

# Militarism, Ideology and Poverty

**“Had no military expenditures been made by nations after the communist victory in China in 1949, the world’s realizable wealth (including housing, productive facilities, transportation, power) would now be at least 50% greater. And mankind’s generalized poverty could have been conquered.”**

The concept of the United Nations, that five Great Powers – the U.S., England, France, Russia and China – would collectively rule the world as Permanent Members of the Security Council, in concert and in some undefined manner, was preposterous at the outset. What it meant, in effect, was that 38 percent of the people of the Earth, inhabiting 28 percent of the world’s land area, would make all ultimate decisions for the whole of mankind. Sixty-two percent of humanity would be effectively disfranchised in world affairs; 72 percent of the world’s land area would be controlled from outside its own boundaries.

With the decision to exclude Mainland China from the U.N., and the granting of veto power to the Chiang Kai-shek regime based on Taiwan, a further 22 percent of the world’s people was denied a voice in concerted world action. Thenceforth, the popula-

tion of 22 percent of the world’s surface would decide what must be done, in the global sense, by the population of the remaining 78 percent of the world’s land area. Some 16-17 percent of the world’s people would decide the national limits of action of the remaining 83 percent of mankind.

That the situation was absurd is shown by the initial assumption that unanimity could be secured through the veto power. The veto power enjoyed by Permanent Members of the Security Council was, instead, a further narrowing of the decision-making process. It had been written into the Constitution of the U.N. at American insistence – at the insistence of Alger Hiss, in fact. Any one of the five Permanent Members of the Council could prevent united action by the U.N. through exercise of the veto. With permanent membership in the Council granted to Taiwan, the veto power of Taiwan meant that the U.N. could not

function in unanimity unless the People’s Republic of China were excluded from any say whatever in world matters. In *realpolitik* this would require that the U.S.S.R. acquiesce in clearly intended U.S. actions in the Far East and that the U.S. acquiesce in Russian actions with respect to Eastern Europe.

Therefore, the necessary precondition for unanimity among Permanent Members of the Security Council was that the Soviet Union share with the United States and the United Kingdom avowed hostility to the factual existence, and the possible spread, of communism in the Far East. Exclusion of Mainland China from the U.N. postulated this as necessary for unanimity in the Security Council.

Russian hostility to communism in China being impossible, it followed that unanimity in the Security Council was also impossible except over relatively trivial issues. And the same held

true over Anglo-American attitudes towards the Russian presence in Eastern Europe.

Effectively, the U.N. was sterilized. It could not perform meaningfully unless it acted in union. The necessary unanimity, however, would have required Russian assistance in the suppression of communism in the Orient, and Anglo-American assistance in the fostering of communism in Europe.

Neither could occur. Therefore, the U.N. could not function, in any ulti-

mate sense, as an organ of world governance. It could not but degenerate into what it became: an arena in which Great Powers strove to manipulate affairs to their own advantage (real or fancied), to the gross disadvantage of their opponents (real or fancied.)

What might have happened, in and to the world, had there been no veto power in the U.N. — or, for that matter, had the United Nations not been established at all — is a matter for conjecture. It could possibly be argued

that the ordinary courses of diplomacy would have been more effective deterrents to aggressive actions by nations, and more competent in securing accommodation between potential antagonists, than a world deliberative body whose structure and constitution contradicted its own avowed purposes.

The argument cannot be dismissed out of hand that the U.N. has actually exacerbated national antagonisms — and without the slightest intention of doing so. One of the intended functions of the U.N. was to serve as an early warning system bringing growing national antagonisms into the open so that they could be pondered and, perhaps, offset in some fashion. Unfortunately, this enhanced visibility of national and ideological antagonisms has served more to exaggerate than to diminish them by inflaming public opinion in the member states. Vitriolic rhetoric became characteristic of debate in the General Assembly, and grew to be specifically intended to excite national publics, and to foment alarm among member states.

