



The Legion Prepares for War

By MARCUS DUFFIELD

The American Legion, powerful instrument of ex-service men, having achieved the bonus loans which cost the government more than a billion dollars, is now bracing itself for another big-navy battle in the next Congress. Mr. Duffield shows the methods of the Legion officials in bringing pressure to bear and in acting as civil arm of the War Department.

PRESIDENT HOOVER has called attention to the fact that the United States is spending more on armament for future wars than any European nation—more in toto and more per capita—and that while other countries of the world are spending about the same as they did before the war, this country is spending about three times as much as it did. This rather startling increase in our war budget is not entirely attributable to the efforts of our War and Navy Departments. War Departments always have sought to get more appropriations, because it is their business. But now they have back of them and working with them for the first time a large and influential body of citizenry. For the American Legion has constituted itself a gigantic war department of 800,000 members, which carries on throughout the country a campaign for big army, big navy, and the strongest air force in the world.

The American Legion feels that the United States must reconcile itself to the fact that the world has only "signed an armistice," as one of its commanders publicly declared; and that this country should take advantage of the present international lull in fighting to build up

its martial forces. Such foresight would be doubly wise, it feels: by becoming thoroughly formidable in defense, this country would serve the cause of peace through discouraging other nations from attacking, and thus delaying the inevitable conflict; and, secondly, we should be laying the groundwork to come out on top of the heap.

There is, however, a considerable group of people who differ from this plan of peace, and they cannot be ignored, because among them are noteworthy world figures such as H. G. Wells, John Dewey, Albert Einstein, Selma Lagerlof, Jane Addams, and Rabindranath Tagore. They all signed a peace manifesto saying that the world's arming, in which the United States leads the way, seems to them inconsistent with the various international pacts outlawing war; that instead of training youth for war, we should be educating the newer generation to thoughts of peace and ways of utilizing and improving upon the various methods of pacific adjudication which have been worked out among the nations; that "the time has come when every sincere lover of peace should demand the abolition of military training of youth and should

deny the right of governments to impose conscription."

People whose minds run like this—against whom the Legion, of course, has sternly set its face—have evolved a philosophy of peace which lays great stress on psychological factors. They feel that it is impossible to be striving for peace and at the same time training and planning for war. They feel, to apply this philosophy, that if a great nationwide organization numbering 12,000 posts, as does the Legion, throws itself into a campaign for war preparation, it tends to shut out from the mind of the nation that will to peace which is regarded as indispensable in eliminating war from the world.

Such thinkers hold that the method of arming more heavily than one's neighbor is an old-fashioned way of promoting peace, which has not proved itself entirely successful, but on the contrary has actually fostered the war spirit in the past in Europe. They point out that the more any one nation arms, the more alarmed its neighbors become; that an atmosphere of suspicion is cultivated, rather than an attitude of trust which smooths the way toward arbitration of frictions. They are apt to cite, for example, the emphasis with which English newspapers displayed President Hoover's mention of our rather large war budget. They add that no matter how pure a nation's motives may be in building up armaments, there is an almost inevitable tendency to begin picturing a foe, and talking about it, which does not help good feeling. Brigadier-General John Ross Delafield, former chairman of the Legion's Defense Committee, for instance, assured a patriotic gathering in New York City that Soviet Russia would attack when its five-year plan was achieved.

Thus the issue is drawn between the advocates of two very different routes

to the common goal. There are those, on the one hand, who urge the building of a mass desire for peace. They run the risk of being labelled pacifists. On the other hand, there are those who favor, also in the cause of peace, building a war machine. They run the risk of being confused with chauvinists.

The fact that the American Legion has chosen the latter route is of special interest because of its great power in the nation. The power already has been demonstrated by the facility with which the Legion's political lobby in Washington moved Congress to rush through the so-called bonus bill last spring increasing the loan payments to veterans. This suggests that the Legion's choice of a route to peace is likely to be the nation's choice. Therefore it would seem worth while to examine the details and consider the wisdom of such a method.

II

The American Legion, freed of matters of more immediate concern to itself, has now set itself definitely to the task of making America ready for the next war. Without ceasing to mention its hope for peace, the Legion is pursuing the matter of preparedness with a comprehensive efficiency as remarkable as its driving force.

A government committee appointed by President Hoover, composed of four cabinet members, two senators and two representatives, is studying at the present time plans for a universal draft, and is under instruction to report its findings to Congress when that body convenes for the new session in December. The story back of the creation of that committee is a story, not without its element of the dramatic, of a ten-year struggle on the part of the American Legion, now slowly coming to fruition.

