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**The Threat of
Nuclear War and
the Nature of the
Ruling Class**

**Charity and the
State**

by

Robert Briffault

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Science, Class, and Politics

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The Threat of Nuclear War and the Nature of the Ruling Class

Everyone is aware of the increasing threat of nuclear war. How seriously are we to take the war-like stance of the current administration? Is this hoopla merely meant to frighten the Soviet Union, or is the administration in earnest?

Nuclear weapons are in themselves merely things. In order to really understand the problem of the threat of nuclear war, one has to understand the people who control them--the U.S. ruling class. Nuclear weapons are a particular expression of the nature of the ruling class in the U.S. Since nuclear weapons are designed primarily to kill non-combatants, they are by definition, a war crime. Their very existence reflects the criminal intentions of the U.S. government. Any analysis of the threat and probability of nuclear war must be primarily an analysis of the class that threatens to use them. Such an analysis is attempted here. A complete description and analysis of the U.S. ruling class is not attempted. Only those aspects of this class that bear directly on the actual and potential use of nuclear weapons is touched upon.

Theoretically, the general nature of capitalist ruling classes is known. Nevertheless, how they will act under particular situations depends on a host of circumstances, past and present. Therefore, it is necessary to know and take into account the influence of each of these more important factors, in so far as they are known. It is impossible to get inside the heads of the leaders of the U.S. ruling class. But they do reveal their thoughts through their actions.

It is the actions of these people since World War I that we will follow. This will give us an insight as to why they used nuclear weapons in the first place against Japan, as well as why they have been relying on them ever since. It may also give us an idea as to whether they really mean to use nuclear weapons in the near future.

Part I

The U.S. government is now openly talking about the possibility of all-out nuclear war. More than this, it is talking and thinking about initiating such a war. Even though it is hard to believe that any sane person could consider such a possibility, the evidence that the U.S. government is doing just that is fairly conclusive. The government has not kept its plans a secret: various members of the administration talk about this possibility (and for the record) as if nuclear war were a foregone conclusion. For example, General Bernard Rogers, NATO commander, in February of this year stated that, "We should not be so weak in other types of forces that we are forced to resort to nuclear weapons first." (Sacramento Bee, 2/27/82) In other words, the U.S. would immediately resort to first-strike use of nuclear weapons any time the U.S. found itself losing a war with its conventional forces.

The open discussion of the possibility of a first-strike nuclear attack on the Soviet Union by highly placed U.S. government officials has been an on-and-off occurrence, particularly since 1960. There was very serious talk of this during the Kennedy administration. Under Carter this discussion again became very earnest. It has intensified greatly since Reagan took office. In fact, the U.S. has been talking so aggressively, it is beginning to look as if it were searching for an excuse to use these weapons. Haig began talking right from the beginning about using nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union, even for relatively frivolous reasons.

Alexander M. Haig said Friday that the best deterrent to war is to demonstrate to the Soviet Union "our willingness to do whatever is necessary--including the use of nuclear weapons--to protect America's vital interests." (Sacramento Bee, 1/10/81)

Further, the government is now busy circulating instructions to the civilian population on how to protect itself in case of a nuclear war, supposedly so that it can have a good chance of survival. Hospitals throughout the country have been solicited by the government to adopt programs for processing casualties from such a war. This type of activity on the part of the U.S. government implies to people that a significant proportion of the population will survive a nuclear war. It also has the effect of getting the population accustomed to the idea that a nuclear war is a definite possibility at the present time and probably unavoidable in the long run. It is the opinion of Physicians for Social Responsibility that any physician that participates or cooperates in these government sponsored programs is guilty of actions that are "profoundly unethical", since these actions would contribute to the population's acceptance and support of nuclear war.

Of course, it is not possible to survive a nuclear war. Such an assertion by the government is a falsehood, pure and simple. And it has been known to be false for a very long time. For instance, in an earlier period (over 20 years ago on Dec. 19, 1961) when the U.S. government began recklessly talking about getting into a nuclear war:

800 faculty members of universities in the New York area published in the New York Times an open letter to President Kennedy and Governor Rockefeller which stated:

"We are now in the era of 50 to 100 megaton bombs. According to the AEC (Atomic Energy Commission) estimates of October 1, a one hundred megaton bomb, exploded in the

air, would have an 18 mile radius of total destruction of ordinary structures and ignite most wooden buildings in a radius of 60 miles. Within that area a large proportion of the population would be suffocated by lack of oxygen or poisoned by carbon monoxide. Basement shelters under burning buildings would be useless."

Scientists who signed this statement included experts in chemistry, physics, medicine...nearly every branch of engineering; in short, practically every science which is involved in the problem as well as professors in the social sciences and the humanities.

(Marzani, et al., The Shelter Hoax and Foreign Policy, pp. 8-9)

In line with this information, it was pointed out that:

One single bomb of 100 megatons exploded at the proper altitude over Newark would burn out the whole vast area from Philadelphia on the south, to Bridgeport, Connecticut, on the north and reach into Pennsylvania on the west. Five such bombs would burn out the entire east coast from Boston to Washington, with nearly one quarter of the U.S. population. (Ibid., p. 11)

Thus with a limited number of such bombs, almost the entire U.S. population could be wiped out and the Soviet Union had more than enough for that purpose in 1962.

The principal killing mechanism of nuclear weapons is the firestorm.

A firestorm is not just a fire or a series of fires. It is a conflagration so huge, so gigantic, that it becomes a meteorological event, sucking in enormous columns of air which feed and intensify the blaze so that all oxygen in the area is used up and people in

shelters are either cremated or, if the shelter is deep enough to withstand the fire, are suffocated because of the lack of oxygen. (Ibid., p. 8)

As before, scientists tell us now that it is not possible to survive a nuclear war. Any survivors would be wiped out by epidemics, radiation, lack of medical attention, and a lack of food. All the croplands will be hopelessly and irrevocably poisoned (Ibid., p. 15).

Of course, the number, accuracy, and effectiveness of nuclear weapons have increased tremendously since then. Conservative estimates place the number of large nuclear weapons at 9000 for the U.S. and 7000 for the Soviet Union.

Given these facts, why would anyone advocate nuclear war? It is quite obvious that no sane person would do so. Once nuclear weapons came into existence and their devastating effects became clear, any government run by sane people would have negotiated their total abolition. As we know, the Soviet Union for years tried to get the U.S. to agree to total abolition, but the U.S. government refused. (F. Cook, The Warfare State; J.P. Morray, From Yalta to Disarmament)

Why is the U.S. government waving nuclear weapons about today? To begin with, the conventional U.S. military forces have always been significantly inferior to those of the Soviet Union. In case there are people around who believe the Fourth of July speeches about the U.S. being the most powerful country in the world militarily, then some documentation may be necessary in order to demonstrate that this is not the fact. Four famous ex-officials of the U.S. have come out for an agreement banning the first-strike use of nuclear weapons. They are former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, former national security advisor McGeorge Bundy, former strategic arms negotiator Gerard Smith, and former U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. George Kennan. They pointed out that this agreement "would have to be followed by a large buildup of U.S. and NATO conventional forces." (Sacramento Bee, 4/8/82) They would have to do this to match or exceed the conventional forces of the Soviet Union. In passing, they

do point out that the Soviet Union had been trying to get the U.S. to agree for 25 years to a no-first-strike treaty. But the U.S. always turned it down because it would mean "accepting defeat from superior Soviet conventional forces." (Sacramento Bee, 4/8/82) As proof that this superiority has not been recent, here is a quote from a 1974 article by Drew Middleton, the New York Times military correspondent.

The prevailing view among senior American and allied commanders is that the East's quantitative and qualitative superiority over NATO is so great that the West would be forced to use tactical nuclear weapons to prevent the quick conquest of West Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium. (New York Times, 3/31/74)

And this substantial superiority in conventional military forces on the part of the Soviet Union has been the case since 1943.

This superiority is not based on technology or quantity of men or equipment, as usual official capitalist sources indicate, but on the superior quality and morale of the Soviet forces. Part of this superiority is based on the fact that the war envisioned by the U.S. is a war of aggression against the Soviet Union. Troops defending their homeland generally have a superior morale compared to those who are waging a war of aggression. Consequently, the U.S. business community feels that if it is to successfully wage a war of aggression against the Soviet Union, it must rely on nuclear weapons.

All the propaganda about the Soviet Union being aggressive and U.S. military preparations being necessitated by this, is just that--propaganda. False propaganda. This red herring has been dragged out every time the U.S. wanted to increase military expenditures or attack civil rights in the U.S. (as in the "McCarthy" period). The U.S. government, and particularly some retired officials, have always eventually admitted that previous "the Russians are

coming" scenes were false.

Historian Herbert Aptheker lists some instances of this from the pre-1958 period.