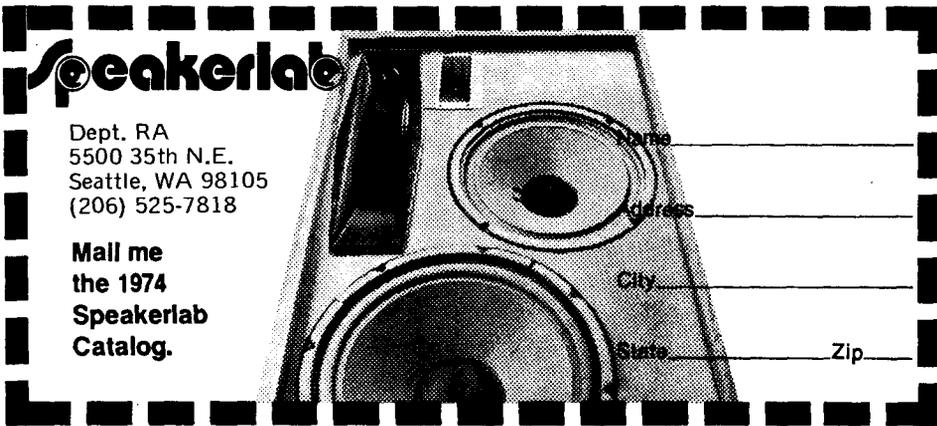
Does this mean that a world deliberative body should not exist? Of course not. Ironically, however, it would seem that such a body can prove effective *only* if it starts out within a set of world relations equivalent to those which it intends to bring into being. A world deliberative body founded upon national or ideological antagonisms can only serve to aggravate them. Functionally, an effective United Nations can succeed only in the absence of persisting serious discords among nations. This — its ultimate objective — is also its required starting point. In a certain sense, the theory can be advanced that success of a world policymaking organ must of necessity be a function of the paucity of need for its existence.

[ARSENAL OF FUTILITY]

The truth of this paradox is driven home by the fact that despite existence of the U.N., during the eight years from 1964 through 1971, world military expenditures approximated \$1.2 trillion, of which some 88 percent was spent by developed countries and 53 percent by NATO countries alone. The Warsaw Pact countries during these years spent militarily

# BUILD YOUR OWN SPEAKERS & SAVE UP TO 50%.

You can assemble your own high quality, multi-element stereo speakers in a few hours and save up to half the retail cost of comparable speakers. Send for our free 32-page catalog of speaker kits, raw speakers and accessories.



**Speakerlab**

Dept. RA  
5500 35th N.E.  
Seattle, WA 98105  
(206) 525-7818

**Mall me the 1974 Speakerlab Catalog.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

some \$431 billion, one-third of total military expenditures of the world. The U.S. spent close to \$510 billion or 39 percent of the world total. Even the developing countries spent close to \$160 billion, almost one-eighth of the world total. On the Vietnam War alone, the U.S. spent \$140-150 billion directly, in addition to the immeasurable indirect cost involved in wrecking its domestic economy, the foreign exchange value of its currency, and its foreign trade. An additional \$360 billion was spent by the U.S., domestically and abroad, not only in actual defense of the nation against invasion, but in attempts overseas to shore up the U.S. geopolitical position: attempts which have manifestly failed.

Hence, in the United States and throughout the world, the sudden plunging of developed countries into poverty and economic chaos. The coming chaos first expressed itself internationally in 1971 when the U.S., unable in any other way to stem the hemorrhage of its gold reserves induced by military expenditures of more than half-a-trillion dollars in eight years, embargoed any further gold payments by the U.S., even to foreign central banks. But it had already expressed itself domestically in the U.S. in 1969-70 when its military extravagance in Southeast Asia proved to be, not the cost-free exercise which Lyndon Johnson in 1967 assured the nation it was, but so vast a consumption of the nation's past and current savings as to strip even the private sectors of the U.S. economy of the capital needed not only to expand but to meet current bills.

In earlier issues of RAMPARTS I have stressed how international faith in the dollar was destroyed by the unpardonably large military spending of this country, and how in 1973 Europe closed itself against unwanted dollar infusions. What is not yet appreciated by the American public, however, is that total U.S. defense budgets during 1946-75 (\$1.5 trillion) approximated two-thirds of the value of *all reproducible real assets*, public and private, in the United States as estimated for 1968 (\$2.36 trillion).

Definitional differences and difficulties make comparable estimates for other nations hazardous. It remains a fact, however, that had no military

expenditures been made by nations after the communist victory in China, the realizable wealth of the world (in the form of housing, hospitals, schools and universities, productive facilities, developed infrastructures including electric power and transportation, plus agricultural potential) would have been at least 50 percent higher than it is today.

