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# Duty of the Working Class Today.

by Adolph Germer †

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The paramount duty of the American working class today is to counteract the pernicious doctrine of pro-Militarism that is spread throughout the land. No trick is left untried, no opportunity overlooked to blind the people with the nightmare of invasion in order that the vested interests can put over their armament steal.

The schools, churches, civic and fraternal organizations, theaters, movies — in short, everything where people congregate, are invaded, and the murder mania is spread.

We felt perfectly safe until the war broke out in Europe. Since that time the press and every other agency at the command of the armament ring have pounced upon us until we can see nothing but an invasion by bleeding and crippled nations.

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The campaign to increase the army and navy appropriations serves a double purpose.

So long as our vision is focused upon an alleged foe abroad, the foe at home — the kings of industry — can carry on their work of exploitation and robbery without detection and interference. They can continue to murder our sisters and brothers in mills, shops, factories, mines, railroads, etc., etc., through failure to comply with protective labor laws and augment their fortunes and keep them in idleness while we are looking abroad.

The other purpose the campaign serves is to swell the fortunes of those who traffic in military supplies. That the dealers in military materials are the chief supporters of “preparedness” is well known.

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We are told that “preparedness preserves peace.” If that be so, Europe would not now be bleeding. Every nation in Europe has from year to year been strengthening the armaments, all under the mantle of “preparedness means peace.”

†- **Adolph Germer** (1881-1964) was born in Welen, Germany and came to US in Dec. 1888. The son of a miner, young Adolph himself went to work in a coal mine at age 9. Germer was a member of United Mine Workers of America from 1897, and a member of the Social Democratic Party (Chicago faction) from 1900. Germer was elected the representative of UMWA to the World Miners' Congress in Amsterdam, 1912. That same year he ran as one of the Socialist Party's candidates for the Illinois Legislature; he ran for US Senate from Illinois 2 years later. Germer was elected the Vice President of the Illinois mine workers and worked as a UMWA organizer in 1914 Colorado Coal strike. Germer sat on the NEC of the Socialist Party from 1913-16 and was elected National Secretary of the Socialist Party in 1916, serving until 1919 in that capacity. In February 1918 Germer was indicted under the Espionage Act as part of the effort of the Wilson administration to decapitate the Socialist Party. Germer's trial before K.M. Landis began on Dec. 6, 1918 and ended Jan. 4, 1919. Five days later he and his codefendants were found guilty of the charges presented and each was sentenced to 20 years at Leavenworth by Judge Landis. Germer was freed on \$25,000 bond pending appeal, the funds provided by future factional opponent William Bross Lloyd. Germer was the top leader of the Party Regular faction during the SP split of 1919. After the implosion of the national SP organization in that year, Germer moved from Chicago to work as an organizer for Local New York, 1920-22. In 1922 he was elected Secretary of the Socialist Party of Massachusetts. Germer was employed as a oil worker in California from 1923. In 1924 he was active in LaFollette Presidential Campaign. He was an organizer for the CIO from 1936, playing a significant role in the 1937 UAW strike against GM. Germer retired in 1955. He died in Rockford, Illinois in 1964.

“The Battle Cry of Peace,” “Neill of the Navy,” “Guarding Old Glory,” and other similar pictures thrown on the screen have had their damaging effect upon an unsuspecting public.

The vision has been clouded until, as a nation, we are almost as ready to plunge into a whirlpool of blood as the workers across the seas.

Every atom of our energy should be put forth to frustrate the use of hundreds of millions of dollars of the people’s money to strengthen the means of destruction of property, the product of labor, and the murder of human beings — while millions of our comrades are jobless, hungry, ill-clad, and unhoused.

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But what will labor do about this situation? Labor can either do nothing and let the profit-patriots get away with the loot, or labor can deluge Congress and the President with letters and resolutions from every section of the country, protesting against the plunderbund ramming its greedy right arm into the pork barrel up to the shoulder.

Congressman Meyer London will be materially helped in his fight against the armament pirates if protests are sent in by those who will have to do the shooting and be shot in the even the policy of “preparedness” turns this nation into a slaughterhouse.

Let the word go out that we will not be blinded by the deluding cry for “preparedness to preserve peace,” nursed by those who grow rich thereby!

*Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport.*

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