Thus, despite the enormous and insistent propaganda here to the effect that the Soviet Union threatens war and aggression, it is a fact that leading figures repeatedly have admitted, to their confidants and under private circumstances, that this was not true. Forrestal, for example, before madness befell him, confided to his diary in June, 1946, that he did not believe the USSR would attack "at any time." In June, 1948, General Walter Bedell Smith reported to the Security Council that "the Russians do not want war"; a military report to the NATO Council in 1951 found that there were "no serious indications that the Soviet Union is preparing for hostilities"; Eisenhower's Chief of Staff in 1952, General Gruenther, reported to him he saw no such preparations and felt certain the Russians were not going to war. (Aptheker, American Foreign Policy and the Cold War, pp. 26-7)

D.F. Fleming in his famous The Cold War and Its Origins said "It is difficult to find evidence of any desire on the part of the Soviets to plunge into conflict with the West" (p. 1060). Fleming quotes George Kennan, chief cold-war advisor to the U.S. government, to the same effect.

George Kennan, who made the most formal statement of the containment doctrine, said in 1954 that he had never seen any evidence that the Soviet leaders at any time "desired a general war between the Soviet Union and the major capitalist powers, or looked upon such a war as a likely means of achieving their objectives." (Ibid., p. 1063)

Felix Greene, the British journalist, points out the same thing with the help of some interesting quotations. This is no surprise since all upper class politicians and knowledgeable journalists were well aware of the mythical basis of the threat of "Soviet aggression".

As for American fears of attack by the Soviet Union, this is what George F. Kennan (former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union) wrote in 1956:

"The image of a Stalinist Russia poised and yearning to attack the West, and deterred only by our possession of atomic weapons, was largely a creation of the Western imagination, against which some of us who were familiar with Russian matters tried in vain, over the course of years, to make our voices heard."

This "creation of the Western imagination" did not arise spontaneously. It was quite clearly in the interests of those who felt it was essential to launch the United States upon a large military expenditure program to establish an adequate justification. It would be difficult to persuade a skeptical American people to support a global extension of military power to keep the world safe for American investors. It was therefore necessary to convince the American people that they were in danger, that a devilish external enemy was out to overthrow the United States. And not only the United States--but the whole Western world. The destiny of the United States was to save civilization.

To make people afraid is always easy.

President Truman in his Memoirs was later to write:

"The demagogues, crackpots and professional patriots had a field day pumping fear into the American people.... Many good people actually believed that we were in imminent danger of being taken over by the Communists and

that our government in Washington was Communist riddled. So widespread was this campaign that it seemed no one would be safe from attack. This was the tragedy and shame of our time."

Writing some years afterwards it was easy for Truman to blame the "demagogues" and "crackpots," ignoring altogether the fact that he was himself greatly responsible for initiating this national hysteria... (Greene, The Enemy, pp. 231-2)

Also, many recent officials confirm this fact in the process of arguing for something else. For example, the NATO commander General Bernard Rogers quoted earlier justifying the first-strike use of nuclear weapons by the U.S., admitted in that same interview that the Soviet Union would never resort to nuclear weapons first. He said, "The idea is to force the other side into the alternative of using theatre nuclear weapons or withdrawing. I believe there is no Soviet leader, present or of the foreseeable future, who wishes to expose his nation to the risk of nuclear war." (Sacramento Bee, 2/27/82) In other words, the Soviet Union, if faced with defeat with conventional weapons, will not have recourse to nuclear weapons. However, as General Rogers confirmed in this interview, it is U.S. policy to use nuclear weapons in such a situation.

General Rogers also stated that the Soviet Union was unlikely to start a war in Europe. He was quoted as "predicting that there is little chance of a Soviet surprise attack in Europe for the foreseeable future." (Sacramento Bee, 2/27/82) So the war situation pictured by Gen. Rogers would have to be the result of U.S. aggression or that of one of its allies. Even though these high-placed officials are inveterate dissimulators, they occasionally let slip the truth in these little asides.

Immediately after the Second World War, the U.S. built thousands of military bases around the periphery of the Soviet Union so that it could launch an attack

if ever the government thought it had achieved a sufficient position of military superiority. The U.S. is still waiting.

Why does the U.S. business community and hence the U.S. government feel that it has to wage a war of aggression against the Soviet Union? Because the Soviet Union is the symbol of socialism (regardless of the reality), the state that is controlled by wage and salary earners. In a truly socialist society, capitalists, as well as all other exploiters of labor, will sooner or later be abolished. They will be converted into wage and salary earners. To the business community, such a development seems like the end of the world. Evidently a part of this business community thinks that the end of the world through nuclear holocaust would be preferable to becoming a worker. The old slogan "Better dead than Red" from the McCarthy Era epitomizes this attitude. In the view of the U.S. business community, the continued existence of the Soviet Union will act as a beacon of hope and an example to working classes all over the world to try to establish socialist societies in their own countries, including the U.S. The real threat of the Soviet Union to the U.S. business community is not a military one, but an ideological one. Our old standby, NATO commander General Rogers confirmed this point when he said in the previously quoted talk, "The Soviets believe that if they are patient, they can dominate Western Europe without firing a shot."

Capitalism is dying and socialism is the system of the future. Socialism does not need foreign military conquest in order to triumph. So it is clear to the U.S. business community that the Soviet Union must either be destroyed or totally discredited--preferably the former.

If there is any doubt that this is the way the ruling circles in the capitalist world feel, just remember their actions since November 1917. 1.) After all that slaughter, they called off World War I and all the Allies and all the Central Powers invaded the Soviet Union. 2.) Failing, they spent most of their time organizing subversion, opposition, and sabotage

in the Soviet Union. 3.) Right after the failure of their first invasion of 1918-22 they began planning the next invasion. This invasion plan led to World War II. However, this invasion plan did not turn out the way they planned it--some of the "allies" ended up on the side of the U.S.S.R., "opposing" their former co-conspirators. After the war, they quickly got back together. And they got together on the basis of one thing only--to plan for the destruction of socialism in the Soviet Union and the other states that were trying to implement a socialist system.

For example, once it became clear that the Soviet Union was not going to be crushed and the "spectre of communism exorcised", then even though WWII was still going on, the U.S. began planning its next campaign. We have the testimony of General Leslie Groves, head of the Manhattan Project to build the atomic bomb:

I think it important to state--I think it is well known--that there was never from about two weeks from the time I took charge of the project any illusion on my part but that Russia was the enemy and that the project was conducted on that basis.

(Quoted in, Aptheker, American Foreign Policy and the Cold War, pp. 15-16)

The principal goal of U.S. foreign policy since 1918, as well as all other capitalist states, has been to crush the Soviet Union and hence socialism. Their actions leave no doubt of this. (See Sayers and Kahn, The Great Conspiracy.)

So, in its desperation, the U.S. government has clung to nuclear war, or its threat, as its only weapon. Consequently, it has been the U.S. government that has started the nuclear arms race and has kept accelerating it ever since.

It has been we Americans who, at almost every step of the road, have taken the lead in the development of nuclear weaponry. It was we who first produced and tested such a device;

we who were the first to raise its destructive-ness to a new level with the hydrogen bomb; we who introduced the multiple warhead; we who have declined every proposal for the renunciation of the principle of "first use"; and we alone, so help us God, who have used the weapon in anger against others, and against tens of thousands of helpless noncombatants at that.

(Kennan, former U.S. Ambassador to Soviet Union, May 19, 1981, quoted in Political Affairs, Feb., 1982, p. 26)

If it abandons nuclear weapons, it abandons its hopes of banishing the "spectre of communism". Thus, as it clings to this weapon with the desperation of a drowning man, it fantasizes about the possibility of surviving a nuclear holocaust. The government is fantasizing about "winning a nuclear war." It is beginning more and more to think of this fantasy as reality.

A few of the wealthiest families along with their top echelon business, government, and military officials, have hollowed-out mountains at their disposal; this probably contributes toward this illusion of the survivability of the few. They seem to believe that these fortunate few, along with their Accounts Receivable, can come out of their mountains after a decent interval and resume their dominant position in society, only in the Southern Hemisphere. Presumably, they think they could use nuclear weapons to blackmail the peoples of the Southern Hemisphere to accept them as their sovereigns. But it is clear they will never make it out of the Northern Hemisphere alive. And the probability is high that the Southern Hemisphere will be poisoned to an unlivable extent. Wishful thinking for a dying ruling class is a powerful thing. This is the basis of the old saying, "those whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad."

This theory about the fantasies of this section of the U.S. business community and the U.S. government may seem a little fantastic. However, let us bring in some documentary evidence to prove the

reality of these fantasies.

In 1980, certain sections of President Harry Truman's private journal were made public. By the end of 1951 it was pretty clear that the U.S. had been defeated in their war of aggression against North Korea. Foaming at the mouth because of his failure to crush socialism in North Korea, Truman began to fantasize in his journal entries.