Poverty, in the sense of semi-starvation, might still have existed. If so, it would have been in isolated instances and, more often than not, because of special local circumstances. But poverty, in the generalized sense which most of mankind today experiences, could have been conquered without great difficulty.

The barrier to the conquest of world poverty is not an excess of population over potential means of subsistence but the displayed preference of peoples to spend on arms what should be spent on the short-range welfare and the long-range productive capacity of mankind.

Military spending, and more specifically military actions, make this impossible. The latter not only diverts capital, labor, and material resources from productive employment but destroys — willfully and deliberately — whatever resources of a chosen enemy it is able to demolish. The former, propagandized to the people as the first line of defense of their way of life, nowadays renders preservation of such a way of life unlikely.

The reality is that militarism and sustenance are now incompatible. Disregarding the possible annihilation of mankind by nuclear weapons, even "conventional" weapons are now so costly that quantitative sufficiency to *guarantee* the defense of even Great Powers against attack is beyond the capacity of the public purse.

We have reached the point that what the military call national security is a function of decreasing marginal superiority of one nation's arms over another's. And as the marginal value (measured in kill power) grows smaller and smaller, the cost of maintaining the margin in one nation's favor grows at an exponential rate. The unit cost of non-nuclear weapons tends to rise without limit, and this limitless cost increase gains smaller and smaller advantage over an adversary, the growth

in military technology being approximately uniform — except for brief time spans of possessed advantage — in all technically advanced nations.

Consequently, something very strange appears to be in the making. Assume the trends in military technology and associated marginal costs to continue without interruption, we shall soon reach the stage at which vanishingly small advantages over an enemy involve infinitely large increases in cost per unit of advantage. And before that point is reached, the entire society must be reorganized in order to ensure that personal consumption does not continue at a level which would debar the military from attaining ever smaller advantages, or from translating these diminishing advantages into massive quantities — and costs — of actual arms which grow obsolescent in their very production.

[THE REAL CONVERGENCE]

Military developments and domestic tranquility are thus becoming antithetical. This is

## FREE CATALOG



### 1200 EXCITING OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

New Eddie Bauer Catalog for 1975-76 invites you to great new outdoor adventures. 120 full color pages with over 1200 unique hard-to-find products for the whole family — each product tested, proven and unconditionally guaranteed. It's ready! Send for your free copy now!

Please send me FREE the new Eddie Bauer 1975-76 full color 120 page catalog. **RA 1**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*Eddie Bauer*®

Dept. ZRM, 1737 Airport Way S., Seattle, Wa. 98134

as true of the U.S.S.R. as of the United States. The arms race has become a continuous series of ever more costly technical changes in weapons, to the point that neither capitalism nor socialism can afford to give primary attention to the daily needs — not to say the personal wishes — of the populace.

The consequence is that militarized capitalism and militarized socialism are becoming functional identities.

From the socialist side, it is not during a revolution that a system approaches identity with militarized capitalism. It is after success of the revolution that this progression is set in train, because every attempt at socialist revolution is countered by military action of the leading capitalist power, and this countering continues long after the revolution has reached its goal. The result is that, although the revolutionary goal of attaining power is reached, preservation of the revolution requires increased, not decreased, deployment of social resources towards military purposes, diminishing the social values of the revolution.

On the capitalist side, the mere attempt at revolution abroad involves not only intervention to suppress the revolution but, in addition, magnification of military preparedness should the revolution not be suppressed.

The entire world thus becomes a vortex of military preparedness and expenditures, increasing in velocity and dimension until all mankind is caught up in it, socialist and capitalist alike.

National armaments are becoming supranatural, the world's nations subordinated not to their military leaders but to their military technologies and corresponding budget appropriations. Preparations for war, in their financial-technical aspects, take on a life of their own even when war is not intended. As military technology in any one nation advances, it becomes essential that the latest advance be rendered obsolete in the shortest possible span of time. For it is assumed that what one nation has already achieved, other nations will soon achieve. And the approach to limitless military budgets throughout the world grows clearer day by day.

I hesitate to term this the quandary

of mankind. For it to be truly a quandry, it must be motivated by inevitability. And inevitability in this process is *not* inevitable.