In 1921 the annual national conven-

tion of the Legion heard a proposal that a plan of nation-wide preparedness be drawn up by the organization. The proposal met with favor, and the national commander appointed a committee to look into the matter.

The personnel of the committee is interesting in several ways. When the Legionnaires were fresh from the war, they did not have a kindly feeling for the military régime in general. A note of antagonism crept into a resolution in the first national convention in 1919 which called for "a thorough house-cleaning of the inefficient officers and methods of our entire military establishment." This did not augur well for co-operation between the Legion and the War Department. Yet by 1921 when the important Legion committee for universal draft was appointed, it turned out to be composed mostly of army officers directly under the orders of the War Department. The members were Colonel George E. Leach, Major-General Hanson E. Ely, Major-General Edward L. Logan, Colonel Arthur F. Crosby, Brigadier-General John McA. Palmer, Colonel Oswald McNeese, and Colonel D. John Markey. Possibly old differences had been forgotten.

This committee was an important milestone marking the progress of cordial, even intimate, relations between the Legion and the War Department. Several factors contributed to the alliance. In the years immediately following the war there was a reaction through the country which led to a wave of what amounted almost to pacifism. Peace conferences and arms reductions were in the air, and business, from the point of view of the War and Navy Departments, fell off; young men were not so eager to enlist in the services. Something had to be done, and the War Department no doubt was wise enough to realize that the American Legion,

with its widely placed posts and its increasing political power, could be a very useful collaborator. Then, too, there is a human element: if an ex-private and five generals are on a committee together, in all likelihood there will be a tendency for the private to speak softly. Although the Legion officially drops rank and title among members, its standing committees on military, naval, air, and defense affairs are usually men of great experience, and frequently in active service.

At any rate, when the Legion committee reported, it produced an elaborate plan for universal draft, which had the endorsement of the Army General Staff. The plan called for a law giving the President power to control material resources and industrial organizations of the nation and fix prices not only in war time, but when war was imminent, and to draft everybody, setting some to work and some to fight. This seemed good to the Legion, for it was presented as a means of making the whole nation take part without profit to any one and without putting the whole burden of sacrifice on the soldiers. So it was adopted and has been one of the Legion's major objectives ever since. It was originally, and still is, put forward to the nation as a scheme to promote peace, on the ground that it would eliminate the profiteering incentive to war and make war generally disagreeable all around. So attractive has universal draft been made to sound that one prominent editor suggested awarding it the Bok Peace Prize. This was perhaps the first time that a War Department project had ever been mentioned for a peace prize.

For the Legion universal draft plan is in essence a project of the General Staff. The core of the plan is the provision for immediate conscription on the outbreak of war, to do away with the delay of the volunteer system which has been the

pride—or the folly—of this country since the Declaration of Independence. Secretaries of War long have been pleading with Congress to enact a conscription law, but Congress never would assume the responsibility of doing so in time of peace. The present Secretary of War, a Legionnaire, has announced that he has withdrawn his department's standing request with Congress for a conscription law—he will rest on hope of obtaining action on a plan such as that of the Legion.

Persistently and shrewdly through the years the Legion has been pushing its universal draft. First it was drawn up as a bill, by Legionnaires in Congress, and the Legion engineered hearing after hearing, but Congress refused time and again to pass it.

When the Legion finally succeeded in getting Congress to authorize the present committee to investigate the subject, the House eliminated, in its resolution, the consideration of the conscription of labor, and authorized the committee to proceed with the study of drafting property and soldiers. The Senate thereupon passed the resolution, eliminating the study of the use of private property without profit during wartime. The part about conscripting soldiers remained.

III

The Legion has many other plans for our army, some of which have already met with success, while others remain to be pushed. The National Defense Act of 1920, probably the most comprehensive plan this country has had, embodied many of the suggestions offered by the then infant though willing Legion. Later it mentioned that this law "came into existence through the united effort of the ex-service men." Having thus assisted at the birth, the Legion has re-

garded the Defense Act rather in the light of an adopted child, and assumed responsibility for its career. "The successful development of the army," said the second national convention, "particularly that of the National Guard and organized reserves, depends largely on the continued efforts and wholehearted co-operation of the American Legion."

The "wholehearted co-operation" has consisted primarily in urging more appropriations every time Congress meets. The War Department, seeking the nation's funds for its work, finds itself no longer a voice crying in the wilderness. It is joined by a chorus thousands strong shouting into the sensitive ears of Congressmen through the Legion's political lobby in Washington.