In an entry dated Jan. 27, 1952, Truman wrote "the proper approach now would be an ultimatum...informing Moscow that we intended to blockade the China coast from the Korean border to Indochina" and that "if there is further interference we shall eliminate any ports or cities necessary to accomplish our peaceful purposes."

"This means all-out war", Truman wrote. "It means that Moscow, St. Peterburg (Leningrad), Mukden, Vladivostok, Peking, Shanghai, Port Arthur, Dairen, Odessa, Stalingrad and every manufacturing plant in China and the Soviet Union will be eliminated.

"This is the final chance for the Soviet government to decide whether it desires to survive or not..."

The journal does not specifically refer to nuclear weapons, though it says the communist countries would be "completely destroyed."

Charles Burton Marshall, a member of the State Department policy planning staff at the time, said Saturday that the journal reflected Truman's "reveries."

Marshall said that the United States did not have the nuclear capability to carry out Truman's threat, even if it had been considered seriously...

(Sacramento Bee, 8/3/80)

Truman, the president when the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japanese civilians was made, fantasized

what he would like to do to the populations of China and the Soviet Union--wipe them out. But he didn't have the power to do so. And his fantasies could not be too different from those that put him in that office, since they kept him there after Hiroshima.

And Harry Truman was not the only highly placed official whose fantasies of nuclear holocaust have become public. It seems that the Strategic Air Command Chief, General Curtis LeMay, had this same fantasy. In fact, it turns out the U.S. government's military plans for a war with the Soviet Union was based on this same fantasy of Curtis LeMay's.

The United States had a strategic plan if war broke out with the Soviet Union during the 1950's to strike a single, massive blow that would leave the Communist nation a "smoking, radiating ruin at the end of two hours," declassified secret documents show.

The documents were released recently under the Freedom of Information Act to author David Alan Rosenberg, who reproduced them in the current issue of International Security, a foreign affairs quarterly published by Harvard University...

The declassified documents about nuclear war strategy consists of notes taken by U.S. Navy Capt. W.B. Moore during a top-secret briefing by officers of the Strategic Air Command in 1954, including its commander Gen. Curtis LeMay.

According to Rosenberg, LeMay reviewed Moore's notes, once they were declassified, and pronounced them generally accurate.

In the notes the SAC briefer said, "The exact manner in which SAC will fight the war (with the Soviets) is known only to General LeMay and he will decide at the moment, depending on the existing conditions..."

Although the decision was not his to make, LeMay makes it clear in the briefing notes that he believed the United States would hit first, under certain conditions...

"I want to make it clear that I am not advocating a preventive war; however, I believe that if the United States is pushed in the corner far enough we would not hesitate to strike first." (Sacramento Bee, 2/15/82)

The thing to notice about this fantasy is its criminal nature and goals--the mass murder of hundreds of millions of defenseless people. But it was more than a fantasy. It was a fantasy that had become a part of basic U.S. planning. It was already noted in the previous quotations from Truman that the U.S. did not have the capacity to deliver an effective atomic attack in 1952. It did not have the capacity for an effective one in 1954 either. Even though the U.S. may have increased the number of bombs and the number of bombers, it still could not have delivered a sufficient number of bombs to the target. The Soviet Union, with the most effective fighter force around, would have destroyed most of the bombers before they could have gotten very far. So the plans to leave the Soviet Union "a smoking, radiating ruin at the end of two hours" was only a fantasy, but a fantasy that reveals what the U.S. ruling class is capable of. Something else should be noted. Curtis LeMay stated that the U.S. very well might launch a "preventive" (i.e., aggressive) war, and use nuclear weapons in that war.

Another important point should be made. The U.S. public has been told for a long time that the only reason the U.S. has nuclear weapons is to deter the Soviet Union from using them. This is false, of course. But here again is the official U.S. information media, admitting, in an aside, that the U.S. propaganda was false. Here was the U.S. planning to leave the Soviet Union "a smoking, radiating ruin" when the Soviet Union could not threaten the U.S. with nuclear weapons. This same article states that,

Although the Soviet Union had nuclear weapons at the time of the 1954 briefing, it had a bomber force that was vastly inferior to the United States' and possessed no missiles

capable to reaching this country. (Sacramento Bee, 2/15/82)

There is another form of madness than fantasies to which ruling classes are subject. This second form of madness is usually the result of despair. This form of madness consists of trying to destroy the world they cannot have. The Nazis in the last stages of the Second World War gave us many instances of this. When they were forced to leave the Soviet Union they destroyed every building, factory, or home; flooded every mine; killed every piece of livestock they could lay their hands on. Even on their own territory they flooded the subways to drown their own people; they ordered the destruction of all their productive facilities--factories and mines. Goebbels, in the last days of the war, called on all Germans to commit mass suicide--which some even did. Some of them even attempted to destroy their own art works. They just went on an orgy of spite and vindictiveness.

In one of his last articles published in the Volkischer Beobachter Joseph Goebbels summarized the German government's attitude to the world it failed to conquer.

"If we are obliged to leave, we will slam the door with such a crash that it will shake mankind to the end of its days."
(Quoted in Leonid Volynsky, Seven Days, p. 66)

There is the danger that a section of the U.S. ruling class may also, because of despair, choose to depart this earth with a bang. Thus leaving nothing worth using to any successors.

Given these facts, certain important conclusions logically follow. In order for complete nuclear disarmament to occur, only the U.S. and its allies need to get rid of their nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union, which has conventional military superiority, does not need to use nuclear weapons to defend itself. It only built or expanded its nuclear arsenal in response to U.S. nuclear armament, expansions, and aggressive inten-

tions. And if it were aggressive, which it is not, it would be foolish to use nuclear weapons rather than conventional forces since it would contaminate the land it intended to use and/or wipe out the population it intended to exploit. So if the U.S. and its allies undertook nuclear disarmament, that would be the end of the world being threatened with extermination. The Soviet Union would immediately follow suit. It would have no motive to do anything else.

With each expansion of the nuclear arsenal and each policy decision to threaten to use the bomb any time the U.S. government feels "its interests are threatened", these madmen are inching closer to the mass murder of the entire populations of North America, Europe and Asia. The greater the number of weapons, the greater the chance of "accidental" war. And further, the more "powerful" the U.S. government feels itself, the greater the illusion of being all-powerful and hence using its weapons. Make no mistake about it. These people are homicidal maniacs and potential mass murderers to the nth degree.

Part II

I.

Many citizens of the United States have illusions about the character of their ruling class, the big business families, and their representatives in government. They believe that they are not very much different than themselves, except for being more talented and intelligent. These naive citizens believe that the labels of "mass murderer", "war criminal", "war monger", etc. have no basis in fact. Certain evil policies may have been pursued in the past (e.g., the Indo-China War) but those were as much a matter of accident as of design. And what design there was, came from a few bad apples such as Johnson or Nixon. By-and-large big business families are as nice as your next-door neighbors. They would never plan to murder the population of three continents, just to protect their own individual economic interests. Only communists are evil by nature.

The overwhelming majority of U.S. citizens have these illusions. This is not so surprising considering the fact that the ruling class has control of almost all of the communications media. What is surprising is that the great majority of "leftists" and "Marxists" in this country have these same illusions, though to a slightly less extent. As far as most U.S. leftists are concerned, "American exceptionalism" still lives. In other words, these illusions aren't as strong where foreigners (e.g., Nazis) are concerned. So even in a leftist journal, it is necessary to spend some time undercutting these illusions. To do this, we will follow some of the activities of the U.S. ruling class from the period before World War II to the present.

As we shall see, the homicidal, war-criminal attitudes and actions of the U.S. big business community is no recent development. It has left a trail of criminal actions a mile wide on every level over this period. Its anti-human, selfish conduct has been single-minded and undeviating. The U.S. ruling class has planned war crimes, committed them, and then participated in their cover-up. It can justly be said that war crimes have been a way of life for the last half century for the U.S. big business community. First we will take up what constitutes a war crime, then we shall follow the trail of war crimes left by U.S. big businessmen.

2.

What is a war crime? The U.S. government now thinks that even the term war crime is just a form of communist propaganda, and consequently should not even be discussed.

At Nuremberg, definitions were made and convictions were obtained for war crimes. This sent a shudder through the U.S. ruling class. Consequently, a whole chorus of critics led by U.S. and British professors in effect made the point that if the Nuremberg principles were allowed to stand, this would inhibit aggressors in the future from doing what they felt was necessary to facilitate the conquest and domination

of foreign peoples. This was obviously an intolerable constraint for any civilized country. For example, the Republican leader in the U.S. Senate, Senator Taft warned "that the Nuremberg principles have undermined the fundamental principles of law in the United States...and that in these trials we have adopted the Soviet ideas of justice..." (Sawicki, From Nuremberg to the New Wehrmacht, pp. 184-186).

