

# TRUMAN'S BOMB POLICY

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

*Both William Z. Foster's and Hans Berger's articles were written before Prime Minister Attlee arrived here for conferences with President Truman on the atomic bomb. Yet what Foster and Berger have to say are pertinent to the Anglo-American discussions. They raise issues which the country as a whole must face and face quickly if the disposition of the bomb is not to be left solely to the power politicians or to such limited and narrow meetings as those that have been taking place on the Potomac. The character of these conferences as well as the fact that only two leading powers of the coalition are participating intensifies fear and suspicion throughout the world that an Anglo-American combination is in the making which cannot solve the basic problems of the peace. If anything such an alliance, whatever the pretty words and platitudes that embroider it, jeopardizes collective security by undermining coalition unity and coalition policy.—The Editors.*

IN HIS Navy Day speech President Truman once again stated his policy that the secret of the atom bomb must remain within the exclusive control of the United States. Mr. Truman undertook to assure the world that this murderous war weapon is safe in the hands of this country and that, therefore, the rest of humanity should dismiss its fears on the matter and leave the bomb entirely to us.

Said the President, "The possession in our hands of the new power of destruction we regard as a sacred trust. Because of our love of peace, the thoughtful people of the world know that that trust will not be violated, that it will be faithfully executed." To further reassure peoples of other countries, Mr. Truman compared his twelve points of foreign policy with the Ten Commandments. He said also that "The foreign policy of the United States is based firmly on the fundamental principles of righteousness and justice." "Our American policy," Mr. Truman continued, "is a policy of friendly partnership with all peaceful nations, and of full support for the United Nations Organization." And the first of his twelve points of a program of foreign policy declares, "We seek no territorial expansion or selfish advantage. We have no plans of aggression against any other state, large or

small. We have no objectives which need clash with the peaceful aims of any other country."

It is indeed a very great assumption that the President makes: that our country is so fundamentally peaceful and so very unselfish in its relations with other peoples that it, rather than the United Nations, should be designated the custodian of the deadly atom bomb. But will the peoples of the world accede to this proclamation of self-righteousness on our part?

ARE WE AN ULTRA-PEACEFUL NATION?

THE advocates of the plan that the United States shall retain control of the atom bomb make very much of the assertion, as the President does, that our whole history shows us that our country and its ruling class are profoundly peaceful. The notion is that we, unlike the warlike nations of the rest of the world, never meddle aggressively in the affairs of other nations, and we never fight unless we are attacked by designing powers. Therefore, the world is asked to rest quite content in delegating the control of the atom bomb to such a fundamentally peaceful nation as ours.

Now all such argumentation, which is widely accepted by Americans, is very flattering to us as a people. Unfortunately, however, it does not correspond to the facts of our history. Actually, as a nation we have been anything but the spotless virgin of pacifism that those who want exclusive American control of the atom bomb would like to have us and the rest of the world believe. On the contrary, our national history is full of examples of American military

aggressiveness. We are a bold, pushing nation, and we have never hesitated to take up arms to fight actively for our national interests or for those causes which our ruling classes were able to convince us were in the interest of the nation. Consequently, our national history is thickly interlarded with wars, many of them distinctly on the aggressive side. It is a myth, the belief that the United States is a peculiarly pacific nation.

During the first half of our national existence three of our wars, all militantly fought, were justified wars. These were the War of Independence, which established the Republic; the War of 1812, which clinched the right of our new nation to live despite the world-tyrant, Great Britain; and the Civil War, which abolished slavery and laid the economic and political basis for a swift growth of our national life. Although these were just wars, they were all fought with such vigor that surely our enemies had no grounds for believing that we were notably a pacifist people.

Besides the foregoing, we have had a whole series of other wars, these definitely aggressive in character. First, there may be mentioned the innumerable Indian wars, extending over 150 years, and during which the white man, in one of the most ruthless drives in world history, shattered the red man's society, impounded him in a few scattered reservations, and seized a continent's control. Then there was the Mexican War of 1848. This was a war of naked conquest, in which the rapidly expanding United States simply tore away from Mexico the rich prize of Texas and the Southwest.

The Spanish-American War of 1898 was also a war of aggression on our part. Although historically, the elimination of the rotten Spanish empire from this continent and the Far East was a step forward; nevertheless, we satisfied our budding imperialist ambitions by stripping Spain of the Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico, and gobbling them up ourselves, a course which provoked a resistance among these peoples which still continues: also in our record of aggressive wars were the many armed incursions we made during the following thirty years into various Latin American



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countries, including Panama, Mexico, Haiti, Nicaragua, etc. These warlike attacks upon our weaker neighbors to the south of us, not to mention our general political policy of interference in the internal affairs of Latin America generally, have by no means cultivated in these peoples the conviction that the United States, by grace of its inherent pacifism, has been chosen by history for exclusive control over the atom bomb.

Then there was our active role in World War I. This was a titanic struggle among the great imperialist powers, including the United States, for a re-division of the world to suit themselves. While Germany was actually the military aggressor, the other big powers definitely shared in the responsibility for precipitating the war by their imperialistic maneuverings for power. The United States emerged as the real capitalist victor in this great war. It was transformed from a debtor to a creditor nation, and generally it was given a big impetus on its imperialist course of development.

