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Questions on disarmament and your job

Friends Committee on National Legislation (U.S.)

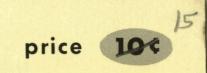
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QUESTIONS ON DISARMAMENT AND YOUR JOB

One way that we in America can prove
to the world and to ourselves that we seriously
want disarmament is by starting now to make thorough,
practical plans for adjusting our economy
to a peaceable world.

FRIENDS COMMITTEE
ON
NATIONAL LEGISLATION

- Does American Prosperity Depend on Arms Production?
- What Will We Make in Place of Weapons?
- How Can Military Suppliers Change to Civilian Work?
- How Will Working Men and Women Meet the Change?
- What Public Measures Would Help Smooth the Way?
- What Can WE Do to Prepare for Disarmament?

WE who are concerned citizens, whether industrial workers or social workers, business men or members of government, teachers or students, are faced with the primary challenge of today's world—how to keep a world that we can live in and hand on to the generations of tomorrow. This calls for world disarmament and a world organized for peace.

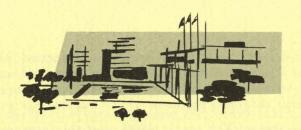
It is clear that there are many political roadblocks to be removed on the way to that disarmament which nearly everyone agrees we should have. Yet if we think only of these we may overlook the economic roadblocks—as well as the shining economic promise which disarmament holds.

Economists tell us that the economic path to peace will be smoother if we plan and prepare the way for it. Some machinery for making such plans is in being now. Can we make up our minds to use it, to adapt or extend it, or to set up new machinery as needed?

The change to a non-military economy will require not only planning but determination, and a readiness to accept work and sacrifice along the way. The political problems are enormous. The economic transition will call for mobilizing the full resources of the entire government in a prolonged attack on this question. It calls for the full cooperation of labor and management with government all the way from the local to the Federal level. A tough job—but it can be done.

Here we shall take a look at some of the questions that are most often asked about problems the country will face in changing over to strictly peaceful production. Answers suggested do not pretend to be a final word. They are put forward as a basis for discussion, for further questions, and for "grassroots" decisions that can lead to ACTION.

It is our hope that this brief and general pamphlet will lead to more comprehensive studies of the total problem and to much more detailed analysis of the shifts necessary in special areas such as Los Angeles, Seattle, Wichita, and Philadelphia.



1. Does American Prosperity Depend on Arms Production?

There are surface signs which help to spread this impression. Critics in the Communist world proclaim it as fact. What is the truth about this?

America enjoys a relatively high standard of living while devoting a sizeable slice of national resources and energies to making weapons of war. Certainly many jobs have been created by military production. This is not surprising, for it is just here that the government spends a lion's share of the Federal budget. However, to believe that prosperity can be created through arms production, or that this pattern of spending is sacred and unchangeable, is to follow an illusion.

Standards of living are measured by consumable goods and services. It testifies to the country's amazing productive power that we do reach such a high standard. If all of that power were turned into the production of consumable goods and service, or of creative leisure—and none into armaments—our standard of living could be markedly higher!

American prosperity stems from our productiveness. To maintain general prosperity is to keep a steady flow of the total volume of things we turn out, so that we as consumers receive a steady supply of the things we need. It does not depend on how much is invested in one special field, such as weapons. In times of transition, when the make-up of some parts is shifting, it is of utmost importance to keep the total national spending—by consumers, business and government combined—at an even level. This can be done in different ways, and naturally some ways are better than others. But we can be certain of this: If we stop channeling a great part of our resources into the means of destroying human life and turn the same current into things which people need and can use, real prosperity should increase.

Is it true, as many believe, that a cut in defense spending will cause a depression, at least temporarily? It is not true if sensible policies are followed. Past experience does not show that defense cuts inevitably create recessions. Actually, the biggest cut in military spending we ever had was in 1946 and 1947, when business and employment remained good. That was partly, of course, because of a large backlog of wartime saving.

By contrast, in 1957 defense spending *increased*—more than \$3 billion over the total for 1956—and yet industrial production declined the whole year and unemployment mounted, leading into a quite definite recession. As it happened, changes in the *tempo* of defense spending helped to deepen this recession; but, as before, the arms outlay was only one part of the picture. What counts most is the *whole* picture.

Three to five billion dollars is a large sum compared with the family budget. Even so, it is only about one per cent of our total national production each year. An annual cut of this size in military spending should not pose a very difficult economic problem—if the transition is well planned.