At times the Legion even outdoes the General Staff in zeal for preparedness, as exemplified by "two smashing victories," as the lobby reported, in the seventieth Congress. The War Department allowed Congress to cut down the number of reserve officers to be trained by the government from 20,000 to 16,000, and cut down the appropriation for national rifle matches so that they could be held only every alternate year instead of every year. The Legion lobby urged the House Appropriations Committee to be more liberal with government funds, but failed to prevail, and the fight was carried to the floor of the House. After the lobby chief, as he reported, "addressed a letter to each Member of the House calling attention to the situation and asking co-operation in favor of the Legion's amendments," the bill passed both the House and the Senate by large majorities. "So the Legion won on both counts"—the 4,000 extra officers were trained, and \$500,000 more spent on rifle matches.

"The Legion Committee on Military Affairs," its report to the 1928 convention began, "with few exceptions has

supported recommendations for appropriations and legislation requested by the Secretary of War for all the components of the Army of the United States. The Committee has also co-operated with the National Guard Association, Reserve Officers' Association, and National Rifle Association in furthering special military policies requested by these organizations." These organizations must indeed find the Legion a boon.

The matter of rifle matches is a favorite issue. The Legion's first demand was for universal military training for all young men, but this proposal was so foreign to American tradition, savored so much of the militaristic European system, that even the Legion's power was insufficient to force it through Congress. It has not been forgotten, however. As a substitute, the Legion has bent its efforts toward making this a country of expert rifle shots. "We recommend," said the 1929 convention, "a progressive programme for training the youth of our nation in rifle marksmanship as a substantial contribution to the national defense." In accordance with this, each of the 12,000 Legion posts is urged to sponsor a rifle club in its community, and the Legion likewise is forming rifle teams of its own members to take part in the national matches at Camp Perry every year, and to shoot against foreign teams from the FIDAC.

Perhaps the most ambitious military endeavor of the Legion has been brought to flower within the last year. The Legion noted the difficulty of getting sufficient Congressional appropriations for the Citizens' Military Training Camps throughout the country, which, it feels, should prepare 50,000 young men each summer to fight the next war. Shrewdly the Legion hit upon the idea that if thousands more men than could be accommodated in the camps were to

apply each year, then Congress would be persuaded that there was a wide demand among its constituents. So the Legion systematically has set about constituting itself a vast recruiting agency for the C. M. T. C. A volunteer organization has been constructed to parallel the army system, with a chairman in charge of each army corps area, corresponding to its general. The chairman directs the work of each post in his district in tempting the young men of the neighborhood to enroll, by picturing the personal pleasures and patriotic necessity of subjecting themselves to military drill in their holidays.

If the youth of America isn't ready to take up arms at a moment's notice, surely it will not be the fault of the Legion.

IV

A further step in the American Legion's campaign to insure peace by preparing for the next war is the drive for a big navy. This effort is no doubt responsible for a part of the United States' trebled post-war armaments budget. The Legion has insistently demanded in virtually every session of Congress more:

submarines
airplanes
naval bases
cruisers
small ships
men

and bigger:

fortifications
merchant marine
reserves
guns
war games

Put war plans on every American merchant vessel! the Legion demands. Modernize our antiquated battle-ships! Raise the elevation of our guns! Train

our merchant crews for war! Lest their motive be misunderstood, the Legion explains that "to maintain the navy's proper ratio under the 5-5-3 treaty, and to keep it properly manned and equipped, is our best and cheapest guaranty of national peace. . . ."

The Legion was sorely tried in 1928 when "enemies of American safety" struck a "decisive blow at national defense" by getting Congress to reduce the number of new cruisers to be constructed to fifteen. This was despite the testimony of E. E. Spafford, national commander, before the House Naval Affairs Committee that the signers of the 5-5-3 Treaty had constructed 300 vessels, of which only sixteen were built by the United States, and that "we have dropped from first to about third place."

President Hoover went a step too far, the Legion felt, when in the following year he suspended building on three of the ships. He gave that order after Ramsay MacDonald's visit to America as a reply to the British prime minister's order that work be halted on two British ships. The press and the public both in England and America rejoiced at this sign of tangible will to curtail naval rivalry. Not the Legion. "The Legion protests," telegraphed its national commander, Paul V. McNutt, "against any action by the Chief Executive to prevent in any way the regaining by the United States of its lost naval parity with England." Even if England had stopped building two cruisers, he said, the United States would still be 75,000 tons short when all its fifteen were finished. He reminded Mr. Hoover of "the one-sided sacrifice which resulted from the United States' zeal for peace at the Washington Conference when our scrapping of the most modern battle-fleet in the world led to our present cruiser inferiority."