The Nuremberg trials were also attacked by prestigious representatives of the U.S. press. Fortune, representative of big business, attacked them, as expected. And, also as expected, the liberal Atlantic Monthly and The Nation followed suit. The "liberal" and "democratic socialist" publications are always found supporting big business on important issues.

After being maneuvered into a corner by the Soviet Union with the help of an outraged world opinion, the U.S., Britain, and France were forced to participate in the Nuremberg Trials of Nazi War Criminals. They soon saw their mistake and brought them to a premature end. They followed this up with an all-out attack on the principles established at Nuremberg.

And what were these principles? The first principle is that there are such things as "war crimes" for which the "war criminals" should be punished. Professor Trainin* summarizes the two main groups of war crimes that had been established more or less even before Nuremberg, along with some of the Conventions and Treaties that established them.

The basic presumption of any international communion is the existence of peaceful relations between states. Peace is a very great social value, and therefore offences against peace represent the first group, the first

*The judges at the Nuremberg trials "unanimously voted for a motion of thanks to A.N. Trainin...for his great contribution." His book, quoted from here, brought together and provided the principal theoretical basis for the trials. (A. Poltarak, The Nuremberg Epilogue, pp. 157-158)

species of international crime... [There follows quotes from various Congresses on this type of international crime. Then Trainin introduces material on crimes of the second type--M-LL]

In this connection there exist and function international agreements (the Hague and Geneva Conventions and others) which represent an attempt to bridle the elemental force of war, to direct it into the channel of some restrictive rules, to lay down provisions for the treatment of the peaceful population, prisoners of war and wounded.

The Geneva Convention concluded on July 6, 1906, binds belligerents to treat sick and wounded soldiers with humanity. Article 1 of this Convention declares: "Soldiers and other persons officially attached to armies shall be respected and taken care of when wounded or sick, by the belligerent in whose power they may be, without distinction of nationality." According to Article 3: "After each engagement the Commander in possession of the field shall take measures to search for the wounded and to insure protection against pillage and mal-treatment both for the wounded and the dead."

Article 6 of the Geneva Convention provided for the protection of hospital institutions: "Mobile medical units (that is to say, those which are intended to accompany armies into the field) and the fixed establishments of the medical service shall be respected and protected by belligerents."

The Geneva Convention of July 27, 1929, confirmed and partly developed these provisions. Thus, Article 1 of the Convention of 1929 lays it down: "Soldiers and others officially connected with armies, in the event of their being wounded or falling sick, must enjoy protection and defence in all circumstances; they will enjoy humane treat-

ment and care, without distinction of nationality, on the part of the belligerent under whose authority they may find themselves." "After every battle," said Article 3 of this Convention, "the side occupying the battlefield will take steps to discover the wounded and dead and to protect them from looting and ill-treatment."

Striving to make use of the peaceful population in order to ensure appropriate help for sick and wounded soldiers, the States which concluded the Geneva Convention of 1929 laid it down in Article 5: "The Military Command may appeal to the humanity of the local population in order that, under its control, the sick and wounded belonging to the armies should be brought in, and that they should be cared for: affording particular protection and some facilities to the persons responding to such an appeal."

The Hague Convention concluded on October 18, 1907, regulates the attitude of belligerent countries to prisoners of war and the civilian population. Article 6 of the Special Annex to that Convention, entitled "Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land," declares: "The State may utilize the labour of prisoners of war, other than officers, according to their rank and capacities. Their tasks shall have nothing to do with the operations of the war."

The Hague Convention dwells particularly on regulations for the protection of the welfare of peaceful citizens and cultural treasures.

Articles 46 and 47 of the Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, lay it down: "Family honour and rights, the lives of individuals and private property... must be respected. Private property cannot be confiscated... Pillage is formally prohibited."

Article 27 of the same "Regulations" speaks

of the protection of public buildings and cultural treasures: "In sieges and bombardments all necessary steps should be taken to spare as far as possible buildings devoted to religion, art, science, and charity, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected."

As we see, some barriers, very limited it is true, have been raised in the way of untrammelled licence in war-time. The infringement of these laws and usages of warfare, the transformation of war into organized State banditry, constitutes the second group, the second species of international crimes, directly connected with war.

In this way it is possible to outline the following system of international crimes:

The first group is composed of offences against peaceful relations between the peoples-- (i) aggressive actions; (ii) propaganda of aggression; (iii) conclusion of agreements with the object of aggression; (iv) infringement of treaties serving the cause of peace; (v) provocations with the object of interrupting peaceful relations between States; (vi) terrorism; (vii) support of armed bands ("Fifth Columns").

The second group is composed of offences connected with war--(i) offences against prisoners, wounded and sick soldiers; (ii) offences against the life, health, honour and property of peaceful citizens; (iii) the destruction of cities and other inhabited places; (iv) the destruction and looting of material and cultural values.

(A.N. Trainin, Hitlerite Responsibility Under Criminal Law, pp. 37 and 39-41)

Professor Trainin draws mostly on treaties, etc., primarily from the twentieth century. But these principles had begun to be accepted over a much longer period. In order to demonstrate that

this is true, we will draw on the testimony of an arch-reactionary, a Nazi. Admiral Canaris, head of the Nazi's Military Intelligence Service (Abwehr), became upset when Field Marshall Keitel ordered the mass murder of Soviet POWs. He was afraid that the Soviets might retaliate in kind. Consequently, he wrote to Keitel hoping to dissuade him from this course of action. In this note he gives a clear non-legal summary of what had come to be accepted as the rights of civilians and POWs. Any violation of these rights constitutes a "war crime". Canaris informed Keitel that:

since the 18th century the general principles of international law on the treatment of prisoners of war "have gradually been established along the lines that war captivity is neither revenge nor punishment, but solely protective custody, the only purpose of which is to prevent the prisoners of war from further participation in the war. This principle was developed in accordance with the view held by all armies that it is contrary to military tradition to kill or injure harmless people... (Quote taken from A. Poltarak, Nuremberg Epilogue, p. 295)

Therefore it is generally considered to be a war crime to deliberately kill, injure, or humiliate an unarmed civilian or POW. Even Admiral Canaris who normally had no compunctions about the mass murder of defenseless people was aware of this. All the officials of all nation states are aware of this as well. Another proof of this general knowledge is the following.

In 1902 the German General Staff published a Handbook entitled Usages of War in Land Warfare in which the treatment of war prisoners was dealt with as follows: "The sole purpose

of the taking of prisoners of war is to prevent their further participation in the war. A State can do everything that may prove necessary to detain the prisoners, but nothing more...War prisoners may be put to moderate work, appropriate to their position in society. Work is a protection against excesses, and is valuable from the health point of view. In any case, it must not be hurtful to the health, and must not be of a degrading character. Likewise it must not directly serve military operations against the country of the prisoners...Although war prisoners lose their liberty, they do not lose their rights. In other words, war captivity is no longer an act of mercy on the part of the conqueror--it is the right of the disarmed man."

That was the teaching of the German General Staff, basing itself on the decisions of the Hague Convention of 1899. The new Hague Convention concluded in 1907 still more underlined the significance of the principles of a humane attitude to prisoners and wounded soldiers.

(A.N. Trainin, Hitlerite Responsibility Under Criminal Law, pp. 46-47)

To sum up this section then, it is a war crime to injure, kill, or humiliate a defenseless person, whether a POW or a civilian. It is permissible to do so if civilians are in an area where a battle is being fought, and their death or injury is unavoidable. But it is impermissible to deliberately attack or harm defenseless civilians or POWs. Secondly, it is a war crime to plan a war of aggression, to propagandize your population to accept and support a war of aggression, to violate treaties that support peaceful relations, to engage in provocations that could lead to war, etc.

3.

Beginning in 1918-1922 with the failure of the invading forces of the principal capitalist powers (including the U.S.) to put down the Bolsheviks in the Soviet Union, the U.S. government became involved in an unending stream of war crimes. Having failed to destroy the first socialist state, the U.S. government in conjunction with other capitalist powers, planned a war of aggression against the Soviet Union.

Before WWI, diplomacy and war centered on holding colonies already acquired or attempting to acquire those of others. Now interest in colonies, though still there, had become secondary. What had become primary for all capitalist governments was the problem of how to exorcise the spectre of socialism. The continued existence of the Bolshevik regime represented a threat of extinction for the ruling classes (as ruling classes) of these countries. How were they to get rid of it?

