

WAR 3

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The Third World War began twenty years ago. It continues and extends. Nuclear weapons are not and will not be its active agents. They set the framework within which this new kind of war is fought.

THE ARGUMENT OUTLINED

In this pamphlet we will argue:

- (1) that a resort to nuclear weapons, as a deliberate act of national policy, is only conceivable on the basis of the 'first strike' theory.
- (2) that in neither East nor West will the rulers embark on such a course.
- (3) that the very word 'war', to describe an exchange of nuclear weapons, is both meaningless and misleading.
- (4) that it is improbable that a so-called international crisis (e.g. Berlin, Cuba) will culminate in an exchange of nuclear weapons and hence in world annihilation.
- (5) that is not to say that nuclear weapons will never be used. An accident is possible.
- (6) that war, in the real sense of the word, is on. World War III began while World War II was still being fought. It is a new kind of war and despite the much-vaunted Test Ban Treaty the methods of waging it will steadily develop.

WAR

'War is a continuation of diplomacy by other means'. This statement has been made so often and with some pompous profundity by pundits that many people have not questioned its truth. We say that diplomacy is another form of war. We are not being original. One of the most lucid essays on this theme was written during World War I by Randolph Bourne.* "States, with reference to each other, may be said to be in a continual state of latent war Indeed, it is not too much to say that the normal relations of States is war. Diplomacy is a disguised war, in which States seek to gain by barter and intrigue, by the cleverness of wit, the objectives which they would have to gain more clumsily by means of war. Diplomacy is used while the States are recuperating from conflicts in which they have exhausted themselves.....If diplomacy had been the moral equivalent for war, a higher state in human progress, an inestimable means of making words prevail instead of blows, militarism would have broken down and given place to it.....A diplomacy that was the agency of popular democratic forces in their

* Randolph Bourne, born in New Jersey 1886, died New York 1918.

non State manifestations would be no diplomacy at all. It would be no better than the Railway or Education Commissions that are sent from one country to another with rational constructive purpose.*

Bourne goes on to stress that war is not a function of nations. It is a function of states. Moreover, it is their chief function. War "is not the naive spontaneous outburst of hard pugnacity. It is no more primary than is formal religion. War cannot exist without a military establishment, and a military establishment cannot exist without a State organization. War has an immemorial tradition and heredity only because the State has a long tradition and heredity. But they are inseparably and functionally joined. We cannot crusade against war without crusading implicitly against the State. And we cannot expect to take measures to insure, that this war is a war to end wars unless, at the same time, we take measures to end that State in its traditional form"*.

NUCLEAR WAR - A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS

'War' is a vague omnibus word heavily overloaded with both emotion and diverse meanings. Most people have experienced particular wars and their idea of what war is, is derived from that experience. But historically wars change their form, techniques and purposes many times and if we forget this, and assume that the future will be like the past, then we are prone to out-dated thinking, we may be mentally prepared for a kind of war that never happens and totally unprepared for the war that does happen.

To examine the meaning of 'war' it is useful first to differentiate between such conflicts according to the aims and techniques of those involved. For example, invasions such as those of Genghis Khan, were made for massive plunder and to support a large migrant army. They did not resemble the campaigns of the Roman army which were designed to subjugate peoples, to colonize vast areas and to intergrate them with the Roman economy. In the wars between city states and those between small national states, the aims were to intergrate the attacked state into a new national unity. In more recent times, there have been the wars between large nation states where the aim was temporarily to render the opponent politically unviable so that, during this period, the victor's sphere of influence could be either consolidated or extended.

* Quoted from "The State" an essay by Randolph Bourne. Republished recently by The Greater New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to the Human Animal, 150, Nassau Street, New York 38, Price \$1. The revolutionary implications in "The State" are not nearly so apparent in most of Bourne's other works. All libertarians should read it.

The military techniques used in these wars have been called 'traditional'. The weapons, from the bow and arrow to TNT, are called 'conventional'. A thing is 'conventional' when its use or practice has grown out of tacit agreement or custom. No doubt previous weapons became 'conventional' when TNT was introduced. And TNT in bombs and shells, and later in the V1 and V2 rockets of World War II, became 'conventional' with the advent of nuclear weapons.

