (and available evidence suggests that it is), then the demand for conversion is really the kind of revolutionary reform that André Gorz in his book *Strategy for Labor* suggests should be sought. As the late economist Ben Seligman wrote, conversion means "a reorganization of the lines along which power is disposed; it means . . . a new political economy."

For this reason, placing movements for social change in a conversion framework provides a real opportunity for linking the various inadequacies of the present system to the nature of the economic system itself. For example, in many areas of the country the possibility exists for coalitions to be built around an end to military spending and a conversion of defense facilities to civilian uses, and involving peace, labor, welfare, scientific and religious groups. Such movements can attempt to relate issues such as inadequate medical care, lack of housing, poor transportation, pollution, etc., to the immense number of personnel and facilities controlled by the military-industrial complex, and to demand that these resources be used to meet people's needs, not the needs of an imperial foreign policy or the need of the capitalist economy for a stabilizing device which doesn't challenge private enterprise. Such movements would possess the highest legitimacy, since the money involved is public; defense facilities and weaponry are built with taxpayers' money, and the unfulfilled needs of citizens are apparent and pressing.

THE FOLLOWING recently published books provide information and perspectives on defense spending and the conversion issue. The organizations listed are involved in research and political action around military-industrial domination of the economy:

THE WAR PROFITEERS. By Richard Kaufman. Bobbs-Merrill, 1970. To be available in Anchor paperback.

The author is senior economist of

Congress's Joint Economic Committee and the brains behind Senator William Proxmire's hearings in recent years on weapons system acquisition, the military budget and national priorities. Drawing material from these hearings and other sources, Kaufman has produced a lucid and penetrating study of the manner in which industry profits from defense spending. The book provides valuable ammunition to advocates of cutting the defense budget, and lays to rest the myth that defense business is unprofitable. As Kaufman notes, it is the corporations that provide the dynamics for the arms race and a bellicose foreign policy—while their personnel shuffle in and out of high-ranking jobs in the Pentagon. The bibliography of *The War Profiteers* contains a comprehensive list of congressional hearings and government reports dealing with war production.

THE ECONOMY OF DEATH. By Richard Barnet. Atheneum, 1969. Paperback.

A Tom Paine-like essay that provides the best available layman's introduction to the military-industrial complex and the defense budget. Useful for mass distribution. A former State Department official, Barnet is now co-director of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C.

THE WAR ECONOMY OF THE UNITED STATES: READINGS IN MILITARY INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY. Edited by Seymour Melman. St. Martin's Press, 1971.

This is the most useful collection of critical writings on the defense economy. Melman has gathered together excellent articles that have appeared in various journals in the past few years, including I. F. Stone's "The War Machine Under Nixon," Bernard Nositer's prize-winning Washington Post series "Arms Firms See Post-War Spurt," James Clayton's "Vietnam: The 200-Year Mortgage," and Ernest F. Fitzgerald's "Defense Waste and the Industrial Engineer." In addition, there are selections from hearings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Joint Economic Committee and short essays by Melman and his colleagues on the industrial conversion problem. The book is ideal for adoption by economic and government courses, and a good source book for groups preparing leaflets and articles

on the war economy. (Issue can be taken with Melman's introductory essay in that he doesn't sufficiently relate defense spending to American capitalism as a whole; this view can be balanced, however, by reading selections in the Fann and Hodges book noted below.)

CONVERSION OF INDUSTRY FROM MILITARY TO CIVILIAN ECONOMY. Praeger, 1970. A series edited by Seymour Melman, which includes the following:

The Defense Economy: Conversion of Industries and Occupations to Civilian Needs, edited by Seymour Melman.

Potential Civilian Markets for the Military-Electronics Industry: Strategies for Conversion, edited by John E. Ullmann.

The Conversion of Shipbuilding from Military to Civilian Markets, by Daniel M. Mack-Forlist and Arthur Newman.

Conversion of Nuclear Facilities from Military to Civilian Uses: A Case Study in Hanford, Washington, by Aris P. Christodoulou.

The Conversion of Military-Oriented Research and Development to Civilian Uses, by Marvin Berkowitz.