A general plan, informally agreed to by most of the leading capitalist powers, took shape fairly quickly. It had the virtue of solving two problems at once, apparently. The plan was to have those capitalist powers which possessed little or nothing in the way of colonies (the so-called "have-not" powers) attack and crush the Soviet regime. The "have-not" powers included Germany, Japan, and Italy, while the "have" powers included England, France, and the United States. They would receive direct and indirect assistance from the "have" powers in the prosecution of their enterprise. And once the "have-nots" had crushed the Soviet regime and split up its territory among themselves, they would also have their share of the raw materials of the world in their newly acquired colonies. Con-

sequently, they would then stop lusting after the colonial possessions of the "have" powers. ("The Super Powers," Science, Class, and Politics; Fall, 1978, No. 3, p. 5)

As part of their agreement, the U.S. and Britain poured funds into German and Japanese heavy industry in order to build up their military capacity for the impending aggressive war. (See R. Palme Dutt, World Politics, 1918-1936 and M. Sayers and A. Kahn, The Great Conspiracy) As we know capitalist rivalries split this alliance at the last minute. For example, the U.S. was supplying Japan with scrap metal almost up to Pearl Harbor in 1941. The alliance held up with Germany until 1940 when Germany converted the "phoney" war into a real one.

Nevertheless, we saw that the U.S. was not only one of the planners and organizers of aggressive war, but was the principal planner and organizer of Germany's attack on the Soviet Union during WWII. Both of these acts were war crimes of the first type. These war crimes followed hard on the war crime of aggressive war waged on the Soviet Union between 1918-1922.

In the pursuance of the war crimes of planning and organizing the attack on the Soviet Union, the U.S. government (along with the U.S. business community) also committed a number of other war crimes of which a few are listed below. 1.) It participated in the attack on Spain, along with Germany, Italy, France, and Britain. 2.) It cooperated with England, Germany, France, and Italy, in the dismantling of the Czechoslovak state. 3.) It, along with the U.S. business community, financed Mussolini's takeover in Italy in 1922, helped finance the Nazi Party in the early days as well as helping to facilitate its subsequent takeover in 1933.

Once the war started, and in a dumb-founding reversal of intentions, the U.S. found itself opposed to the Nazis and "allied" with the Soviet Union. Britain and the U.S. refused to open a second front for three years. They did this in the hope that the prolonged war and increased casualties would lead to a weak

Soviet Union. Whether it weakened the USSR or not, we do not know, but it did lead to many innocent people being killed, and millions of extra casualties. Consequently this was a very serious war crime.

The next major war crime came soon after the U.S. entered the war. First Britain, and then the U.S. decided on a policy of deliberately attacking practically defenseless German and Japanese civilians. The policy was not to attack the factories particularly, but to attack and bomb the civilian population. If a bomb happened to hit a factory, so much the better. But that was not the principal purpose of the U.S. and British air raids on German and Japanese cities. The purpose was the mass murder of defenseless civilians, the commission of war crimes on a truly mass scale. They weren't going to let the Nazis, with their concentration camps, etc., get away with all the glory. Millions of defenseless civilians were murdered in these criminal raids. Since then, the U.S. media has bragged that the air war (war crime) was one of the principal U.S. contributions towards the winning of WWII.

As we know, the U.S. capped off their "contribution" to the winning of the war with the creation of a fire storm in Dresden (killing 300,000 defenseless civilians), the fire bombing of Tokyo, and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. With this track record (considering the small part it played in WWII), the U.S. let the world and the Nazis know, that when it came to the willingness and ability of commit war crimes, the U.S. business community and their government were second to none. It is important to notice and remember that the U.S. had established this reputation before the end of WWII. For instance, Hansen Baldwin, the New York Times military observer, wrote, "The use of the atomic bomb cost us dearly; we are now branded with the mark of the beast." (Quoted in G. Deborin, Secrets of the Second World War, p. 256)

This deserved reputation acted as an irresistible attraction to every war criminal of the Axis' side. The last days of the war in Europe saw the flight of innumerable war criminals to the U.S. and British zones of occupation. This led to a whole series of other

war crimes. The U.S. gave asylum to the overwhelming majority. A few (Himmler, Boering, Frank, etc.) had to be sacrificed for appearances sake. But by-and-large, as we shall shortly document, the U.S. successfully defended these war criminals, and hence, in effect, participated (i.e., collaborated) in their war crimes.

4.

In both the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences, the U.S., Britain, and the USSR agreed "that the war criminals would be arrested and put before the court of that country where they had committed their crimes." (Sawicki, From Nuremberg to the New Wehrmacht, p. 102)

Initially the U.S. was reluctant to fulfill this obligation, and beginning in 1947 the U.S. government issued orders to the effect that war criminals would no longer be extradited (Ibid., p. 106). This action, of course, was a violation of all the international agreements on the subject. Instead, Britain and the U.S. organized their own trials for many of the war criminals. Some they found innocent. Some they found guilty but gave them their freedom after only a very short jail term. Some they didn't bring to trial at all. Later, the U.S. turned over responsibility for trying these war criminals to the West German courts, which were more often than not presided over by ex-Nazi judges. Since that development, prosecutions, convictions, and length of sentences have declined even more. Oscar Muller, retired minister and Chairman of the Association of Victims of Nazism described the resulting situation in these words.

We have calculated that under the present practice in the Federal Republic of Germany, the sentences passed by the courts amount to from one hour to one day of imprisonment per murder. There have been many cases of a defendant leaving the courtroom a free man after the court had passed sentence on him. That is what happened recently in Kiel, when

a man found guilty of murdering 300 people was sentenced to several years imprisonment. Account was taken of the period he was kept in detention, and he left the court a free man and went to his textile mill.

(Bezymensky, Tracing Martin Bormann, p. 115)

Among the generals sentenced to life imprisonment or to death, the following are at present [1959--M-LL] already released from prison: Field Marshal Kesselring, generals: Mackensen, Henrici, Falkenhorst, and top echelon SS commanders: Meyer, Sommer, Loerner and Ehrenschnalze. It is common knowledge that Kesselring had bombed the houses of Warsaw in 1939, Henrici was commander of the Wehrmacht in Cracow, Falkenhorst was the hangman of Norway. At liberty, in addition to these, are Marshal Milch--Goring's right hand in the Luftwaffe, Marshal List who committed many crimes in Greece, General Andreas--the hangman of the inhabitants of Crete, SS General Prince zu Waldeck--Himmler's head of concentration camps, General Falkenhausen--Governor of Belgium, General Rendulic--the butcher of Yugoslavia, General Ramcke--the hangman of the residents of Brest in France, Field Marshal von Manstein--the murderer of the population of the Crimea and the Ukraine, General Gallenkamp, who shot British prisoners of war, SS General Gottlob Berger--chief of Himmler's staff and creator of the "European" Waffen SS detachments.

This list is, of course, incomplete. (Sawicki, From Nuremberg to the New Wehrmacht, pp. 111-112)

Thus the criminals who had not been extradited by the American authorities...became the first nucleus of the general staff which was later considerably expanded by officers released from prison on the basis of amnesty. (Ibid., p. 118)

Civilian war criminals were treated much the same way. These war criminals, whom the U.S. authorities considered "our type of people," were used as the principal officials of the newly and illegally created West German state and West German military establishment. Many of these war criminals turned up as the principal officials in NATO. For example, General Heusinger was made head of NATO forces, and General Speidal head of German forces in NATO.

It is clear that the U.S. government protected Nazi war criminals because they wanted to use them for their own criminal purposes. After all, experience counts in any occupation. Thus, the U.S. government by saying, in effect, that war criminals are the most valuable collaborators of U.S. policy in Europe and Asia openly confessed their own criminal plans.

The U.S. government also became involved in smuggling war criminals out of Europe and Asia. As the war was ending, the U.S. in collaboration with the Vatican, the Italian Fascists, and various Nazi organizations began a war criminal smuggling operation. There were a number of such smuggling organizations. There was ODESSA (Organization of Persons Belonging to the SS), EP (Edelweis-Piraten), and Spinne, among others.

These organizations smuggled war criminals into Italy, from where they would go on to Spain or South America. Many famous and thousands of not-so-famous felons traveled this underground pipeline. Martin Bormann and his family; Adolf Eichmann and his family; Otto Skorzeny; SS Colonel Leon Degrelle, the butcher of Belgium; SS Auschwitz doctor, Josef Mengele; Auschwitz doctor Dr. Klingerfuss; Vice-Regent of Slovakia, Jan Durcansky; the designer of a mobile gas chamber, SS Colonel Walter Rauff are a few of the more famous war criminals who have made use of these organizations. In tracing the probable escape route of Martin Bormann, journalist L. Bezymensky gives an accurate description of how the ODESSA organization worked at that time.

The ODESSA organization functioned smoothly. No wonder--in addition to former SS high-ranking officials its members included influential

Italian aristocrats, prelates, and even officials of the U.S. intelligence service.

