

# Four Poems

## Four Frescoes of the Future

Multitude and no tumult: a maze on march,  
Slow march, strong body and heart bowed down,  
And head bowed down to the solitude of the dead,  
Brutish grief down trodden under march of feet,  
Death put down with the dead, and grief put down. . . .

Then an end, an end to this. Say enough, return  
Nourish, tend, to work, to shop, return  
In the name of the living, in the name of our span.

Multitude and no tumult; sweet gusts of song  
Floating, delirious hope, pure notes; so sing  
Song, chiming and climbing chain. As no one sang  
Alone, aloft in the old days. This chant our lore  
Our love, our will, our bold blithe gale of sound. . . .

Then an end, an end to this; singing, return.  
Nourish, tend, to work, to shop, return  
In the name of the living, in the name of our span.

Multitude and no tumult: galleries intent—  
Men in great congress, active in applause,  
The agile argues, the logical man again  
Utters, exhorts, expands and again expounds,  
Pauses. Applause. O orator, reply!

Then an end, an end to this; disperse, return  
Nourish, tend, to work, to shop, return  
In the name of the living, in the name of our span.

Multitude and no tumult. Long frolick lines,  
O gaiety of wind; child flung in foam to swim.  
Races and feats, games, parachutes, flags;  
Roar for the athlete trim and brown as bronze,  
O festivals, O spectacles, enchant, enchant—encore!

Then an end, an end to this. Pick up, go home.  
Nourish, tend, to work, to shop, return  
In the name of the living. In the name of our span.

GENEVIEVE TAGGARD.

## Names

There, in the cities, with the high-sounding beautiful names:  
Manhattan, the island, tall and river-dampened,  
Chicago, Cincinnati,  
The rich and sea-washed San Francisco town,  
In the coast and inland cities,  
In the beautiful cities, there,  
Low among the towers,  
The thronged men gather.

Withdrawn, and stripped of a way to use their hands,  
Alone they wander.  
Stunned by the onslaught of intolerable hours  
Their hearts no longer quicken to the siege of light.  
They gaze in the glare of dawn on the blackened docks,  
They stare at the mist of morning lifting from the river docks,  
Ensnared in their need, in the shadow of walls, they stand,  
The strong men, lonely, dismantled of wonder,  
Their hearts gone still against the beautiful city.

GLADYS M. LA FLAMME.

## American Etiquette

The "American" Legion, banker-led,  
Drums through a street in Miami,  
Belgrano usurer at the head:—  
Hats *on*, the flag is passing by!

Whether to uncover  
Depends,  
Not upon the Flag itself,  
But upon *who* shows it.

If that be some Tory-buffaloed group willing to abolish the  
Bill of Rights for further benefit of the plutes,  
Then keep your hat on—  
From respect for what did serve the Jeffersonian majority and  
what does stand today against complete fascism.

If the Obvious be used by militant A.F. of L. unionists, or by  
Utopian Leaguers, or by the Farmer-Labor Party—  
Well now, let's see,  
A matter for calm judgment . . .  
Yes, you might uncover without first consulting Emily Post.

But when the Same must be shown by out-and-out Reds  
(evolved Jeffersonians),—  
Then decisively  
Off with the hat,  
Though you be bald as Lenin! (applause)

H. H. LEWIS.

## They Take Their Stand

(For the Dixie Agrarians)

Some poets live in Dixie Land  
Who never to themselves have said,  
We'll wash the star dust off our hand  
And wipe the cobwebs from our head.

In books so learned they have writ  
Praise to a system dead and gone,  
And like old Buddha, here they sit,  
Proclaiming how they mope alone.

In Dixie Land they take their stand  
Turning the wheels of history back  
For murder, lynch, and iron hand  
To drive the Negro from his shack.

They never delve in politics,  
It's all too common place, they say.  
Their thought must go to subtle tricks  
That fit such noble gents as they.

In Dixie Land there's many an ass  
Clamoring loud in every school  
But never sees the growing grass  
That might be eat by any mule.

Come sift the star dust off their stars.  
See coal dumps where our children play—  
They sing of ancient Greece and Mars,  
We'll show them starving kids to-day.

DON WEST.

# Capital's Fight for a Draft Law

WALTER WILSON

**T**HE war mongers who have been fighting and maneuvering so desperately in the present Congress to secure a draft law are in for a real battle and a decisive defeat if the issues can be isolated and presented clearly to the great masses of the American people. Here is something that will stir the workers and farmers into action. It is just as dangerous for the advocate of conscription to talk draft to them as for anyone to prick a sleeping lion with a thorn.

The Administration tacitly admitted its weak and unpopular position on this subject when it resorted to subterfuge in endeavoring to pass its draft law. The militarists and imperialists from William Randolph Hearst to Franklin D. Roosevelt know that the masses would not allow an out-and-out draft bill to become law. So under cover of wanting "to take profits out of war" the war mongers sought the most drastic conscription law ever proposed in any country. They sought to out-Hitler Hitler in the matter of forcible conscription for the army and for industry. The story back of this is a long one covering the entire post-war period.