Local Economic Development After Military Base Closures, by John E. Lynch.

These detailed technical studies emerged from a seminar on industrial conversion headed by Professor Seymour Melman of Columbia University. The series is a wealth of information on the potential markets and new products that defense-oriented industries could supply if converted. For this reason, the books are highly useful to individuals and groups seeking facts to demonstrate that human needs could be met by the men and machines now utilized by the defense establishment. The major flaw is that none of the books really considers the question of political control, i.e., will government-owned defense facilities be sold to private firms or turned into community-run corporations? Would the shipbuilding industry have to be nationalized to achieve conversion? Also neglected by Melman's group is the question of how to develop the political consensus necessary to bring about the policy changes that make possible reduced defense budgets and produce conversion. Despite these shortcomings, Melman and his col-

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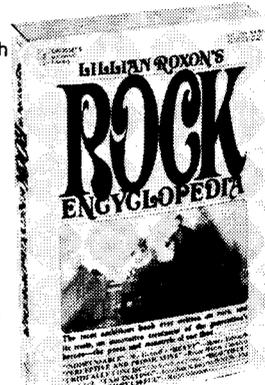
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leagues have rendered a needed service. The introductory volume, *The Defense Economy*, contains a 55-page bibliography on "Studies of the Economic Effects of Defense Policies and Expenditures," prepared by the Research Analysis Corporation, which alone recommends the volume to researchers.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE COLD WAR: SOURCES AND READINGS. Edited by James Clayton. Harcourt, Brace, World and Jovanovich, 1970. Paperback.

This book takes a historical approach to the problem of defense spending and for that reason it is complementary to Melman's book of more immediate readings. The book contains a useful set of statistical tables on defense spending and employment since World War II. It includes sections on the impact of the Cold War on research and development, national resource allocation and regional development, with excerpts from Melman's *Our Depleted Society*, H. L. Nieburg's *In the Name of Science*, and Peck and Scherer's *The Weapons Acquisition Process*. There is a valuable sec-

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tion on the cost of the Vietnam war. Clayton's introductions and notes provide additional information and a good overall perspective.

READINGS IN U.S. IMPERIALISM. *Edited by K. T. Fann and Donald C. Hodges. Porter Sargent, 1971. Paperback.*

This book provides evidence for the case that defense spending is an essential part of American Imperialism. The case cannot be easily dismissed since, in my opinion, there is a good deal of truth in the New Left critique which raises the possibility that conversion might really mean the conversion of American capitalism to American socialism. Among the most valuable articles are Harry Magdoff's "Militarism and Imperialism," which documents the importance of war to the American economy throughout the nation's history; William A. Williams's "The Vicious Circle of American Imperialism"; Heather Dean's analysis of "Scarce Resources"; and James O'Connor's "The Meaning of Economic Imperialism." Articles by Third World authors writing mostly on U.S. relations with Latin America are also included in the book, which is a healthy antidote for those who believe that conversion can be achieved simply by congressional legislation.

COALITION ON NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND MILITARY POLICY.

A coordinating body for national religious, peace, labor, welfare and scientific organizations which seek to reverse the militarization of America's policies and resources. Serves affiliated organizations as a channel for communication and cooperative action to oppose deployment of new weapons systems, to support arms control agreements, and to redirect resources into programs to meet human needs at home. Publishes a newsletter ten times a year, available for a \$3 contribution. Seeks new national and local groups for affiliation. Present members include SANE, United Auto Workers, National Council of Churches, and Women Strike for Peace. CNPMP, 100 Maryland Ave. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. (202-546-7000).

NORTH AMERICAN CONGRESS ON LATIN AMERICA (NACLA)

A research group which studies U.S.

policy and the defense establishment. Its publications include: "The University-Military-Police Complex" (\$1.25) the "Research Methodology Guide" (\$1.25), which is very useful for researchers and includes a section on "How to Research the Military" "U.S. Military and Police Operations in the Third World" (65c); and a monthly newsletter available for a \$5 membership fee. NACLA East, Box 57, Cathedral Station, New York, New York 10025; NACLA West, Box 226, Berkeley, California 94701.