But since the use of nuclear weapons by the powerful nation states would end all human life on this planet, use of the word 'conventional' to describe weapons for military attack, ends with TNT. Similarly, use of the term 'war' to describe a military contest between powerful nations also ends with TNT. For in all past wars, not only have there been 'aims', but also large numbers of people in the nations involved have survived. Hence, mankind has survived.

It is obvious, even to most of those who manage our lives, that military techniques on the world-war scale have reached the summit of their utility and feasibility with the use of TNT. Military tactics involving certain suicide have never been favoured by the vast majority of mankind. A policy of international nuclear suicide has no support from them. Moreover, it is completely void of any kind of 'aim'. Therefore, to describe the use of nuclear weapons as 'war' is quite false and misleading.

Talk of 'nuclear war' only makes sense to those who want to believe or want us to believe, that the use of nuclear weapons will be similar in effect to the use of TNT in World War II, except that millions more will be killed more quickly. At the same time, they must stress that millions will survive. As a prop to this somewhat subtle deception, they are compelled to adopt the crude deception of Civil Defence, however embarrassing this sometimes may be.

We believe this interpretation of the meaning of the term 'war' to be extremely important. It must be quite explicit in all propaganda aimed at mass support for a campaign to get rid of the sort of society of which nuclear weapons are a product.

ACCIDENT ?

Nevertheless, weapons capable of destroying man exist, and a military strategy involving their use continues to evolve. Together with this evolution grows an ever-increasing complexity of military organization and technique. (e.g. SAC, BMEWS, great multi-computer systems, chemical and

biological weapons, polaris submarines, orbital H-bombs, The Doomsday Bomb..). In this situation, the possibility of an 'accident' leading to a massive exchange of nuclear weapons quite clearly exists.

It is difficult to categorise precisely accidents involving such consequences because all apparently different kinds of accidents are inter-related. But it is a man-machine system, so we shall place them into two main categories. The 'machine' accident, that resulting from purely technical failure, and the 'man accident', that resulting from human error or inadvertence, or from the action of a person in a controlling position who is suffering from some form of mental aberration. These are well dealt with in the Mershon Report (pp 12-16*), although they have been categorized differently and the word 'war' is wrongly used. We agree generally with the detailed argument in this section of the Report. Since space does not permit the setting out of this argument here, it is hoped that the reader already has studied the Mershon Report, or will do so. For we disagree with an important conclusion of this Report, namely, that the danger of world annihilation rises sharply in periods of international crisis and tension, and that it is most likely to come about through the spread of a small war. This appears to be also the view of the British Government and is stressed in its attempts to propagate the Civil Defence fraud.

CRISIS ?

"Many wars in history have been more or less 'accidental'" states the Mershon Report (p.7). Surely, it would be nearer the truth to say that few wars have been accidental. 'Accidental' events may have provided the ostensible motives. But such events were not difficult for rulers to find, or even to engineer, in a situation where the weapons were 'conventional' and military war was thought to serve their aims.

Since it is clear to the managers of our present societies, East and West, that there can be no 'aims' in using nuclear weapons, 'accidental' events which in the past have been used for starting wars, will neither be sought nor engineered as a reason for launching a nuclear attack. On the contrary, when such events nevertheless occur, they will do their best to control them. They have, so far, shown themselves to be quite capable of controlling their peoples. There is reason to believe that, for the time being at least, they can control themselves and will not allow international events to dictate their major decisions and actions.

* Research paper on Accidental War by the Mershon National Security Program at Ohio University - Housmans, publishers and booksellers, 5, Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

Thus, The Great Deterrent is not a deterrent from 'war' (this we shall discuss below), but it does set the framework within which wars will be fought.

FIRST STRIKE ?