The President replied to this rebuke

by referring to problems of peace "far more intricate and difficult than can be solved by the simple formula you suggest," and pointed out that "by constant expansion of naval strength we cannot fail to stimulate fear and ill will throughout the rest of the world toward both of us."

This fall the Legion is bracing itself for another big-navy battle in Washington. It feels that our navy has been allowed to fall below the allotment provided by the London Naval Conference of last year. No sooner had the Legion succeeded in putting through the bonus bill last spring than the capital lobby directed its great energies toward urging more navy building, but it was too late in the session to accomplish anything further. The public may soon expect statements to the press and speeches throughout the country by Legion leaders who will stress our naval weakness and the need to build; the Congressional committeemen may expect to be buttonholed by Legion lobbyists; and every representative and senator may expect to be deluged with Legion letters from all corners of the nation.

V

So convinced has the Legion become that its own virile route to peace is the only right route, that it has come to regard as bitter foes those who sponsor meeker methods.

Dotted through the records of the Legion lobby in Washington are items headed in italics: "Legislation Defeated." These contain the pithy stories of how the Legion crushed what it regarded as the misguided efforts of "pacifists" to obtain legislative gestures against war. The Legion is inclined to feel that such gestures are not always even well-meaning, and to suspect that they have some obscure sinister intent. Hence the

name "pacifist," certainly not discreditable by derivation, has become in the Legion's eyes—and through it and other patriotic societies, to a certain extent in the nation's eyes—a term of opprobrium, to be bracketed with "bolshhevik," "radical," and "intellectual." Although some of the people who differ from the Legion as to method of peace promotion are doubtless not actually dangerous characters, still it will be difficult to discriminate between fine shades of opinion when the next war breaks out, so the Legion feels it might as well lump them all together now as unpatriotic.

Ever alert in Washington, the Legion lobbyists keep watch on these treasonable efforts and when necessary leap into politics to save Congress from being hoodwinked into overly pacific moves. For example, the Legion found that Representative Welsh had introduced a bill providing for awarding diplomas in certain of our land-grant colleges to students who had not drilled. Now this is a sore point; the Legion has been to some pains to scotch a movement among college students of the country to throw off compulsory military training. The Legion insists that a college president who responds to such student demand must be disciplined by immediate withdrawal of any government aid he may be getting. If the Welsh Bill had gone through, removing the requirements of military courses for graduation, an entering wedge would have been driven, and there is no telling how rampant pacifism might have run among the nation's students once they were free to elect or reject military training. Therefore, the Legion lobby applied what detractors are wont to call the thumb-screw on Congress, and the Welsh Bill was killed.

The lobby was almost caught napping on the Burton Resolution. Mr. Burton felt that one way to make wars less prof-

itable, less extensive, and perhaps less attractive would be for the United States to lead the way among nations in forbidding its manufacturers from capitalizing on war by exporting munitions to whatever other nations might be fighting. The Legion lobby afterward reported that this "innocent-looking resolution" was virtually sneaked into Congress and scheduled for unanimous consent passage "with only a handful of members in the House." In the nick of time the lobby called a halt and pleaded for delay, pointing out that if the United States didn't keep its hand in, making guns and bullets, we certainly should be inept making them when the next war came.

Telegrams were sent to Legionnaires through the country to bring pressure on their Congressmen, National Commander Spafford rushed to Washington, and a meeting of the Legion National Defense Committee was called under the shadow of the Capitol. This stalwart group, composed of a captain, a colonel, three generals, and a civilian, quickly placed itself "on record as being unalterably opposed" to the passage of the Burton Resolution.

The menace of this bill faded, and toward the end of the session, as the lobby reported with a sigh of relief, "it was apparent that due to the Legion's opposition and the opposition of those in the national capital who were interested in national defense that (*sic*) the Burton Resolution was a dead letter."