NATIONAL ACTION RESEARCH ON MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX (NARMIC)

A project of the American Friends Service Committee designed to aid community groups in taking action against the military-industrial complex. Provides information on defense contracts, military installations, weapons systems, etc. Publications include "Weapons for Counterinsurgency," a study of firms that manufacture weapons for Vietnam-type wars; and "Bringing It All Back Home," a study of domestic police and Army counterinsurgency planning. NARMIC, 160 North 15th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102 (215-563-9372).

SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS FOR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTION (SESPA)

Organization of scientists and engineers opposed to military research and production and dedicated to the idea that science should meet human needs. Chapters in 15 cities. Publishes a newsletter called "Science for the People," available for \$5 a year. Seeking interested members for new chapters. SESPA, Box 59, Arlington Heights, Massachusetts 02175.

UNION OF RADICAL POLITICAL ECONOMISTS (URPE)

Organization of radical economists who research various aspects of American economic system, with a view toward change. Chapters at various universities. Publishes a quarterly journal available for \$7.50 a year membership fee. The Winter 1970 issue contains an article on "Capitalism and the Military-Industrial Complex," and a special August 1970 issue is available on "The War and Its Impact On the Economy." Back issues can be purchased by new members. URPE, 2503

Student Activities Building, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104.

—DEREK SHEARER

Letters:

[CORRECTION]

EDITORS: Two errors appeared in my RAMPARTS [April 1971] article on Chile, which should be corrected:

The Premier of Greece was *George* Papandreou, not his son *Andreas*, who served in the Cabinet and was the "left" leader in the Center Union party.

The Papandreou government was not overthrown by the colonels' *putsch*, since it was not in office, and had not been since its replacement by the King in 1965. The coup took place as the May elections were approaching, which were expected to return a large Center Union majority, on a platform whose slogans promised radical changes.

Readers interested in a careful study of the 1967 coup should turn to *Death of a Democracy* by Stephen Rousseas, with Herman Starobin and Gertrude Lenzer, which documents the role of the CIA in the coup, which was effected by the colonels' putting into operation a NATO contingency plan to be used in the event that "communists" tried to seize power.

MAURICE ZEITLIN
Santa Barbara, California

[PEOPLE'S PEACE TREATY]

EDITORS: We find it disturbing that your April issue gave so much attention to the People's Peace Treaty and none to the rest of the spring actions against the war in Southeast Asia.

We are afraid that Peace Treaty amounts to little more than a petition, even though it is claimed that it is an act of civil disobedience. We also cannot see how the United States has a right to demand a coalition government or the release of prisoners. It also seems foolish that anyone would trust the U.S. government to hold to any date that it set for withdrawal. Now—on every ship, plane and row-boat available—seems to be the only justifiable means of withdrawal, to us.

On April 24 the largest mass of workers, women, blacks, Third World people, gays and students will mass in Washington and San Francisco to show their dislike of the government's policies of aggression, repression and pre-judice. This demonstration would seem to be a much more profitable use of energy and would seem to deserve more attention in your magazine.

JEFFREY WILLARD
FRED PETERSON
RICHARD WALL
Temple University
Student Mobilization Committee

When the April issue went to press, the plans for the spring mobilizations were still under discussion and neither date nor details were available. The People's Peace Treaty is based on the Eight Points for Peace proposed by the Provisional Revolutionary Government in Paris, September 7, 1970. The Eight Points for Peace and the People's Peace Treaty represent the PRG's recognition of the need to undercut any excuse Nixon might use to justify prolonging the war. It is a document that recognizes political realities and deserves our support. —THE EDITORS

EDITORS: We of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom declare War on War! We are moved to take drastic action by the frustration of our people for a quick end to the war in Indochina. We are tired of seeing our brothers kill and be killed in a senseless, endless war. We see the great potential of our country—which could erase poverty at home and abroad and bring dignity to human life—squandered in useless destruction and an arms race which brings us less security and drains our resources.

Until the war in Indochina is ended and our country changes its priorities from death to life, we will say NO to the war machine in whatever non-violent ways we can:

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