Mankind can still choose whether the process shall continue. But nations cannot (or believe they cannot) unilaterally halt this process on their own account. They cannot (or believe they cannot) permit nations considered hostile (and perhaps, in fact, hostile) to outstrip them in non-nuclear military capability. And so the arms race not only continues but accelerates. Mankind so far has rejected its free choice to halt this insanity.

In one respect, the process is more ridiculous than tragic. It has been demonstrated in Indochina, as in Portuguese Africa and — long before — in Yugoslavia and the Balkans generally, that the more sophisticated the weapons of powerful nations, the less capable they are of suppressing guerrilla insurgency employing primitive weapons. Has the world forgotten that the NLF in Vietnam was predominantly armed, in its early stages, with crossbows, sharpened bamboo stakes, the equivalent of zip-guns? And that with such weapons they held back, and frequently defeated, the heavily-armed forces of South Vietnam? Or that the Yugoslav partisans, without the panoply of arms which the Axis powers possessed, pinned down more than 40 Axis divisions at the height of the Balkan fighting in 1943?

The world had better not forget this, for most of the Earth's surface is hospitable to guerrilla activities. To put it another way, the extraordinarily sophisticated weapons of advanced industrial states are simply inapplicable to the very areas in which, logic dictates, they are most likely to be employed. The very advance in military technology *decreases* military capabilities in relation to most of the Earth.

Progressive rise in costs of militarism not only negates the social systems they are intended to defend (capitalist or socialist) but also, in the concrete forms it assumes as weapons and strategy, decreases the geographical areas in which advanced weapons can be employed effectively. As marginal military cost tends to infinity, the extent to which the resulting weapons can be employed with intended effect tends towards zero.

I address these remarks as much to military men as to the public at large, as much to socialist societies as to capitalist or mixed economies. In my life, I have met and known many military men, from generals and admirals to privates and *matelots*. I have found as much personal honor and dedication among them as in any other stratum or profession in society. Their social concern, however, is of necessity limited by their requirement to obey without question — which is not characteristic of the general public in non-dictatorial societies. Yet they are amenable to reason. And perhaps the shortest cut towards ending the arms race, especially in its technical aspects, is to demonstrate to the military how utterly self-defeating their honestly motivated activities are becoming.

To the public at large (including legislators), what as yet is only vaguely apprehended by a few needs to be transformed into full and general recognition. However wealthy, no nation can afford to deploy today's most advanced military technology, even if it is never used. No social system can fund tomorrow's military technology without radical transformation of the social structure such that the military must play a political role which the average military officer himself finds repugnant.

If all nations attain something close to equality in military technology and capability, and if each strives to "improve" upon it, the resulting changes in social forms throughout the world will make it impossible to distinguish politically any nation from any other. The objectives sought in military superiority will vanish in the total dominance of militarism over all else. And the industrial necessities of such a situation will leave neither room nor role for a supposedly civilian population, except as servitors.

This is the choice which mankind must make — and soon. To continue the arms race, and to make it militarily meaningless by its continuance. Or to turn its swords into plowshares, and to abandon a military process which jeopardizes the very existence of civil society even if its weapons remain unused. Then, and only then, can mankind create a United Nations which will actually unite humanity.



# How Poverty Breeds Overpopulation

(and not the other way around)

**T**he world population problem is a bewildering mixture of the simple and the complex, the clear and the confused.

What is relatively simple and clear is that the population of the world is getting larger, and that this process cannot go on indefinitely because there are, after all, limits to the resources, such as food, that are needed to sustain human life. Like all living things, people have an inherent tendency to multiply geometrically—that is, the more people there are the more people they tend to produce. In contrast, the supply of food rises more slowly, for unlike people it does not increase in proportion to the existing rate of food production. This is, of course, the familiar Malthusian relationship and leads to the conclusion that the population is certain eventually to outgrow the food supply (and other needed resources), leading to famine and mass death unless some other

countervailing force intervenes to limit population growth. One can argue about the details, but taken as a general summary of the population problem, the foregoing statement is one which no environmentalist can successfully dispute.

When we turn from merely stating the problem to analyzing and attempting to solve it, the issue becomes much more complex. The simple statement that there is a limit to the growth of the human population, imposed on it by the inherent limits of the earth's resources, is a useful but abstract idea. In order to reduce it to the level of reality in which the problem must be solved, what is required is that we find the *cause* of the discrepancy between population growth and the available resources. Current views on this question are neither simple nor unanimous.

One view is that the cause of the population problem