

The Unwanted War

FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS the world has been living in the shadow of another global war. The shadow is cast by the ominous substance of Soviet aggression. And so long as the aggression persists, the threat of a needless, unwanted, suicidal war will remain.

We do not think that war is inevitable. We are emphatically opposed to any suggestion of a "preventive" war. We believe that each day of peace and preparation makes the free nations stronger and lessens the chance of world conflict. Yet, such a conflict could start tomorrow, through design or miscalculation or desperation. This issue of Collier's, written as of 1960, shows how that war would be fought and won, and reports on the program of reconstruction that would follow victory.

We have no illusions about the fearful cost of victory. But we are confident that freedom would be saved and Communist imperialism destroyed. For the Soviet dictatorship does not have the physical or moral strength to survive a fight for its existence. Its greatest weakness is the inherent weakness of all tyrannies, which Allan Nevins wrote of in the previous issue of this magazine.

Professor Nevins cited the lesson of history in his article, Tyrannies Must Fall, to show that every tyranny, from the vast empire of Genghis Khan to the world-ambitious Nazidom of Adolf Hitler, has collapsed as much from inner flaws as from outer pressure. Tyranny is built on a foundation of hatred, fear and intimidation, of unrest and potential revolt. The tyrant creates a juggernaut. And when the burden of oppression becomes too great, the juggernaut goes out of control and crushes him.

The destruction of tyranny leaves a vacuum which it is the task of the liberated and their liberators to fill. The task is quite as important as the task of creating the vacuum. Twice in this century victorious powers have reconstructed world affairs in such a way as to make it possible for tyranny to persist. In the pages that follow, those contributing to this issue have suggested a procedure which they and the editors of Collier's believe would avoid some mistakes of the past, both in the conduct of war and in the difficulties which would follow it.

These writers have consulted eminent authorities on military and economic matters, besides drawing on their own broad knowledge of their particular fields. They have proceeded from the factual basis of the world situation today to a logical analysis of what may come. The war that they describe is a hypothetical war, to be sure. But their description contains no careless fantasy or easy invention. They were not assigned to perform a journalistic stunt. The editors of Collier's did not put in ten months of work on this issue with the intention of creating a sensation. Our intention is to look squarely at a future which may contain the most terrible calamity that has ever befallen the human race.

If war does come, we believe that it must be fought as a war of liberation. The free world has no quarrel with the oppressed Russian people, but only with their Soviet masters. Those masters would probably attack the civilians of this and other free countries in a campaign of atomic extermination. But we hope and trust that the

atomic bombs of those free, humane countries would be used not for retaliation, but for the destruction of strategic targets, and only after advance warnings to civilians to evacuate the areas.

If the unwanted war does come, we feel that the peace which follows should not repeat the pattern of unconditional surrender, reparations and trials of war criminals. The Russian people should be permitted to deal with their surviving oppressors as they see fit.

We should not expect from Russia a carbon copy of American democracy or American economy. We should not force either upon her. Self-rule and private enterprise would probably evolve in a form that would be modified by background, environment and the character of the people themselves. The victors, through help and guidance, should first make sure that a dictatorship would not rise from the ruins of war.

With that precaution taken, they should simply provide the opportunity for freedom to emerge. The liberated people could be left to choose the political forms of freedom which would flourish best in Russian soil.

Implicit in all that you will read in the pages that follow is the means by which the catastrophe of another war can be avoided. That means rests with the Soviet government. The men in the Kremlin must make the choice.

They can roll up the Iron Curtain. Or they can start a war and have it shot down.

They can believe the truth—that the West has no aggressive intentions and is willing to live at peace with Russia. Or they can continue to delude their people and themselves with their own propaganda, start a war, and see enlightenment brought to their people by armed might.

They can cease to subjugate their captive neighbors and still maintain close economic and cultural relations with them. Or they can start a war and see those countries' independence restored by force.

They can rejoin the family of nations, open their doors to the outside world, free the channels of trade, turn their vast country's resources to constructive use, and thus improve the lot of all the world's peoples. Or they can continue their present course of suspicious, intransigent belligerence, and risk their own destruction.

The Soviet government must change its outlook and its policies. If it does not, the day will surely come when that government will disappear from the face of the earth. The Kremlin must decide. And if the Soviet rulers refuse to change, then they must realize that the free world will fight if necessary. It will fight and win. For the course of history cannot be diverted; tyranny is still doomed by its very nature to destruction.

An appeal to the reason of Joseph Stalin and the men around him is the ultimate purpose of this issue of Collier's. We believe that it is the most important single issue that any magazine has ever published. Robert E. Sherwood has told us that "it is quite conceivable to me that (it) may have an effect on the course of history." We sincerely hope that he is correct. And we earnestly pray that its effect will be to help establish and maintain an enduring peace. THE EDITORS



— — PREVIEW OF THE WAR WE DO NOT WANT — —



The bomb strikes Moscow, in retaliation for heavy attacks on UN cities. Seconds later, Kremlin (within enclosure in foreground) was swept into oblivion. Red Square (surrounding avenue) was heaped with rubble. St. Basil's Church (bulbous towers at right) was gone

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