In fact, there was such a cut in 1955, and this was one of the most prosperous years we have ever had. In 1954, by contrast, defense spending was cut and we did have a recession. The one fact was not the *cause* of the other—although again it was part of the picture. The trouble in 1954 was that the government cut *non*-defense spending at the same time, when logic would have suggested an offsetting increase in this area.

Economists generally agree that when there is a reduction in one part of our total national spending, both public and private, it needs to be balanced by increased spending in other parts, so that the total outlay will remain steady, or gradually increase with the country's growth.

Under favorable conditions, it is often possible for an equilibrium to be maintained largely by increased *private* spending, as in 1946-47. Tax reductions, if large enough and properly distributed, can encourage such added spending. There is a pressing need for expansion of essential public programs such as education and public health, which are now held back largely because of the size of defense outlays. With a growing economy, there should be opportunity both for tax reduction and for a continuing expansion of public services.

Clearly the nation's economy is geared at this time to large military outlays. Not many people would argue that therefore we must go on making weapons indefinitely—that nothing else can keep up the level of jobs and business. The question which does arise is how a changeover to other lines of work can best be made, especially in the plants and communities where defense industry is heavily concentrated.

These problems must be faced. (See Questions 3, 4 and 6). Luckily, a good deal has been learned in recent years about how our economy works. We can be certain that prosperity does NOT have to depend on making any article that can't be used. Weapons of war in our time have become far too dangerous to be kept on as "busy work".

2. What Will We Make in Place of Weapons?

We have only to ask this question to bring to mind many ways in which we as a nation fall short of our own standards. One compelling reason why we fall short is that we spend so much on armies, missiles, nuclear bombs and all of the other paraphernalia of war. In spite of relative prosperity, we are far short of meeting basic human needs.

If peace were to "break out" suddenly, would it find us unprepared—afraid to accept its bounty because we haven't found out how to use it? The

fabled Sorcerer's Apprentice had learned how to put some forces to work but not how to stop them. Our challenge is to find ways to bend our gigantic productive forces to our own will, to meet our real needs.

Right now the U. S. is spending some \$45 billion yearly on war preparation; and concurrently, around seven and a half million of our people are employed in war-related work—including the armed forces.

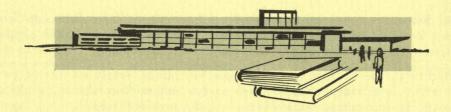
Now picture a ten-year period in which armaments would be reduced by regular stages, down to a figure sufficient to cover internal security and our share of a world-wide United Nations inspection and police system—say \$5 billion a year. Reduction on this scale would release some \$200 billion otherwise going into armaments—as shown below.

When we study the saving from this kind of ten-year disarmament plan alongside some of the nation's needs, many attractive uses can be seen. A sample reapportionment of the money saved is shown below. How would YOU recommend that the savings from disarmament be used?

HOW SAVINGS FROM

10 YEARS OF DISARMAMENT COULD BE USED

\$20 BILLION	Aid to World Development
\$25 BILLION	Public Health Hospital Buildings Medical Research
\$25 BILLION	Natural Resources Roads and Waterways Recreation Areas
\$20 BILLION	Old Age Benefits Child Welfare Other Social Security
\$30 BILLION	Tax Reduction so Individuals May Enjoy Better Private Living More Leisure Artistic Expression
\$30 BILLION	Adequate School Buildings Better Teachers Salaries Scholarships & Research
\$30 BILLION	New Housing Projects Slum Clearance Area and Urban Renewal
\$20 BILLION	Civilian Research Program for the Space Age



In **Education**, for example, although Americans have been proud of their public school system, these facts stare us in the face:

1. Over 130,000 new classrooms urgently needed now

2. Even these would not eliminate overcrowding and double sessions

3. National shortage of teachers estimated at 220,000

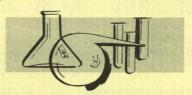
4. More teachers leaving the profession than entering it

5. National average teaching salary \$4650; many states less

6. Number of teachers receiving less than \$2500-46,000

7. Average income in many other professions 100 to 300 per cent higher

Helping to meet the needs for classrooms, equipment, more teachers and better salaries over the next ten years could easily absorb \$15 - \$20 billion of the armaments savings. After all, it is less than half of our present annual expenditure for armament. An additional \$10 billion could be invested in higher education and research facilities. Once we get rid of the arms race burden we may be able to afford all of this—AT LAST!