Finally, there was our part in the great World War only now concluded. While this was a just war, a war of national liberation, and a fight of the peoples of the world against fascist enslavement, this fact must not, however, make us ignore the war's imperialist beginnings. It was preceded by a whole series of imperialist plottings among the great powers, in which maneuverings the United States played an active part. The world has not forgotten the deadly appeasement of Hitlerite Germany and military Japan, which set the world stage for World War II. All through the war, too, although the American people fought to destroy the fascist monster, the great monopolies and trusts of our country never lost sight of their imperialist interests. And now that the war has been won, these elements are trying to rob the world's peoples of their democratic victory and turn it into a triumph for American imperialism.

#### HAVE WE A NON-AGGRESSIVE FOREIGN POLICY?

WITH the foregoing hastily sketched war record of national expansion and aggressive imperialism behind us, it is indeed assuming a bit too much, as Mr. Truman and others do, to expect that the nations of the world should look upon the United States, with its supposedly inherent pacifism, as the history-chosen sole guardian of the atom bomb secret for the protection of all mankind.

Nor are these nations inspired to place confidence in us as the atom bomb trustees any more by our present foreign policies than they are by our aggressive war record as a people. It is simply absurd to expect the peoples of the world to believe President Truman when he declares that American foreign policy "is based firmly on the fundamental principles of righteousness and justice" and that we have no other desire than to further the general welfare of humanity all over the globe. For these peoples must observe the fact, which is as plain as a pikestaff, that the United States, which has emerged from this war as the most powerful capitalist country in the world, is now busily trying to utilize its great strength, in the face of the war-weakened condition of many other countries, to maneuver itself into a position to enforce its imperial will throughout the world.

In whichever direction one turns the imperialist policy of the United States is manifest. There was Mr. Truman's Navy Day speech, which despite its unctuous platitudes, served clear notice upon the world that henceforth the United States government, breaking with the cooperative policies associated with the name of Roosevelt, is committed to a policy of American expansion. There is the eternal boasting in the press and on the radio that the United States is now the strongest country in the world and is, in fact, leading the world. There are also such policies as those of "getting tough" with the USSR, intervening in the Chinese civil war, attempting to recreate the notorious *cordon sanitaire* of reactionary states along the borders of the USSR, protecting the interests of reactionary forces in Germany and Japan, etc. And the attempt to monopolize the atom bomb and to use it to menace the world is, in itself, an imperialist move of major significance.

The peoples of the world would indeed be politically blind if they did not recognize the foregoing and many other American foreign policies as so many facets of the present very vigorous push of American imperialism for a position of world dominance. And such a recognition on their part is certainly not going to encourage them to leave the vitally important atom bomb to the exclusive control of the United States.

#### WORLD CONTROL OF THE ATOM BOMB IMPERATIVE

THE whole logic of the situation is that other nations, instead of calmly relegating the control of the atom bomb

to the world's greatest imperialist power, one that is now clearly striving for world domination, will spare no means to get control of the atom bomb themselves.

On the one hand they will strive to have the United Nations secure jurisdiction over the bomb, and on the other hand they will, if they have sufficient resources, bend every effort toward manufacturing the bomb themselves. Great Britain is already moving on both these fronts, and it is hardly likely that the USSR is asleep on the matter.

The attempt of the United States to monopolize the atom bomb, a major weapon of offense, is supremely reactionary. It is a great damage to our national interest as well as to that of the rest of the world. It is a major cause for the present crisis in the United Nations, and this crisis threatens to become graver unless the United States shows internationally a more cooperative attitude regarding the atom bomb and its own foreign policies generally.

The effort of this country to keep the bomb solely in its own possession is a profound vote of no-confidence in our former war allies and also a heavy blow at the whole structure and future of the United Nations.

THE Truman bomb policy is as stupid as it is reactionary. The hopes of the imperialists that they can exercise their atom bomb control over a period of at least five or ten years, during which time they plan to reorganize the world to suit their own greedy interests, are as futile as a house built on sand. As for the so-called secret of the bomb remaining unknown for any considerable length of time, this is ridiculous. The other great powers very probably have already mastered the "secret," or are on the eve of doing so. And as for the supposed prohibitive cost of producing the bomb (in our case \$2,000,000,000) as a bar to its production by other nations, this too, like the time element, will prove an illusion. Indeed, many experts are now saying that countries desiring to manufacture the bomb, if they profit from our pioneering experience, could do so for one-fifth, or less, of what we spent.

Obviously, therefore, the atom bomb must be internationalized, placed under the control of the Security Council, and completely outlawed as a weapon of war. The scientists of the United States, almost unanimous in this stand, are profoundly correct. So are the CIO and many other progressive organizations

and individuals who think likewise. The alternative to internationalizing the atom bomb is to create an acute world situation which might well ruin the prospects for democracy, peace and prosperity for which this great war was

fought. The money-mad imperialists of this country must not be allowed to use the atom bomb as a weapon in their ruthless drive for world dominion. The American people must let their powerful voice be heard in this decisive matter.

The fight to control the atom bomb, whether for war by a handful of power-hungry monopolists, or for peace by the organized peoples of the world, is one of the most fateful struggles of our revolutionary times.