These were reliable people, who had already taken good care of Bormann's family. By this time, Bormann's eldest son, Adolf Martin, had taken monastic vows and following a "preliminary course" in the Federaun Monastery near Villach, Austria, was under the patronage of Bishop Hudal, head of the Christian Charity Fund in Rome. As for Bormann's eldest daughter, Ute Eva, she had taken the veil in Santa-Giulia Monastery...

On the other side of the border he [Bormann M-LL] was met by Italian friends. They offered him the safest means for going into hiding--the protection of the Holy Church. The offer was accepted...

He met Bishop Hudal in Rome in Via della Pace. Hudal was the guardian not only of Brother Martin (Adolf Martin Bormann to the laity), but also of another monk Brother Avery, John Foster Dulles's son.

(L. Bezymensky, Tracing Martin Bormann, p. 93)

Brother Avery's uncle, Allen Dulles, was head of the U.S. intelligence organization in Europe at this time. Once in Rome the Church offered Bormann his choice of where to go. He could go to Spain where Skorzeny and Degrelle were holed-up or he could go to South America where Eichmann and Mengele had settled. The weight of the evidence is that he chose the latter.

Once in Latin American, most of these war criminals could not have stayed there without the cooperation of the U.S. This much is clear. At that time, with the exception of Mexico, all of Latin America were neo-colonies of the U.S.

In Asia the U.S.'s policy concerning war criminals and war crimes at the end of WWII followed the same path. There were some interesting variations however. One of them is the following. The Japanese government put a lot of effort into developing biological warfare. General Ishii Shiro, a long-time advocate of biological

warfare, was put in charge of the research. General Shiro used human beings as guinea pigs, murdering over 3000 people in the process. The Japanese used biological warfare against the Chinese and planned to use it against the Allies in the latter stages of the war. The Soviet Union's lightning crushing of Japan's Kwantung Army frustrated these plans. The U.S. government rushed forward and gave General Ishii Shiro and as many of his cohorts as could make it to U.S. jurisdiction protection from war criminal prosecution. In exchange, the Japanese were to turn over the results of their biological warfare "so that America could make use of the results from the gruesome tests." (Sacramento Bee, 11/1/81) The U.S. immediately launched into further research in biological warfare at Fort Dietrich with the obvious intention of committing this type of war crime in the future. This intention was obvious from the means used to obtain the results of the Japanese research. Of course, we have the advantage of hindsight. We will point out later several instances of when the U.S. committed this particular type of war crime.

The Soviet Union, being against war crimes, brought to trial all the Japanese biological war criminals they could lay their hands on. The results of this trial, describing the activities of the infamous General Ishii Shiro, are contained in the book Materials on the Trial of Former Servicemen of the Japanese Army charged with Manufacturing and Employing Bacteriological Weapons.

The U.S. military also recruited SS and Gestapo specialists to teach appropriate members of the U.S. military their advanced techniques of torture. From this date, torture became a regular part of U.S. military operations. Remember some of those exciting scenes on T.V. during the Vietnamese war showing U.S. or U.S. puppet troops throwing POWs from helicopters, applying the water torture to civilians, or throwing lye on POWs or civilians in "tiger cages"?

5.

By defending and protecting war criminals, the U.S. government showed that it wanted the freedom to commit war crimes in the future. But evidently, it felt this was insufficient. There was the Nuremberg trials which confirmed the earlier principles establishing and expanding the culpability of war criminals. This expansion primarily applied to war criminals committing the first type (listed above) of war crimes--the planning of aggressive wars, the launching of aggressive wars, the propaganda of aggression, the infringement of treaties serving the cause of peace (e.g., the Yalta and Potsdam agreements), etc. These precedents were intolerable for a government such as the U.S. whose goals were to be achieved by aggression and other types of war crimes. Another type of legal precedent had to be set. The U.S. government, therefore, decided to engineer such a precedent. And since the U.S. government was staging trials of Nazi war criminals so they could prevent their punishment, why not use those so-called "trials" to set legal precedents that were the exact opposite of Nuremberg's? A trial of 12 German Generals was taken for establishing the "new precedents".

On February 19, 1948, Tribunal V--with Judge C.H. Wennerstrum of the Supreme Court of the State of Iowa presiding and with Judge E. Carter of Nebraska and G. Burke of Michigan also participating--brought a decision in the case involving Field Marshal Wilhelm List and another 11 generals accused of having committed war crimes and crimes against mankind.

Of the accused, Wilhelm List was in direct command of the invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece, Field Marshal Maximilian von Weichs commanded the occupation troops in those countries, General Lothar Rendulic directed the retreat of the 20th German Army from Finland through the northern zone of Norway

where he completely destroyed the province of Finnmark. The defendant Ernst Dehner stood at the head of a military group fighting the partisans in Croatia, the accused Ernst von Leyser commanded the German division in Albania. The defendants were also active in other countries of Eastern Europe. The overwhelming majority of their criminal acts were, however, committed in the Balkan countries, which is the reason why this case was commonly referred to as the "Balkan Case" or the "South-eastern Case." Since the charges to a great extent concerned the illegal shooting of hostages, it is also called the "Hostages Case." The indictment against the generals contained three main charges:

- a) that they tortured and shot Greek and Yugoslav partisans instead of treating them as war prisoners,
- b) that they took hostages on a mass scale from among the civilian population in the Balkan countries and shot them,
- c) that impermissible reprisals were used in regard to the peaceful population of occupied territories.

The judges, bringing in a decision in their own court, resolved to change the recently laid down legal principles in favour of future aggressors. In theory, their judgment meant the acceptance of all the consequences resulting from aggression. The American military tribunal was undoubtedly aware of the path it had chosen, that is to say, the capitulation of law to the forces interested in aggression...

Partisans. The American military tribunal states that a "partisan" who in the course of battle against an occupying power does not openly carry arms as well as insignia whereby he could be recognized from afar, should be treated as an ordinary spy...

...in the eyes of the enemy they [partisans--M-LL] remain criminals and may be treated as such. An occupation army has no other way to defend itself.

...The court declared further that though the war launched by the Germans against Yugoslavia and Greece violates international treaties and is of a criminal character, this does not yet mean that each act committed by the German occupying authorities in regard to the people and the property of occupied countries constitutes a crime, that each act by which the population opposed the occupying power, should be accepted as a legally permissible inevitable defensive measure. That is why, in the opinion of the court, whatever the reason for the outbreak of war and irrespective of the fact whether it may be considered as justified or not, the defeated nation has to observe the severest regulations introduced by the occupying power." [emphasis ours--M-LL]

Hostages. During World War I even German scholars questioned the right to shoot hostages. The American tribunal, however, was of the opinion that, on the basis of the present state of international law, each occupying power is entitled, in order to defend its interests, to take hostages and in case the conditions for the fulfilment of which hostages were taken, are not satisfied, to shoot them; that it is the duty of the occupying power to maintain peace and order in occupied territories... Should circumstances point to the fact that the inhabitants of a certain settlement actively or passively participate in hostile steps directed against the occupant, nothing can prevent him from "taking hostages." The occupant is also entitled--according to the opinion of the American tribunal--to shoot them, even if they are personally innocent.

Efforts should, however, be made to take only such hostages to be shot that do not live too far from the settlement where the act against the occupant actually took place and that these should be people "of a nationality close to that of the occupied population."...

Reprisal. Reprisals are the answer to a violation of law on the part of the enemy. A reprisal is permitted if it does not surpass the dimensions of the act which the occupant wants to avenge. According to the interpretation of the law by the Tribunal it is also permitted to arrest innocent people and to kill them as an act of retaliation for a previous violation of the regulations passed by the occupying power, even if it was committed by other people. Though the killing of an innocent person for the act of another is something repulsive from the moral point of view, the Tribunal nevertheless is of the opinion that nothing can be done in this case...

In such a way the Polish people learned from the decision of the American court that the Polish judge illegally sentenced to death police chief Daume who, for one killed German, ordered more than a hundred people to be shot in Wawer. On the other hand Daume, on the basis of international law, was entitled to shoot the Poles! Thus, not only did the Polish court act illegally, but also the International Commission in London which considered Daume a war criminal, stating that he should be extradited to Poland.

(Sawicki, From Nuremberg to the New Wehrmacht, pp. 176-181)

These decisions in the areas covered represented a complete rejection of all principles developed over the past two centuries to control international criminal activity of the part of the military of nation states. These decisions not only gave the green light

to aggressors and aggressive wars, but in particular to aggression against colonies and neo-colonies. Since wars of national liberation against highly industrialized capitalist states depend primarily on guerilla (partisan) warfare, these decisions state that it is permissible (nay, obligatory) to commit any war crime (as defined at Nuremberg) to suppress it. The only crime the U.S. court recognizes is the resistance of colonial populations to foreign domination. Again, the U.S. business community's post-WWII intentions were visible--namely a whole series of wars of counter-insurgency to hold on to and expand its colonies.