For Public Health, consider these two facts:

1. Some 325,000 lives are lost each year through inadequate medical care.

2. Over 1,200,000 more hospital beds are needed for adequate standards.

A large part of the need for additional beds is in mental and chronic disease hospitals and nursing homes. However, it was officially reported in May, 1958 that "there are still 2.5 million people residing in areas with no acceptable general hospital beds, and another 25 million people in areas with less than 2 acceptable beds per 1,000 population."

Here as in education the Federal Government can appropriately act to equalize opportunity. An adequate building program alone could absorb \$15 billion. Beyond that, we need more public health clinics and more medical schools—more people in medical research, to wipe out such human enemies as heart diseases, mental illness and cancer.



That **Housing** rates a high place needs no argument. But more than slum clearance and new housing is needed. For the America of the future, an area and urban development program of great size is a "must." Rebuilding the centers of cities to remove transportation blocks and to further a good life for city and country will require huge amounts. Men who can probe the reaches of outer space will not be content with slums on earth.

With an expanding economy go needs for better roads and communication, flood control and conservation. The vast lands now held by military departments—over 27 million acres in the Continental United States—can provide new public recreation areas, and help to conserve vital national resources in water power, minerals, forests and wildlife.

Government-supported research, now largely military, can be reoriented to peacetime, space-age living. With this should go a genuine program of world development, since we are members of a human family inhabiting a shrinking planet, where our security rests in a large measure upon the stability and welfare of other people.

Clearly there is no lack of worthwhile things in which to invest. But will these supply *employment* to replace various kinds of defense work? For each \$5 billion dollars reduction in military spending, it is likely that somewhere around 800,000 workers might need either new jobs or new markets for their same output. However, technological changes requiring new machinery and new equipment are taking place all the time. Totally new products will no doubt create many new jobs, as have electronics, television and plastics in the last fifteen years.

The field of trade and development holds out a prospect of expanded employment in many trades, as does the building of more schools, houses, hospitals, parks and roads. New buildings mean new equipment. Higher pay for teachers will supply new purchasing power for meeting a backlog of unfilled wants. Tax reductions will facilitate more private buying.

The flowering of life, even national life, is in individual, family and community living, and this expresses itself finally in artistic and spiritual life. How would this be furthered by disarmament? In very practical ways: improvement of the necessary material basis of life for those who lack it (through lower taxes, greater productive power, better health and education); the possibility of shorter working hours and thus more leisure time; an atmosphere of faith and hope in a world at peace.



3. How Can Military Suppliers Change to Civilian Work?

To look at the large-scale picture first—what about such industries as aircraft and electronics, which are largely built on military orders? And what of the communities in which armament activity is concentrated? Some large plants are now occupied 100 per cent with military contracts, especially in such states as California, Washington, Kansas and Texas. In a number of communities across the nation more than a third of local payrolls are tied to military spending.

Let us suppose that all these people have been planning—we know that some of them have—on the possibility of successful world disarmament. Planning, in a transition of such great importance, is a key with which to unlock the future. And as a sound beginning, managers, workers and government must soberly face this fact: With disarmament, some industries will either become unnecessary or will have a smaller market for their products. They must find new products, new markets, or new fields.

Most business men recognize the fact of constant change and they expect some risks. Many communities enjoy a wide range of industries and so find it easy to meet change. Such flexibility is the ideal, but increasing mechanization and specialization have made it very difficult for some industries and some communities to remain flexible. Government pressures on industry to tool up for military production make the dilemma serious. Changes in the market are taking place all the time—whether we disarm or not—because of changes in technology and in public tastes and needs.

For instance, while the total military budget has been increasing, some kinds of military orders have been sharply curtailed due to new weapons and new ideas of strategy. The Defense Department has cancelled or modified contracts without warning, presumably because of the need felt for secrecy in military matters. Disarmament, by contrast, would be a public matter, arranged by international agreement, publicly debated. Cutbacks planned for and announced in advance can make the transition easier.

Planning by industries and by organized labor calls for full and clear information on which to base practical plans. Much vital information must be collected locally and regionally, then sifted and put together in the national or even international perspective, to provide a dependable guide for the local people who must make decisions for their own businesses and families. Then various types of government aid or backing can come into play.

Most materials used in making arms have corresponding peacetime uses. Steel can go into bombers or buildings. Civilian use of aircraft may be expected to expand, though not fast enough to take up all the productive capacity now used for fighting planes. Peacetime uses for electronics will doubtless increase for a long time. Nuclear energy offers itself for many constructive uses, more than we can yet grasp. In the field of missiles, the breathtaking vista of space exploration opens before us IF we can rid ourselves of the threat of nuclear annihilation.

