

WAR FOREVER?

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INTRODUCTION We suggest that all industrial nations have developed a command economy whose structural requisites depend on the likelihood of war. Such a system enmeshes the entire world through its requirements for defensive and offensive weaponry. Each nation believes it must always be ready to contain the enemy, and each has developed a supportive ideology for a "defensive" state. As the technology and defensive capacity of a nation increase, along with the cultural imperatives of defense, the probability of war increases. Indeed, war becomes extremely functional for the state. We see two possibilities: a continuing series of small wars in the world, or a super power war followed by the ascendance of new super powers and continuation of the cycle: war forever!

. Present international relations suggest the increased probability of nuclear war or conventional regional wars. It is not that individuals are more aggressive. But present institutional structures determine policies that increase the likelihood of war. The primary factor is available weaponry, explained as necessary for national defense, fostering a permanent war economy (Mills 1958 66). This permanent war economy has produced a symbolic state by which the major institutions of world capitalism have a dialogue that is indicated by the world view of military alertness.

WAR ECONOMY Mills has shown that an interlock of social, economic and political ideologies in the dominant institutional elites fostered a reality that presupposes the need for military superiority. These shared realities become the dominant perspectives by which policy becomes active (Horowitz 1963 417; Cooper 1978 128).

. At the close of World War II, the United States Government found itself shamed by Stalinist proclamations, as a diplomatic

entity and as a protector of free enterprise. The realization that the Soviet Union would soon acquire the atomic bomb enhanced the anxiety of the first super power. As national policies were formed, economic resources were channeled into defense industries reflecting the need for military options on international issues.

. This definition of political reality is demonstrated in the constant involvement of the United States in regions declared unstable. Corporate and government investments flow into regions to guarantee expanded markets for business and for diplomatic power blocks against Communist aggression (Landis 1979; Stockwell 1978; Klare 1977). These initiatives have developed a domestic economy that is now ever more dependent on manufacturing and exporting arms and other repressive technologies (Heilbroner 1980 184; Galbraith 1977 221; Wright 1979).

. The present policies deriving from corporate capitalism are virtually dependent on a war market, and wars are useful to reduce the growing inventories of war materials outdated by technological advances (Reynolds & Lundgren 1976). This leads to allocating more resources to build new armaments. Thus the technology and ideology of the war economy are self-sustaining.

ARMS SALES & ASSISTANCE

. Although the United States has been at peace, military spending has continually increased. Such expenditures impose a continuous drain on economic resources. The governments of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have approved long-term defense plans that are to aid the Western European security (Brown 1978).

. The Military Assistance Programs (MAPs) have given over 86 billion dollars to East Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Near East and Europe (Klare 1977). This program is broken down into

other organizational programs by which the United States Government and military agencies are able to provide industry with a market and further American hegemony abroad. The MAP agency grants arms, equipment, and services to foreign powers. The Foreign Military Sales Program (FMS) awards credits to stimulate arms purchases by foreign governments. The International Military Education and Training Program (IMEP) reinforces acknowledgment of that country's strategic importance to United States defense interests.

. The United States Department of Defense has justified expenditures 1) to strengthen the military technology base; 2) for a vigorous modernization of strategic forces; and 3) for continued development of tactical programs assumed to be imperative for national security (Air Force Secretary 1979; Dept of Defense Annual Rpt, FY 1978-1979). Such terms reflect the symbolic interaction in the institutional realm of the elites. Policy formulation and action become interlocked among the military, industry, and government.

. Expenditures, under the guise of security assistance programs include government, commercial, and financial transactions. From 1950 to 1977, the United States Military Assistance Programs transferred about 126 billion dollars worth of defense items. Security assistance programs are the major instruments of foreign policy for government, of market expansion for industry, and the major instrument by which the military maintains its credibility (DOD Annual Rpt FY 1979, 1978 157; Revanal 1978; Lowenthal 1978). Such processes in a complex world depend on other organizations for support services. Thus, resource drain becomes accomplished throughout the social structure, while funds become available to other quasi-military apparatuses to support existing programs.

RHETORIC OF DISARMAMENT

. The executive branch of the Government is a powerful political

tool by which economic policies are legitimized and institutionalized. A survey of the President's budgetary proposals for 1979 revealed little change from past administrations in national defense, foreign aid, and other strategic resource allocation entities (Congressional Budget Office 1978).

