
Strangle the Beast!

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The mad beast of militarism is sinking his fangs into America.

At first the very horror of the war overshadowed all else. Everyone could see that it was exactly the crushing methodical preparation for the killing of men that made possible and indeed, inevitable, the final bloody climax, and there was unanimous condemnation of all making ready for war.

Now familiarity is breeding acquiescence. Some infection of the martial spirit has crossed the Atlantic. American jingoes are preaching the need of military preparations.

Powerful newspapers, politicians, and paid agents of the armament trust, with the blood-lusting snobs of the army and navy clique are crying for more battleships and whispering of the need for a great standing army. That whisper will soon become a scream for the whole military mess.

If we would avoid the crushing, brutalizing grip of this beast upon American life it will demand every atom of militant, determined energy of the Socialist movement of this country. There must be no compromise on this thing. The hell of the European war is already paved too deep with the good intentions and compromising performances of Socialists.

Militarism and Socialism.

There is no room in the same world for militarism and Socialism. When one comes in the other must go out. Militarism is a beast that must either be driven into the outer darkness or permitted to devour all that is worthwhile in society.

This is the first and biggest fact of all, that militarism cannot be adopted in small doses. The essence of militarism is competition and the end of competi-

tion must always be the power to crush all rivals. A partial, ineffective militarism is like a gun in the hands of a tenderfoot in a frontier camp — an urgent invitation to be killed.

Militarism is a beast that makes the food he feeds and grows upon, and he eats until he bestrides the world. If we are to have armies or navies we must have the strongest in the world, or they are worse than useless, a mere bid for destruction.

There can be no talk of a “democratic” army, or a “citizen” army. These things have never existed. This war has shown that every step towards that end spells weakness, and strength is the be-all and only end of militarism.

Organized to Kill.

Autocracy is the foundation of efficient organization for killing. The power of life and death in time of war must be confided to a military clique. These chosen pets of armament rings and ruling exploiters must be given the right to strike when they see fit. Otherwise they may not be able to involve the nation at war at the most advantageous moment, and gains such an advantage as Japan had when she struck the Russian fleet, or Germany when she swept down upon Belgium, or the United States when it sent the fleet to Vera Cruz.

This spirit of autocracy must not be curbed in time of peace lest it fail to act ruthlessly in time of war. Initiative and independence must be crushed, for the spirit of militarism is unquestioning, blind obedience.

To better inculcate this spirit the epauletted snob must be made the social hero and given full scope to show his superiority. He must be permitted to kick workingmen, sabre civilians, and outrage the women

of the working class without interference. Similar privileges in a less degree must be extended to all uniformed brutes. Otherwise the common soldiers might forget that they are trained dogs who must bite only when ordered, and never snap at their trainers.

The conscripted army is superior in killing power to either the volunteer or the hired assassin. Therefore let us have conscription. If we do not our neighbors will, and our armament will be but an aggravation inviting assault and destruction.

Must Favor Killer.

The laws of war must be made to favor the professional killer. It must be made noble and heroic for strong men to drop bombs from the sky upon the heads of unresisting women and children, but torture and ignominious death must be meted out to the civilian who resists the uniformed ruffians who break open his little possessions and assault his wife and daughter.

The honors in competitive murder and mayhem must go to trained craftsmen in those trades. Therefore the youth of our nation must spend years in the barracks until, like the men of some of the foremost military nations, practically every man is infected with foul sexual disease.

We must train our little boys to worship death, destruction, and arbitrary authority. We must drill them in "boys' brigades" and troops of "boy scouts" in churches whose religion is the worship of a tribal Jehovah who was pleased when his chosen people slew the women and the children of other tribes.

We must encourage all things that breed hatred of other races and peoples. We must preach "manifest destiny" and "benevolent assimilation," and the high character of our "culture," until we have reached a degree of insane egoism where we are anxious to whip all the world.

The grand purpose of wholesale murder and national aggrandizement justifies all means. Deceit and treachery and lying must become the customary thing between nations. With Roosevelt we must despise treaties and be ready to tear them up when dealing with weaker nations like Colombia or Belgium.

The nation that would be adequately armed, and anything less is an invitation to destruction, must teach a philosophy that drips blood and bombast. Its educators must be Treischkes, Nietshes, and Munsterbergs; its journalists and statesmen, Hearsts, Hobsons, and Roosevelts.

If we once enter this road we must not, cannot dare not stop while a single resource remains unsacrificed to the beast. Else by just that thing withheld we may be less strong than the neighbor we defy and taunt to mutual slaughter.

Breeders of Soldiers.

Our women must become mere breeders of soldiers and slaves of the factory. Thanks to the inventions of generations of workers we are now able to rise to the full height of the savage and leave all our useful work to be done by women and old men while the young men may be reserved for killing one another.

We can travel this road to the bloody pit that is its end or we can turn about and travel the road that leads to human brotherhood, mutual democracy and equality, international solidarity and cooperation and a world of free and happy men and women.

But we cannot travel those two roads at the same time.

It is either capitalism and competitive military hell, or Socialism and cooperative peaceful enjoyment of the bounty of the earth.

The time is here to choose. Militarism is, after all, but the bloody claw and gore-flecked fang of the beast of capitalism.

Whoever defends any form of militarism, any arming for wholesale killing, defends the most damnable feature of capitalism and can have no part or parcel in the doctrine or movement of Socialism.

It is equally true that whoever would strike this thing that has blotched the history of mankind with blood, and has now plunged half the world into a gory carnival of death must work with the Socialists.

Moreover, we must work quickly, for the beast is now within our gates.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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