Substantial parts of military spending go not into bombs, bayonets, or ballistic missiles, but into buildings, food and clothing, medical care, paper and typewriters—the many things which parallel civilian life and will be met in some way for the same people in the peacetime world. Also, if large-scale economic aid is made available to developing countries, they will purchase needed equipment here and so extend the market for many lines. This will also make for steadier world economic conditions.

In one large industrial city inquiries were made of five military suppliers, varying in scale from a working force of 250 to one of 18,000, about their plans for meeting "Disarmament Day." One of the largest, a steel company, replied that military work is such a small part of its business that cutbacks would not seriously affect it. Another large firm reported that its business is *entirely* on government contracts and it has *no plans* for a changeover; that its work is with extremely high precision instruments and not suitable to mass production for private use.

However, this firm's products are potentially of great usefulness for the control of cancer and other little-understood diseases, for weather control and for the exploration of outer space—all of which would help to qualify it for continued public support. One company of medium size works preponderantly on military contracts but has three smaller departments which work on civilian products, with a definite plan in reserve by which these could be expanded to retain all employees, in a changeover to peacetime economy. The two smallest firms reported no plans but agreed that dependence on military contracts is unhealthy. Later one of them called the investigator to report the start of some civilian contracts.

In any planned disarmament the transition is bound to be gradual—for economic and practical reasons as well as political ones. A nation can't in a day switch production of \$45 billion worth of military goods to other things. But the time needed can be reduced by wise advance arrangements.

The real problem is not strictly one of disarmament. It is the complex and continuing problem of maintaining full production and full employment in our high-powered 20th-century economy. Large-scale military production has only helped to *conceal* the problem and to postpone facing it. Soon we must come to grips with it in any case, or continue to court catastrophe. The task is big enough to challenge the combined efforts of industry, labor and government.



4. How Will Working Men and Women Meet the Change?

There is no doubt that defense workers, like other people, desire peace. It is natural, however, that they should have questions about their job prospects in the event of disarmament. A job is a necessary and absorbing daily concern. Right now, without disarmament, the change from one line of military production to another is creating its own problems, possibly more far-reaching than the shift from buggies to automobiles at the beginning of the century. This shift causes cutbacks in certain kinds of armaments and may be confused with real disarmament.

The worker employed in a specialized industry has fewer resources to tide him over a readjustment period than do most businesses. His assets consist in personal skills rather than in capital. Personal savings and investments should not be required sacrifices for having worked in some industry once considered vital to the national welfare but now reduced in importance. The increased prosperity of peacetime must apply to all, and the hazards of the transition period must be shared by all.

What is the size of our problem? Currently more than one dollar in ten of the national income is going for military purposes. A comparable proportion of the national labor force is employed on military orders, including people who make parts and supplies on a subcontract basis and members of the armed forces. As armament production disappears, workers need to know what new jobs will be opening for them in replacement, and how the changes will affect their daily lives.

Some jobs undoubtedly will be discontinued in the process of gradual disarmament, while others will change in nature, either in the present plants or in transfers. Both new and remodeled industries will be needed to keep up employment through filling new needs, although some industrial workers will find their new opportunities in small business, office work, service trades or professions. A national will to maintain full production and full employment will be the workers' best insurance; but there are some special knots to be untied. The "untying" implements should include the following:

- 1. Extended and enlarged unemployment compensation
- 2. Mortgage payment insurance
- 3. Retraining programs
- 4. Expanded employment and placement services
- 5. Relocation and moving assistance

Americans do a good bit of moving from job to job and from one locality to another in pursuit of personal advancement. When such moves are made necessary by a change in public policy, however, the nation has a responsibility to help.

Workers, too, have their responsibility, both as participants in the economic process and as citizens. Anyone working on military orders, a field subject to sudden strategic changes as well as the change that would accompany world disarmament, would be well advised to keep an eye on job alternatives, to make personal plans to retrain, and to press actively for whatever public measures he feels are needed.