We are saying that nuclear weapons will not be used intentionally by the men in control. Yet, in the East versus West context, the only military theory involving the use of multi-megaton bombs and missiles which appears to have any kind of logic at all, is that of 'first strike'*. If a nuclear attack were therefore to be contemplated by major power bloc A against B, it could have only one initial purpose: to eliminate the means of counter-attack by destroying all of B's rocket and aircraft bases on land, sea or in space. Let us assume that A believed there was a reasonable chance of doing this. Then, it would be imperative that the attack should come as a complete surprise. Any kind of warning would nullify the purpose. (This further supports the view that use of nuclear weapons will not come about as the result of international tension or through the spread of a small war).

Nevertheless, 'first strike' appears to be seriously contemplated by a few men. General Nathan Twining has said: "If it were not for the politicians, I would settle the war in one afternoon by bombing Soviet Russia"*. And there is the rather more sadistic-sounding statement from General Orvil Anderson, Commander of the Air War College: " I would be happy to bomb Russia, just give me the order to do it"*

Loud-mouthed and rather stupid generals are not new. It is unlikely that the political managers cannot control them completely. But what about other sections of the now highly-bureaucratized military machine? Is it not possible that a person, or group of persons, may send off H-bomb missiles outside the knowledge and decision of those in control ? This is improbable.

The inclusion of massive computer systems in the decision programme is not merely a handy technique. It is an explicit attempt to take the personal equation out of military activity as such. The same is clear from the way personnel are managed. Those, for example, who are attached to the target pre-programmed Minuteman missiles. In the first place, launching of the missile has been made a matter for co-operation group activity. Thus, individual whims and desires are greatly limited. Then, selection of personnel is carried out with extreme care. Those selected are subjected to very efficient brainwashing, and regular and frequent routine checks on their stability. This is done to give them the kind of limited conceptual

* Chemical and biological weapons are essentially 'first strike' weapons.

* Quoted from "Nation" - New York - 28.10.61.

framework which would make co-operative group action, of an unpredictable type, impossible. And integral safety devices continue to be developed. The latest to be publicised is the permanently open, exclusive purpose, hourly-checked system of inter-bloc communication known as the "Hot Line".

The essential tendency of centralization is also in conflict with the possibility of - 'first strike'. Formerly separate military and political personnel are integrated so as to minimize the possibility of faction decision.

Furthermore we are living in an era of very rapidly developing and thereby unstable technology. Thus, at the moment, any calculation concerned with the possibility of successful 'first strike' must be based on the consideration of numerous rapidly-changing military, political and scientific developments which reduce the most careful military assessment to the status of pure guesswork. For example, Polaris submarines versus 'killer' submarines; orbital H bombs; anti-missile missiles; ultimate fall-out and its effect; chemical and biological weapons and methods of delivery; the state of warning systems - these are problems of fantastic complexity as compared with, say, those which faced the German generals in 1914 and 1939. The proposition of the 'first strike' theory seems more likely to be a propaganda technique than a positive military theory.

Historically, in the era of what are now called 'conventional weapons', it was possible for stronger powers to attack weaker on the reasonable assumption that however limited their military achievements might be they could contain the effects of military conflict and come to an ultimate decision without irreparable, possibly even extensive internal damage. In the nuclear age this assumption goes by the board. It is in this context that the 'great deterrent' argument is literally and logically valid. It is not valid in the sense that nuclear weapons are an effective moral deterrent, nor is it valid in the sense that they would deter men from war, since as will be argued later, 'war' will be continued by different techniques, but it does logically imply that nuclear weapons provide the rules for the war game rather than constitute an active weapon within it. The argument that the development of more effective weapons in the past has only led to their active use and that therefore this is likely to happen in the future, is invalid since it assumes that in the mind of those directly involved nuclear weapons are merely an improved form of weapon and not a qualitatively different factor.

It must again be stressed that the retention but non-use of nuclear weapons does not depend upon the moral scruples of our rulers as such. It derives from the fact that overt nuclear conflict would not serve the power purposes of modern centralized states and simultaneously there are

alternative techniques and modes of warfare which can and do serve these purposes.