Immediately after the World War the General Staff, the War Department and militarists in general were entirely happy for they supposed that they'd always be cocks of the walk. For two years or more they had been gods; they could not even imagine that their importance could ever be deflated. They developed grandiose ideas about a huge standing army in peace time with which to maneuver and bulldoze the world; a system of compulsory military training in peace time for all males upon reaching the age of 18; and about a peacetime draft-law as the basis upon which to plan for the next war. They were rudely awakened when the American people almost unanimously turned thumbs down on all these proposals. Says Charles A. Beard: "With an alacrity that astonished all super-patriots, the country at large repudiated the efforts of General Pershing and other army officers, supported by active propaganda on the part of civic associations, to establish universal military service." The army was quickly reduced to 125,000 men (since that time however and especially under the New Deal the militarists have been able gradually to build up a machinery for war by such moves as abolishing the militia system and making it a part of the regular army, by establishing C.C.C. camps, etc.)

Imperialist wars cannot be waged without some form of impressment of man power. What good is the most elaborate war machine without common soldiers to operate it? Unless there is a draft law, enforced by all

the legal and physical powers of the government and the ruling classes, an army cannot be raised for such a war. Without a harsh draft law the government and the imperialists could not get a shirt-tail full of volunteers within a mile of a recruiting station. The volunteer method was experimented with early in the World War and it proved a total flop, before the draft was resorted to. So the Administration is put into the position where it has to have the draft if it wants to take the country into another war of conquest; yet the people won't stomach the draft knowingly. Wall Street orders preparedness; there can be no preparedness without conscription. Thus the problem.

At this point the bright boys in the Army War College, the ex-colonels at the head of the American Legion and others come on the stage. They have a formula for solving the Wall Street-Administration draft problem. Their formula is quite simple. The people want peace; they are against war. Right? Very well, let us find a fake plan for "guaranteeing peace" and then quietly tack a draft law to it. In the campaign for its passage emphasize the "peace" provisions and soft-pedal any mention of the draft. The dumb potential cannon fodder won't catch on until they are in uniform.

The plan hit upon was that of "taking profits out of war." No profits, no war, says the preparedness advocate. Let us have the "universal draft"; let us conscript the dollar as we conscript the man. The whole scheme had been thought out very well. It was well timed too. The Nye Committee findings, seemingly a handicap, were turned to good advantage. Just when the people were shocked at the revelations of the grafting, waste, thieving, collusion, bribing, profiteering . . . of munitions makers and other business men in the World War—just when the interest in this reached its climax—out came the militarists, headed by the President, with their "peace" plan.

The American Legion's old plan of the Universal Draft (for this is the "profits out of war" plan) was given enormous prestige when President Roosevelt spread his endorsement of it on the front pages of almost every conservative and liberal paper in this country in glaring headlines for perhaps a hundred million readers to see. The war-time orgy of profiteering must never happen again he said. Workers, farmers and Wall Street business men, he declared, must never again make millions out of war while the poor soldiers are getting a dollar a day in the trenches. To prevent it, conscript property, labor and soldiers. He announced the ap-

pointment of a committee of "well-known opponents of war and profiteering," including among others Bernard Baruch, Wall Street gambler and multi-millionaire, Hugh S. Johnson, one of those chiefly responsible for the law impressing 4,000,000 young Americans into the army in 1917-18, and General Douglas MacArthur, hero of the Bonus Army eviction in 1932, to work out bills incorporating the President's ideas on "taking profits out of war" and "guaranteeing peace."

The McSwain Bill was the result. Analyze this bill. Does it mean to take profits out of war? Its sponsors know that it does not. They themselves are on record as being opposed to any idea of conscripting property because such a law would be clearly unconstitutional; they do not propose the necessary constitutional amendment which would legalize laws to conscript property in war time. The chief backers of this legislation are on record of favoring a guaranteed profit for business in war-time of at least 6 percent to 100 percent and more. They know that the price-fixing device has been tried in every American war with total lack of success. Old Pelatiah Webster, one of the fathers of the U. S. Constitution, once said that attempts to limit war-time prices had always been as ineffectual as "water dropping on a blacksmith's forge." We had both price-fixing and "excess-profits taxes" in the World War, yet 21,000 new millionaires emerged from that conflict. The American people who are going to benefit by the next imperialist war will also have control of law enforcement and it makes a lot of difference who has the power to enforce or ignore a law. (The classic example is Section 7A of the N.R.A.) Hugh S. Johnson says you must give capital a wage in war-time or else it won't work. The New York World-Telegram in an editorial of April 19, 1935, said: "We doubt the ability of Congress to 'take profits out of war,' since our national economy is based on profits."

One feature of legislation which has been proposed for taking profits out of war is that it conceals from the people the real causes of imperialist wars; the desire for control of world markets, colonies and dominance over smaller countries.

The features we are most concerned with here, however, are conscription of labor and soldiers. The legislation backed by the Administration and the militarists generally would make the President absolute dictator in time of war or in times when he declared war "imminent." At such times he could, at his discretion and with the advice