6.

Having set the stage, legally, the U.S. government was off and running on a whole series of war crimes. Just a few of the more spectacular and well-known ones will be mentioned. The first was to violate the Yalta and Potsdam agreements again and combine the U.S., British and French zones of occupation illegally in order to create the West German state. The reason for this was to create an aggressive militarist ally for future U.S. aggressions against the socialist states. Once these governments did this, they had no legal right to have a presence in Berlin. When the Soviet Union rightly demanded that they leave, the U.S. threatened to nuclear bomb a number of Soviet cities. (Daniel Ellsberg, Protest and Survive, ed. by E.P. Thompson, p. v) And since the U.S. had a long record of committing war crimes including the use of the atomic bomb, the Soviet Union could only assume that the U.S. would commit this war crime as well. The U.S. then used their base inside East Germany to infiltrate the area with spies and saboteurs, as well as engaging in all sorts of provocations calculated to endanger the peace and destabilize the East German regime. These activities are all defined as war crimes.

When in 1950 the U.S. saw that its control of South Korea was coming to an end, it and its puppet regime in South Korea launched an attack on North Korea. This criminal aggression was planned for a long time.

(See I.F. Stone, The Hidden History of the Korean War) Even though this war of aggression was launched only three years after Nuremberg, the U.S. government made use of a greater variety of war crimes than the world had ever seen in one war before. The Nazis had been put in the shade. First there was the bombing of defenseless civilians. Almost every building in North Korea was leveled. The war crimes became so extensive that North Korea asked for an unbiased (not controlled by the U.S.) committee be formed to investigate and report on the situation there. The International Association of Democratic Lawyers, whose headquarters is in Brussels, Belgium agreed to undertake the task. Several excerpts from their report follows.

In this section of the report, the Commission has confined itself to a statement of those facts which were proved by direct evidence which in the opinion of the Commission was corroborated and established beyond doubt. A considerable volume of written statements was submitted to the Commission, which have been taken into account only by way of corroboration of facts proved by primary evidence. We were invited to investigate many similar cases to those stated above in various parts of the country, and it was time alone that prevented this from being done.

The members of the Commission were especially concerned to be satisfied in each case that the victims were indisputably civilians, and entitled to be treated as such; that they were given no trial, or even advised of any offence against the occupying power.

The circumstances surrounding the detention or mass murder of people reveal certain common features at all the major places which the Commission visited, and cannot, therefore, in the opinion of the Commission, be treated simply as cases of excesses committed by individual soldiers or units.

The wholesale killings fall substantially

into two categories, the killing of the inhabitants of a locality, and the killing of refugees.

As to the former, it was established that on entering a locality the American troops either alone or using for their purpose Syngman Rhee auxiliaries or also using Japanese agents rounded up the families of all men serving in the Korean People's Army or of men who worked in state enterprises or government, or who were active in the Workers' Party or leading movement of women's league. In many cases this meant in practice the seizure of all families in which no young men were present. In nearly every case those seized included men, women and children of all ages. In some cases all the civilian inhabitants of a locality were seized. In addition, in many villages, peasants and their families were taken when they refused to hand over grain and livestock without any requisitioning authority being produced, and without any receipt being rendered or compensation offered.

While the group killings continued in each area throughout the period of occupation, it would appear that the greatest number of those killed were exterminated, either within the first few days of the occupation, or immediately before withdrawal from the area. In every town visited, it was clear that the occupation troops had on the day before, or on the day of retreat, taken the people in detention for whatever cause and deliberately exterminated them.

As to the killing of refugees, this falls into two periods:--

(a) When the American troops were advancing northwards in September and October 1950, large numbers of refugees fleeing northwards were cut off by the advancing troops particularly in the areas of Sinchon and Anak. These

refugees were clearly distinguishable as refugees (whole families including women and children. The men wearing the traditional Korean white clothes, and the women long skirts in color) who were not at the time intermingled with troops of the Korean People's Army. It was these groups which were systematically exterminated as related above.

(b) When the American troops retreated in November-December 1950, it is established that large numbers of the inhabitants of the major cities were induced by leaflets and threats to believe that the atom bomb would be dropped and that they should move south with the American troops. These refugees were deliberately exterminated in their thousands by American forces.

The tortures and bestialities committed against individuals again reveal a common pattern of behavior throughout the area visited, and cannot be passed over as the sadistic excesses of individuals.

The whole series of cases cited in this chapter of the report must not be taken as the whole evidence of cases committed but as typical of a vast number of similar cases brought to the attention of the Commission for examination. The torturing of people by beating, kicking, electric shocks, pouring water in the nose and throat to excess, cutting off various parts of the body, mutilation and the killing by shooting, bayoneting, suffocation, blowing up, burning alive and burying alive could be repeated again and again in sickening detail.

The Commission draws conclusions from these established facts which are set out later.

(Facts Tell, pp. 227-8)

This section of the report describes the commission of the war crimes of torture and murder of defense-

less civilians. The use of torture was systematic and obviously a matter of policy. It was also obviously policy to circulate flyers threatening to use the atomic bomb in order to panic the population into fleeing. Then the air force would bomb and machine gun them when they became concentrated on the roads. The U.S. government lied in order to save labor in its campaign of terror through the mass murder of defenseless civilians.

The Commission's conclusion is business-like, thorough, and unemotional.

CONCLUSIONS

The Commission has given very careful consideration to the facts disclosed in this Report, to which it has applied the principles of international law universally accepted by civilized states.

It is not the function of this Commission to pass a final judgment. It is not a Tribunal that is competent to do so. Its duty is limited to an investigation of the facts, and to indicate the offences against international law which, in its opinion, these facts disclose. If there be a defence to the crimes this Report discloses, that defence must be heard by an appropriate international Tribunal before final judgment can be passed.

On this footing the Commission reaches the following conclusions:--

1. By the deliberate dispersion of flies and other insects artificially infected with bacteria against the Korean People's Army and among the civilian population of North Korea, with the intention of spreading death and disease, a most grave and horrible crime has been perpetrated by U.S. forces in Korea, contrary to the provisions of the Hague Convention concerning the laws and customs of war on land of 1907, and to the universally accepted law prohibiting bacteriological war-

fare which was re-stated in the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

2. By the use of poison gas bombs, and other chemical substances among the civilian population of North Korea, the U.S. forces are guilty of a planned and deliberate breach of the Hague Regulations of 1907, Article 23 (a) and (e) and of the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

3. By the murder en masse of civilians or of individuals without charge, without trial, including many women and children throughout the areas occupied by them the United States forces and Syngman Rhee soldiers under their command have acted in defiance of the express provisions of the Hague Regulations of 1907 (Art. 46) imposing a duty on the occupying power to protect the lives of inhabitants.

4. By the wrongful seizure and imprisonment, ill-treatment and tortures of the civilian inhabitants in the areas occupied, the U.S. forces and Syngman Rhee soldiers under their command have again broken the express provisions of the Hague Regulations of 1907.

5. By the bombardment of undefended towns and villages far from the front and the indiscriminate destruction from the air of non-military objectives, the American forces have again acted in defiance of the accepted laws and customs of war, and in particular in breach of the Hague Regulations.

6. By the destruction of protected buildings, such as buildings dedicated to public worship, art, science, historic monuments and hospitals, in some cases in the indiscriminate bombardment of undefended towns and villages, and in others by deliberate attack on these protected buildings, when they were being used solely for the purpose for which they were intended, and where necessary, marked with appropriate signs. The American forces have again broken the Hague Regulations of 1907 and in particular Article 27.

7. By the deliberate destruction by fire and explosive of public buildings of a civil or non-military character when such destruction was not imperatively demanded by the exigencies of war, the American forces are in breach of the Hague Regulations and in particular of Articles 55 and 56.

8. By the confiscation without requisitioning authority, and without compensation or receipt, or by the deliberate destruction of foodstuffs and the private property of civilians, not necessary for the maintenance of the occupying forces, the American troops have again broken the Hague Regulations and in particular Articles 46 and 52.

9. By the murder of prisoners of war, American troops have been guilty of a breach of the Conventions of 1929 and 1949 concerning the treatment of Prisoners of War.

10. By the pillage of historic works of art, and of private property, the American forces have been guilty of offences against Hague Regulations (Art. 47).

In the opinion of the Commission all the above constitute war crimes as defined by Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal of Nuremberg.

Having regard to the extent and character of the crimes revealed, the Commission is of the opinion that the American forces in Korea have been guilty of crimes against humanity as defined by the Nuremberg Charter, as follows:--

1. By the wholesale destruction or extermination of sections of the civilian inhabitants, and in particular of refugees without any attempt to bring any to trial for any offence, and by the terroristic methods adopted against whole sections of the Korean people, and since 28th January 1952 by the use on a large scale of the bacteriological weapons against civilians;

2. By the destruction or attempted destruction of the way of life of the people of North Korea, by the destruction of its schools, university, museums, its historic monuments and cultural objects, by the destruction of the organs of government and the murder of its officials.

