

What Are We To Do?

We are confronted with the fact of war. The time for theorizing is past. Delirious fever robs us of all reason. A civilization madly rushing to its destruction sweeps before it the carefully built up system of human living based on the culture of exchanges. Thought has no hideout.

What are we to do?

Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Finland, Norway, and—worst catastrophe of all—Denmark, the little country where the principles of freedom had been given greater opportunity of expression, where the ideal of a free earth was nearer to realization than anywhere else in the world. Organized murder has replaced organized living. The knowledge of ages is being systematically destroyed.

What are we to do?

Already the poisoned voice of propaganda is insidiously whispering the answer into our ears. We too must fight. To save our homeland. To safeguard our way of living. To protect our women. Gradually the venom will be poured into our veins until every vestige of reason is eradicated, and we too will be forced into the headlong descent of mankind.

But, while we still retain our sanity let us take thought. What is it all about? What caused it? What results may we look for? For, while civilization may be wiped out, life somehow goes on. We cannot ignore the future.

What are we to do?

Let us tell the truth about war. Not its destructiveness, its aftermath of misery, its uselessness. All this has been told so often, and with little effect because sentimentality car-

ries no conviction. But, let us prove by induction and deduction the cause of war.

War arises from the conditions that make for poverty. Whenever an economy breaks out into a rash of Okies, Joads and bums, loafers, thieves and tramps, and the other ulcerous manifestations of poverty, it is to be expected that the body politic will resort to blood-letting. War starts within the country.

Let us repeat that over and over again. And let us carefully, patiently and fearlessly teach the truth about poverty: that it is caused only by the inability of labor to apply itself to the Earth, which burgeons all things Man needs. And let us show that the strait-jacket which prevents labor from so employing itself is the legalized fiction of the title deed to that earth.

Nor should we stop there. The robbery of labor, starting at the point of production through this unnatural appropriation of the Earth, continues at the point of distribution through that instrument of legalized extortion called Taxation.

The way to stop war is to remove the cause of war. If we can, and we can, prepare our people for peace by imparting a knowledge of peace, we will remove the forces within our country that are fast propelling us into the maelstrom.

If we do that, and it is the only sensible thing we can do, there will be at least one place in the world to which the remnants of a destroyed Europe may come for succor and for guidance out of the morass. Thus we can best serve the world by refusing to join in its suicidal madness. Thus we can help a helpless future by our example of sane living. Thus we can be the saviour of mankind.

That is our job.