Mr. Burton has been quite a trouble to the Legion, for it had to mobilize its legislation-quashing machine on another occasion because of his penchant for peace gestures. Back in 1922 the use of poison gas was prohibited as too horrible a weapon by a section of the Washington Arms Conference agreement. This was ratified by the United States and by other nations, but did not be-

come effective because France rejected that section on account of a provision about submarines. Four years later, Mr. Burton brought the issue of poison gas into the Geneva Conference, to which he was an American delegate, and the representatives of forty-four countries agreed to bar its use. He anticipated no difficulty in obtaining Senate ratification of the Geneva Protocol; in fact, the consent was on the point of being gained when the Legion objected.

The lobby noted that the sentiment to ratify was "fostered mostly by the group of pacifists who have as their ultimate object the elimination of war entirely," and summoned nationwide help against such extremists. Twenty-five thousand copies of a pamphlet were sent out presenting the argument that America must not relinquish poison gas because it was one of the most humane weapons of warfare, and besides it would help bring wars to a speedy termination, instantly crippling whole armies without necessarily killing them. Pressure was brought to bear at all points, agitation continued for months as only the Legion knows how, and the protocol prohibiting poison gas was never ratified.

There was an odd little sequel. Representative Hamilton Fish discovered and mentioned in Congress that the head of the Legion lobby all the while had also served as treasurer of an association of chemical officials which, he suggested, was carrying on propaganda financed by chemical industries to defeat the Geneva Protocol. This evidence of its lobbyist's serving in a double rôle did not disturb the Legion. It evidently regarded the National Association of Chemical Defense as a brother patriotic society.

Occupied as it is in building up the nation's armaments for the next war, the Legion has had little interest in helping along the major moves toward

world peace in which the government has from time to time indulged. There will be plenty of time for that later. "While we are all interested," as the Legion lobby remarked, "in the reduction of armament and the subsequent elimination of war, we know that this is an ideal that is only for the future, and in the meantime the American Legion is definitely aware of the steps being taken to interfere with our own national defense programme by the pacifists who seem to hold sway for the moment."

Peace gestures, in fact, are regarded circumspectly by the Legion. It is never quite sure when our country will venture a little too far; doubts assail it as to the safety of the nation in the hands even of official delegations to international conferences that are openly anti-war in purpose.

"Resolved," resolved the tenth convention, "that the national defense committee of the American Legion recommends to the President that at all international peace, disarmament or similar conferences involving the question of national security in which the United States is a participant or has an observer, official or otherwise, the American Legion be accorded a representative at such international conferences."

For a few years the Legion advocated adherence to the World Court, but it dropped that stand as too controversial. As for the Kellogg Treaty, it is all right in its way, if we do not take it too seriously. It won a lukewarm endorsement in the San Antonio convention, but the resolution hastened to add that "we desire that the American Legion make it clear to our people that the approval of this treaty does not in any way guarantee peace." This led up to a warning against reducing our military establishment.

The Legion sees the olive branch through a mass of oak foliage.



CALL IT A DAY

By EDWARD SHENTON

By his drawings, Mr. Shenton has enhanced the unique quality of an already noteworthy story. So effective is the use of two mediums by the author-artist that it caused us to depart from our custom of not publishing illustrations. The story takes its place in the distinguished series of short novels which is appearing in SCRIBNER'S. Although written about the war, "Call It a Day" is written from a new point of view and by use of an unusual technic. The result is a peculiarly personal story—one in which the individual human spirit is the core.

I

Corporal Wakely: *Dawn.*

THE rain continued as the division moved forward. Thirty thousand men shouldering the rain-weighted darkness; men, indistinct, shapeless; endless men surging out of the rain-dark nothingness, vanishing into the empty black pit of the rain-blackness. The earth a jelly beneath; the heavens liquid above. Men coming and coming until they were only an upflowing of shadows from dark into dark. The night moving and moaning in one vast sound made from a million sounds; a continuous sighing resolved from words, oaths, gasps, breathing, shouts, orders, feet in the mud, wheels, hoofs, tires, axles, equipment, cloth, weariness, excitement

... the whole black earth arising in shapes of men, rolling on through the slime along the raw torn shoulders of the land. Men no longer, except as each one kept a tight hold upon his own dissolving identity. Blind, unimpassioned, forward-sweeping, the full tide of nameless, no-more men.

A fragment of the tide, Perc Wakely was filled with a brief moment of wonder. The world was in motion and he moved with it, borne on a fierce exultation; the cumulative illusion of nations of men at war. The actual battle with its shocking reality lay far away in unimaginable space. Let the drugged mind remain unanticipating, trapped by the mystic horde of on-moving shadows of men. Let to-morrow's dead feel the strength of the countless dim columns