. The United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) guides policy towards reduction of arms. A particular mission of the Agency is to negotiate a Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction Treaty. These negotiations have continued since 1973, and to 1978, concrete agreements have not been reached (US ACDA 1978 2).

. Inspection of the agency's board of directors reveals that policies are coordinated with the National Security Council, the Defense Department, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Central Intelligence Agency. While the policy objectives are coordinated, one must question the relative power of the ACDA in the face of the military-industrial-political forces. The Arms Control and Disarmament Act directs the Agency to study the economic and political consequences of arms control and disarmament, to include the problem of readjustment in the industry and the reallocation of national resources. But the ACDA has not yet formulated a tenable option to the present structural relationships (ACDA 1978 36). Enormous structural changes would be required to change the present institutional system and its accompanying legitimation. Such changes are extremely unlikely.

SUPER POWER SUCCESSION

. Given the war economies of industrial nations and the failure to reduce armaments, the chances for war are enhanced. A world war, while likely to result in catastrophe for the super power industrial complexes, could have even more devastating results. The elimination of the super powers would elevate other nations to superpower status, giving old rule by new rulers. Economic and

political hegemony and leadership will be available to those nations least affected by the destruction of the super powers. Historical patterns suggest that as one nation falters, another ascends, with a global perspective which equates power with war capability. . Given the proliferation of armaments throughout the industrial world, a change in super power status for one group of nations leaves a vacuum to be filled by other nations. It is likely that access to super power status would not fundamentally change those realities which reflect eventual conflict with the new super powers. The game would continue until the conflict had eliminated all technological capabilities.

. The second scenario incorporates the likelihood that the industrial blocs do not opt for nuclear warfare. The continuation of conventional armament build-ups promotes instability and constant poverty for the lesser developed countries (LDC's), while the industrial bloc countries engage in limited defensive wars of attrition. This requires that present regimes of LDC's lean toward military assistance from the industrial world creating a net loss of resource allocation for their nations.

. When LDC's opt for military hardware, there is little technological growth in their basic industrial and agricultural industries, and the military hardware, when used, yields nothing but the demand for more external assistance. The result is a resource drain leading to economic stagnation, as can be seen in many third world countries.

. The direction of government, military, and industrial agencies demonstrates maximization of resources into war related industries at the national and global levels. Reports indicate that the amount spent equipping each soldier in the United States in 1977 was 60 times the amount spent educating each child (US ACDA 1978). Overall, the Warsaw Pact and NATO nations spent about

2,574 billion dollars in just 9 years, equal to 20 times the Federal outlays spent on education from 1970 to 1979 (Census Bureau 1979 138).

. The continued involvement of the military, industrial, and government agencies in these evolving defense areas points toward imperialism. The military establishment has become a major determinant of international and national economic policies, fostering a world view based on the probability of war. That this institutional arrangement is maintained in the present is evident from the unenthusiastic response from business and policy decision makers as regards new regulations to control arms transfers (Chase 1974 48; ACDA 1978). There are no reductions, and much evidence of prospective escalations in defense spending through the 1980's.

CONCLUSION The seemingly permanent military threat has protected the dialogue and world view of the elites of industry, government, and the military. The continued development of newer forms of nuclear destruction suggests the development of command economies, which are different from other market economies in that they promote and reinforce a garrison society (Lidenfeld 1968 254, 271; Cooper 1978 128; Ebstein 1964 164; Anderson 1974 41). We see this interplay of structural forces by analyzing trends of using economic resources. To support the military and governmental operations to contain communism, the industry elites become entangled in an economy planned by governmental elements in a self-reinforcing cycle. The result is a command economy increasingly subordinated to military functions.

. The extensive use of economic forces to further United States hegemony has not produced a freer, safer world, but may guarantee total annihilation of life for the super powers (Brun 1978 338). International involvement, the exporting of arms and technology with military capabilities, guided

with political perspectives dictated by quasi-military civilian elites, and the mechanism of credit, gifts, and other forms of military strategic assistance guarantee an economy mainly based on development, production and distribution of war materials.

. The fidelity of the military is guaranteed as the need for complexity and organization escalates. Mobility will be reinforced, thus enhancing voluntary adherence to the state social control systems. The policies of the past will be maintained in the future. Underdeveloped countries will maintain their position of a stagnant economy, while the industrialized countries solidify their economic base. The only changes will be in countries having vital strategic resources, where the super powers will struggle for economic hegemony. The most likely result is war forever, intermittent limited wars, and big wars; and after that, more war.

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