

War Effort Discloses Labor's Capacity

THE COST OF THE WAR to England is reported to be about \$60,000,000 a day—approximately \$1.50 per person. Statisticians assert that the national budget has been tripled by the expenses of war.

Assuming that the purchasing power of the coinage unit is equivalent to that of pre-war times, this tremendous increase in expenditures indicates a corresponding increase in the productive capacity of the nation. True, the making of war materials has been accompanied by some curtailment of consumers' goods, partly because of rationing, partly because mounting taxes have diminished demand. On the other hand, the necessity of building up foreign credits for the purchase of war materials, as well as consumers' goods, has undoubtedly stimulated England's production. The accent on speeding up and on longer working days must bring results.

It would be impossible at the present time to make a statistical comparison between present and pre-war production in England, one that would take into consideration fluctuations of the measuring instrument (price), as well as the offset of a diminishing quantity of consumers' goods. Common sense and the meager available facts indicate, however, that production has been vastly accelerated. In all probability the consumption of necessaries has not decreased at all; men who work and fight hard must eat in proportion. Only luxuries, or non-essentials, are being neglected.

Which means that England has a capacity (as has every other country) far in excess of its known peace-time production. Privilege, which exacts a large share of the wealth produced by labor and capital, has not been abolished. But, when the community is faced with danger the tendency is to disregard law-given prerogatives; indeed, the privileged class, sharing the common fear, are prone to let up on their "rights" during an emergency. For instance, land which has been sacredly preserved for purposes of pleasure or ostentation is being put to use. The restrictions on production imposed by patent monopolies have been broken through for war materials. It must be remembered that imported war materials are free from tariffs, which means that a dollar's worth of such "free" imports represents more production than an amount of goods costing one dollar with duty included. The final proof that production is advancing is the fact that rent is advancing; this correlation of rent and production is the Q.E.D.

This increased production is going on *now*. Every item used for the war, for the maintenance of capi-

tal or the sustenance of the people, is the result of the day-to-day exertion of labor. From the past the government has accumulated claims on present production, but claims cannot be loaded into cannon. Future British citizens will have to pay to future British citizens on claims originating now. Yet, neither past nor future British citizens can contribute a single sandwich or bullet to the current event. Labor now being exerted is doing the whole thing.

British labor is daily producing all that it needs



for life in addition to the \$60,000,000 a day which the war is consuming. It will be called on to produce more as the war progresses, and it will meet the call. At the same time a goodly portion of the most capable labor is engaged in destroying what other workers are making. Furthermore, the increased output continues in spite of the interference from German bombers and submarines. How those British laborers can turn out products when they have an opportunity and a stimulant!

They could do it in peace-time too. But in peace-time the opportunity is refused to them, and the stimulant of property in the things they produce is denied to them, through monopoly exactions and taxation. Rid labor of the robbery of monopoly and of taxes, give it access to the land on which it must work, and the imagination is staggered by the picture of the productive capacity of labor which war suggests. And inevitably the thought arises that labor so freed would abhor war.