WORLD WAR III

We have said that use of the term 'war' to describe a military contest between powerful nations using weapons of mass destruction, ends with TNT. But war, in the real sense of the word, continues. Perhaps we have become so accustomed to the relatively casual talk about the 'cold war', that we have tended to think of it as something which affects us only very slightly. The term is misleading. It is often used to dismiss events ("It's all part of the cold war") rather than to discover their meaning. Many believe that this so-called cold war is a prelude to the use of nuclear weapons. This concept leads them into the sterile activity of 'easing the tension'. The question of whether Britain should be in a position to use nuclear weapons independently is one that has taken up the energies of people through movements such as CND and, to a slightly lesser extent, the Committee of 100. The very question displays an ignorance of political reality. Many of the Labour Party leaders are aware of this reality, and so is the Observer (see leading article, 17.11.63). But the question is also irrelevant to the issue. The prospect of annihilation seems to have caused an emotional reaction which has so numbed the intellect that the strategies of World War III have had little real examination. We do not presume to be able to complete this. But we hope to start the discussion.

War is still "a function of States". But World War III is a new kind of war. It began while the second world war was being fought. One of its most significant battles was fought in 1945, at the Russian town of Yalta in the Crimea. It was called a conference. There were a number of skirmishes between the three groups representing the interests of their particular bureaucratic states. The scramble for reparations caused considerable 'bloodshed'. But the carving up of the world into 'spheres of influence' was the most important decision reached.

Compromise on certain questions is always possible between the leaderships of apparently opposing power blocs.

Although each knew that the 'new war' was to continue, they also recognised that it was in their mutual interest to control the nations within their respective spheres. There are many who still argue that the U.S.A. should and could have helped the Hungarians during their revolution in 1956. The American super state knew that if the Hungarians were allowed to continue developing their revolution as they had begun it in the few weeks after October 23, it could be a very serious threat to the 'stability' of the whole 'sphere of influence' set-up. But the USA also

knew that the Soviet Union could be relied upon not to tolerate such a revolution in a nation within its own 'sphere' of influence'. That is one of the reasons why the rulers of America were so upset when the recent 'missiles in Cuba' episode seemed to show that their opposite numbers in Russia did not have a similar respect for the Yalta decision. Both were fully aware, however, that there would be no nuclear exchange for Cuba.

The massive economic capacity of the power blocs has given rise to great and accelerating development in the fields of science and technology. Because of the sort of societies in which this 'progress' occurs, nuclear weapons have been produced. But since their ideology centres on the idea of power and efficiency, the individual aim of each tends to be, not the destruction of the opponent but the integration with its own economy of those qualities of the 'opponent' which will increase its power and efficiency, i.e. manpower technology and natural resources. A dynamic of the modern power bloc is the accelerating process of centralization in the social, economic and political fields. It cannot work in any other way. Only in this way have the great advances in all spheres of technology and science (including the social sciences) become possible. At the same time, it has both widened and narrowed the scope of achieving the aims vis-a-vis the 'opponent'. It has widened it in the sense of making possible the extensive use of psychological, economic, political and local-war techniques. But it has narrowed it by the same token in making total military attack obsolete. Thus, as we have said, the Great Deterrent is not a deterrent from war as such, since World War III continues, but it sets the framework within which wars can be fought.

WORLD WAR III TECHNIQUES

The so-called 'crises', 'brinkmanship', 'threats of nuclear attack', 'emotional indignation in public speeches' are merely staging posts in World War III. They make more sense if seen as such than they do if interpreted as, say, the counterpart of the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo. The various conferences between the 'leaders' of the power blocs, held under whatever title, are neither genuine efforts for peace, nor a waste of time. They are intrinsic features of World War III and have vital functions, propaganda and otherwise, for all involved --all, that is, excluding ordinary working people.

The technique for waging this war will steadily develop. Whole national populations will be subjected to intense political, economic and psychological pressures and the smaller ones possibly to direct 'conventional' military attack.

Moreover, the people thus subjugated will be utterly absorbed and integrated within the particular conquering power bloc. Unlike in the past experience (e.g. World War II), they will never again emerge as politically viable entities.

