

THE YEAR FOR DECISION

"The present effort for world peace is the most important matter before the world today, for through this effort we hope to escape World War III.

"There are two questions which, more than others, will determine whether this country is to make the maximum contribution to world peace. First, do we want peace or revenge; and second, are we willing to make the political and economic concessions essential to the success of world organization for peace?"

To this effort, - without dismay and with undiminished courage, - the Syracuse Peace Council summons its members and friends in 1945, and we would share with you all this message from English Friends:

"Members of a Committee appointed by London Yearly Meeting desire to share with Friends in other countries the call which came to us at our Yearly Meeting to influence peoples and governments towards a righteous peace. We are impressed by the need for prayer and penitence, and for a fresh dedication to God's service, so that we may be His messengers and prepare the way for the Christian reconciliation and reconstruction which is the only hope of lasting peace."

MORE ABOUT CONSCRIPTION

While the Great Powers are allowed to raise conscript armies without hindrance or limit it would be vain to expect the lasting preservation of world peace. If the instrument is ready for use the occasion will arrive and the men will arise to use it. I look upon conscription as the taproot of militarism; unless that is cut out all our labors will eventually be vain.

---Jan Smuts.

American Farm Bureau Federation declares compulsory military training "foreign to American way of life." - Pennsylvania State Grange, "Contrary to American Ideals." - State Council of the Michigan Commonwealth Federation says, "Militarizing our country will not solve our domestic problems not will it keep peace in the world." - Detroit Council of Churches believes military training would hinder the establishment of a lasting peace.- Conscription is the symbol of nineteenth century militarism, according to the Postwar World Committee of the Catholic Association for international Peace. - Catholic Mirror calls compulsory military training "a complete reversal of our American way of life." - Arizona School Administrators, Council on Education of the Arkansas Education Association, and the Association of Governing Boards of State Universities and allied institutions condemn peacetime conscription now. - Would lead to Jingoism and future wars, said representatives of 40 New York youth groups. - Warwick Neck, Rhode Island, League of Women Voters says would "hinder peace plans." - Articles of the month.

War Department leaders are expressing more confidence over the passage of a peacetime conscription bill now than they were several weeks ago. Apparently they feel that the "educational" campaign of the American Legion is bearing fruit. According to War Department statements, they are interested solely in a military act, and do not feel that President Roosevelt's suggestion for a combination of military training with various educational and citizenship courses would serve the purpose they seek...The official War Department position on peacetime military training is given in an article called "General Marshall wants a Citizen Army," --Satevepost, December 23.

Says an Army circular, "There will be no place in a sound universal military training program for activities that are non-essential to the task of preparing our young men for combat." That ought to end some of the double talk with which we have been kidding ourselves.

Says a soldier from Syracuse in a letter to his pastor:

"It looks as if this military training proposition is a national question. If you ever have anything to say about it, don't let them do it. It is a sure way of wrecking the morals of the country. In the months in which I have been in the Army, I have seen a lot of fellows loosened up. It doesn't pay to put us on our own at this crucial stage of the game. Besides, there are too many other ways the situation can be solved. When you get into this, you can see the damage it is doing in other than physical terms."

And that ought to end the rest of it.

If peacetime conscription is a good peace policy then Europe should be the most peaceful spot on earth, for Europe has had more conscription longer than any other similar area in the world.

RACE RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

The December 18 decisions of the Supreme Court make timely a reminder of the unfinished business of democracy and peace in our own borders. To the layman the two decisions on the same day are confusing. One held that no loyal evacuee (Japanese-American) could be compelled to remain in the relocation centers against his will. The other upheld the evacuation order of the army. From this Justices Jackson and Murphy dissented. Said Justice Murphy: "To give constitutional sanction is to adopt one of the cruelest of the rationales used by our enemies..." and, after reminding us that "not one person of Japanese ancestry was accused or convicted of espionage," he concluded: "I dissent from this legalization of racism... Racial discrimination in any form has no justifiable part whatever in our democratic way of life... All residents of this nation are kin in some way by blood or culture to a foreign land. They... at all times... entitled to all rights and freedoms guaranteed by the constitution."

Splendid words. But sadly at variance with the temper of the American mind as evidenced by:

(1) The barber in Poston, Arizona, who chased out of his shop a Japanese-American war veteran, who was still on crutches because of wounds received while fighting in Italy against doctrines of racial discrimination.

(2) Kiyoshi Muranga, who received the second highest military medal in the U.S.A.—the DSC for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy. This native son of America died in action but the Veterans of Foreign Wars of his home town will not include his name on their list of heroes because it is of Japanese origin. The address? Gardina, California.

(3) The Hood River (Oregon) Legion post which erased from its county war memorial the names of sixteen Nisei now in the military service.

(4) The Philadelphia rapid-transit strike last summer over the hiring of colored operators, which half paralyzed the second war production center of the nation at the very time when General Eisenhower was lauding the Negro troops in his command for their valorous performance in the Army of Liberation.

(5) The refusal of the owners of Rosehill Cemetery to allow the body of Tom Y. Chan, an American gentleman of Chinese extraction, who died in Chicago recently, to be buried beside his wife who died more than twenty five years ago. Said the manager: "We cater to white people only."

(6) Racial blood segregation as the official policy of the American Red Cross. Remember the medical corps Captain who reported that Negro blood was no longer segregated? The Captain appears to have been wrong. Edward H. Cavin, "assistant administrator, general services" ARC, Hdq., Washington, declares "there has been no change in the policy."

William Allan Neilson writes: "Let us not mistakenly assume that we have won a victory in this ordeal... Hitler himself... cannot but gloat that his racial doctrine has found strong support...."

A SUGGESTION

We would second The New Yorker's suggestion that the Dumbarton Oaks plan be tried out first in New Rochelle, with the Ladies' Garden Club, the Rotary Club, and similar community organizations taking the parts of the countries involved, to see how it would work. Should the Ladies' Garden Club be allowed to veto the Rotary Club's plan to send its men to discipline the Settlement Boys' Club? Should the Dairymaids' Union have to depend on the "benevolence" of the powerful Yacht Club for its rights? Should the fact that the Rotary Club, the Yacht Club, and the Ladies' Garden Club have the richest members and therefore the best equipment entitle them to govern the smaller and poorer clubs?

THE BOOK END

For thorough and thoughtful study of the whole problem of peacetime conscription, order either or both of these new pamphlets from us:

CONSCRIPTION and CONSCIENCE, by A. J. Muste, 9 pp., 5 cents;

CONSCRIPTION, The Test of the Peace, by Norman Thomas, 13 pp., 10 cents.

And for a serious, objective analysis of the Dumbarton Oaks Plan get this combination:

The Official Text of the Plan--- 5 cents.

Delaware to Dumbarton Oaks--an analysis of the D O Plan in the light of the Federal Council's Principles--15 cents.