Taking the view that the extensive murders are not the result of individual excesses, but indicate a pattern of behavior by the U.S. forces throughout the areas occupied by them, and taking into account that the employment of bacteriological and chemical weapons over extensive areas of the country must constitute an attempt to destroy a whole people or part of a people, the Commission is of the opinion that the American forces are guilty of the crime of Genocide as defined by the Genocide Convention of 1948.

In light of these conclusions, the Commission must name those who should be brought to the bar of world justice to answer for these crimes. The Commission has no hesitation in saying that many of these crimes could not have been committed without the fullest knowledge of and planning by the leaders of the government of the U.S.A. and of the High Command of the U.S. Forces. It therefore indicts these people and all officers commanding in the field who are responsible for these crimes together with all individual soldiers who accepted and carried out orders contrary to international law.

With these conclusions we have completed the task that was imposed upon us by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers.

We feel bound to say that our experiences in Korea, in the conduct of our investigation have filled us with horror and dismay at the savagery revealed. We know that there are many, who, like some of ourselves before our journey, will find it difficult to accept the

terrible facts established in this Report. We therefore solemnly pledge our honour as lawyers and as ordinary men and women to the truth of the facts disclosed. We have come from different countries, we do not share a common religion, a common political outlook, or even a common tongue. We have endeavoured to perform our task conscientiously and with full regard to our responsibilities as lawyers.

This Report, the result of our labours, is unanimous.

We believe that those who read it will share our horror and detestation of the crimes and criminals.

We ourselves are determined that the rule of law shall be upheld in the world, that no state, individual, however mighty, shall escape the consequences of their crime.

(Facts Tell, pp. 239-242)

This report is reprinted in its entirety in Science, Class, and Politics, No. 15, Fall 1981.

Concerning the use of biological weapons during the Korean War, an interesting coincidence occurred. Just as the U.S. military was preparing to launch their biological weapons attack, who should show up in South Korea but our old acquaintance, the biological war criminal, General Ishii Shiro.

Reuter reported that a certain General Shiro Ishii arrived in South Korea at the end of December 1951.

The American germ warfare bombs consisted of various insects carrying different types of bacteria like cholera and bubonic plague. Anthrax was carried by infested tarantula spiders and fowl mites were used for spreading encephalitis.

The container was usually a refinement of the Ishii porcelain bomb. Called the "eggshell" bomb, and about the size of a small football, it consisted of a porous

shell, allowing the infected carriers to breathe, brittle enough to shatter into a thousand fragments on impact...

...only 2 world powers had refused to ratify the 1925 Geneva Protocols outlawing germ warfare--Japan and the USA.

(The Worker, published by Communist Party of Britain (M-L), April 22, 1982)

Having horrified the world by its criminal expertise and dedication, the U.S. government emphasized its unprincipled, contemptible character by bragging loudly about its honorable behavior and concern for human welfare. It even had the temerity to suggest that maybe the U.S. POWs were not treated as well as they might have been. To the hardened criminal, hypocrisy and sanctimoniousness are two of the principle virtues. Blifil (of Tom Jones) is the role model of all U.S. politicians and substantial businessmen.

The next orgy of war crimes indulged in by the U.S. government occurred in Indochina. Since this war was relatively recent, people are more familiar with some of the crimes committed there. Once again, the defenseless civilian population became the principal object of the U.S. airforce and its aerial bombing. Besides purposely bombing civilian housing, hospitals, schools, old people's homes, etc., it shot farm animals, destroyed irrigation works and dams, used poison gas purposefully against civilians, etc. All of those acts are obviously considered serious war crimes. In fact, the U.S.'s military activities in Indochina were just one long series of war crimes. This was all documented by the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal. (A handy summary of the findings of this Tribunal is contained in Jean-Paul Sartre, On Genocide.) The torture of civilians and prisoners of war by U.S. or U.S.-supported military forces was presented daily on T.V. during the Indochina war (e.g., POWs thrown out of helicopters, etc.). All of this helped to condition and corrupt a large part of the population and hence give the ruling businessmen a freer hand to develop and execute their criminal plans.

When the U.S. government chose to respond to the findings of this Tribunal, its answer was revealing of its attitude. It just lied brazenly to an organization that it knew would realize it was lying. Thus it showed its contempt for the Tribunal as well as itself.

At this reference to conventional international law the State Department objected (April 5, 1965) that "the United States Senate never ratified the Geneva Protocol of 1925" and that thus "the United States of America is not bound by this protocol."

The International War Crimes Tribunal did not consider this response significant because the principles of immunity of the civilian population, the prohibition of the use of poison, and the prohibition of weapons adapted to cause useless suffering are rules of common law mentioned in the Hague Conventions of 1907 to which the United States is a signatory and are taken up in war manuals including the 1956 American manual "The Law of Land Warfare."

(Sartre, On Genocide, p. 27)

The horrors of Vietnam could be presented at length. But the reader should have the idea by now. The U.S. business community views mass murder and other types of war crimes merely as tools of personnel management and public relations. In dealing with any opponent, whether capitalist or socialist, or with a liberation movement in a neo-colony, the threat or the active commission of a massacre of a selected portion of the population can convey convincingly the media message. And that message is: submit or face annihilation. Evidently it is felt that the more horrible and indiscriminate the massacre, the more effective the message. The use of this tool by the U.S. government has been increasingly imbedded in tradition and honored respectability. It is resorted to now almost without thought. War crimes have become institutionalized.

So we have arrived at our present predicament. The U.S. government and military take it for granted that they will use nuclear weapons, the ultimate in war crimes, whenever they find it convenient. As we have already seen, their whole basic military and diplomatic policy is based on their use. Naturally! What else could be expected given this background. General Eisenhower's attitude to the use of atomic weapons, has been the dominant one since nuclear weapons were invented.

To my mind the use of the atomic bomb would be on this basis. Does it advantage me or does it not, when I get into a war? ...If I thought the net was on my side, I would use it instantly.

(Quoted in Wells, Pragmatism, p. 13)

So given this background, it is up to us to convince these war criminals and homicidal maniacs that using nuclear weapons does not "advantage" them.

Conclusion

Given all the information outlined above, how does one go about convincing these people (sic?) not to use or retain nuclear weapons? In general given the extreme seriousness of the problem, the answer has to be--by any means necessary (excluding, of course, such senseless tactics as individual terrorism, assassination, etc.). But what about the specifics? This depends to a great extent on what the nature of the ruling class in the U.S. is like. Are they unified behind this suicidal policy? Apparently not. How great and determined is this opposition? We don't know.

For example, we have the article that appeared in the Sacramento Bee (already referred to) by four of the most prestigious representatives of the ruling class, opposing the current U.S. policy of nuclear first-strike. Are they really serious in wanting to

abandon this longtime policy, which, despite statements to the contrary made from time-to-time, the U.S. has always adhered to? These four ex-officials supported this old policy at a time when it was equally dangerous. Further, all these people were famous for being hard-liners. Why the change in position? It is possible that what they really object to is the ostentatious way the administration is waving the bomb and threatening first-strike. This activity is obviously stirring up increased opposition on the part of the population. Maybe what they are really advocating is the more covert pursuit of the old policy. So it is hard to tell from our vantage point the dominant sentiment among the ruling class.

But because of the seriousness of the situation we have to assume that the maniacs are in control. They certainly appear to be. This is the impression they appear to want to create.

What tactics are available? There are the old standbys of signing petitions, writing your congressmen, and of demonstrations. These have been almost totally ineffective in the past. Maybe if they were much larger in scale, they might have some effect. But knowing the character of such ruling classes, this is very unlikely. The probable outcome of such tactics would be concessions that looked good but would amount to very little, plus a great increase in deception and covert activity. But in order to get mass support for more radical actions, it may be necessary to go through these preliminary steps if people are to see that liberal actions will not produce the necessary results. It is the duty of Marxist-Leninists to point out why these tactics won't work and to point toward tactics that will.

Since it is clear that no one else will or can do it, it is essential for the U.S. working class to prevent the U.S. capitalist ruling class from attempting to start a nuclear war. The only long run solution, of course, is throwing the U.S. ruling class out of power and the wage and salary earners, a basically humane and rational class, seizing control of the government. Until that day comes, it must be made

clear to the U.S. ruling class and its cronies in the government and the military that if a nuclear war starts (i.e., even if only one or a few tactical nuclear weapons are used), the workers will hunt them down no matter where they hide, and give these mass murderers what they deserve. These homicidal maniacs must be stopped and eventually deposed before they kill us all. ■

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