Some examples of these techniques are:-

ECONOMIC

This includes both positive and negative economic attack. The attempt by the French Communist party (on behalf of the Eastern bloc) to destroy the French economy by mass strikes in 1947, is one example of negative economic attack. Another, in the recent American attempt to destroy the Cuban economy by an embargo on Cuban exports. An example of the positive and negative use of economic methods to extend power, is the Russian assistance in Cuba, in terms of technique and materials.

POLITICAL

These techniques include subversion on a massive scale. The political takeover in Czechoslovakia by the Communist party is a case in point. Another is the constant political pressure put on South American states by the U.S.A. Political techniques also include the creation of puppet regimes, and the constant use of UNO as a forum for propaganda and a channel for political pressure and strategic manoeuvre.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

The massive propaganda campaigns conducted by radio outside, and by political agents inside, the 'enemy' state, come under this heading. It also includes the fantastic efforts put into space race. This is of relatively restricted scientific value, but it serves as a gigantic propaganda campaign. It is significant that the quantity of resources (financial, scientific, technological, men and materials) expended on this kind of propaganda must be at least equal to that spent previously on full-scale warfare. There is also the method of 'blowing hot and cold' (threats-crisis-calm cycle). This is an attempt to render areas of 'enemy territory' psychologically unviable. An example of this is the Berlin question which offers a flexible vantage point. We have had the blockade, the Wall and, more recently, the cat-and-mouse game of convoy halting. All these manoeuvres occur within the shadow of the Russian stop-go threat to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany and the lavish American build-up of material affluence in West Berlin to encourage a refugee drain from East Germany.

LOCAL WAR

Examples of restricted 'local' military campaigns are: Korea, Viet Nam, Malaya and more recently, the frontier of India. The significant point about these 'local wars' is that, although their cost may be high in casualties and economic resources, their purpose is obviously and deliberately limited. They are not allowed to spread further than their immediate tactical and ultimate strategic aims require.

WILL WORLD WAR III DEVELOP ?

All these techniques are interactive and interrelated. For example, space research is a possible new sphere for empire building as well as a propaganda technique. Economic aid campaigns can be used also as propaganda and psychological weapons. As we have already said, World War III, as now being contested, can be developed internally, within the power blocs, in the sense that they can increase the efficiency of their centralization both ideologically and politically and they can develop their technology. It can continue externally because there are still huge areas, such as Africa, India, Latin America and the Middle East, where progressive absorption is possible.

The Managers of each power bloc must preserve the integrity of their own internal power structure against the ceaseless subversion and political pressure to which it is continuously subjected. To do this, they will increasingly be compelled to repress and control, in even greater detail, the lives of those they manage. They will do this with considerable subtlety. The use of techniques, derived from the development of the social sciences, has led to a far greater degree of psychological control than that ever envisaged by tyrants of the past. The extent to which people are exploited and controlled today is fantastic. But few appear to be aware of it.

It can be and has been argued that our view is fatuously optimistic. This is an emotive argument - a viewpoint is not necessarily wrong because it is optimistic any more than it is necessarily wrong because it is pessimistic. Additionally the term optimistic can hardly be applied to a viewpoint which predicts an intense and long term state of conflict for the whole human race.

Nor are we concerned here with the ethics of constructing and maintaining nuclear weapons. They exist. We merely attempt to show what their function in the modern world has come to be. Our arguments, although crudely and simply presented, stand or fall by their ability to explain the events of the last twenty years and to predict the tendency of events

in the future. If they are in any sense valid, then people in movements such as CND and the Committee of 100 must consider the implications. This should lead them to reconsider the usefulness of their activity in a campaign which is mainly concerned to 'ban the Bomb'.

Humanity is still in danger of annihilation. This can occur not only as the result of an 'accidental' use of nuclear weapons. Humanity can be morally destroyed while remaining ostensibly alive, if societies are allowed to develop along the course on which they are now set. We suggest that the implications of our arguments are of importance to all those who are politically involved in seeking to stop this development. Fundamental change is essential if people are to begin building a new form of society - a society in which the 'good life' can become a reality.

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