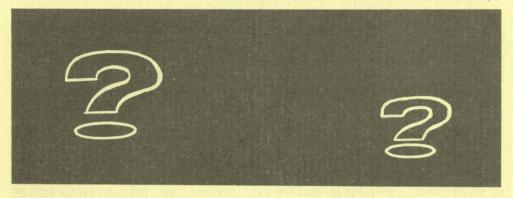
Keeping a constant flow of accurate, up-to-date job information, with special reference to coming changes, would do much to ease individual adjustments. This is a permanent need, along with unemployment benefits and insurance on a realistic scale—for sufficient time periods to cover job changes. These steps call for cooperation among many agencies and all sections of the country. Definite plans have to be made and carried out, but this is not likely to happen unless the people most directly concerned—organized labor and management associations—really go to work on it. All of the steps suggested are quite practical in the framework of a national policy for the fullest use of national resources.

More than once people in local communities have put pressure on their representatives in Washington to defeat cutbacks that would affect local industries, taking this way to try to protect their family and community interests. If the Government had a program, known to all, for helping people in key industries and communities to make necessary adjustments, they would not feel the same urge to fight military cutbacks, when these could be seen as actual steps to security and peace.

What about the people released from the armed forces? Will they be able to find jobs? Large numbers were released at the end of the Second World War and they were quite readily absorbed into civilian life. *Under similar conditions*, the smaller number now in the forces should present no problem. After the war there existed a backlog of unfilled jobs just as there was a backlog of unfilled consumer wants. Here again, the best guarantee lies in brisk economic activity, with plenty of forward-looking projects, both public and private.

The Government must not push its military personnel out into civilian life without due provision for their readjustment. Severance pay plus opportunities for education and vocational training are essential. Many of the older veterans should be made immediately eligible for pensions. The valuable civil projects now carried on by the Corps of Army Engineers—reclamation, flood control and the like—could be expanded during the transition, with openings for army veterans who have worked in these areas. Today's forces are increasingly made up of technically trained people who can find opportunities in civilian air transport, electronics, machine repair, computer and automation work.

It is well to remember that numbers in the armed forces are being reduced whether we have disarmament or not, because of the development of higher-powered weapons and military machinery, requiring relatively less manpower. After every war, plans have had to be made for veterans. There have been pensions and bonuses, loans for housing and business, and various kinds of educational aid. If such costs can be met now as part of the price of abolishing war, a real social saving will result. Indeed it would be far less costly to pension each present soldier than to continue the present military establishment throughout his lifetime. A needless extreme, perhaps—but not so extreme as the "World War III" which stares us in the face every day!



5. What Public Measures Would Help Smooth the Way?

The Employment Act of 1946 proclaimed a national policy of promoting maximum production and employment. It also set up machinery to help realize this aim, including (1) the Congressional Joint Committee on the Economic Report and (2) the President's Council of Economic Advisers. The Act calls for an Annual Economic Report from the President and frequent recommendations from the Joint Committee. There is doubt as to whether the government's obligations under this law are being met. Amendments are needed, with authority to carry out its good purposes.

The Area Redevelopment Bill passed by Congress in 1958, but vetoed by the President, would have provided special aid to regions facing special problems. Such special aids could well be applied in areas affected by defense cutbacks, to assist communities in their plans for disarmament.

The Trade Adjustments Bill which was introduced but not acted upon by Congress provided for a five-member Trade Adjustments Board which would hold hearings, secure information from public agencies, and certify for aid those communities, industries and employees adversely affected by changes in trade policy. Changes in defense policy could justify similar measures.

U. S. Government agencies such as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Federal Housing Administration, various veterans' programs and the work of the Office of Defense Mobilization should provide helpful clues on how to de-mobilize, or re-mobilize for peace. Some overall supervisory agency is indicated, which can pull together information from public and private sources and coordinate national, state and local efforts.

The Small Business Administration is one resource for smaller firms in need of financial backing to convert their plants to peacetime pursuits. Other government measures that might be studied are selective tax benefits during a specified period of change. Tax credits could be allowed for losses during a period of reconversion, and tax carry-forward provisions liberalized to encourage plants to hold onto their workers even if output were small for a time. Careful study is needed of possible graduated tax reduction as an aid to private buying and investment.

The California Legislature in April 1958 adopted and sent to Congress a Joint Resolution requesting a complete study of the economic problems of disarmament. This, it said, should cover "ways of providing Federal aid to areas depressed by a reduction in defense expenditures," and also the "strengthening of government employment services and compensation systems, and the possible methods for retraining and relocating workers facing major readjustments."

The resolution quoted research findings that a 50 per cent cut in our defense spending could result in layoffs of 120,000 people in Southern California alone. It emphasized that all the facts should be brought together as to the numbers of people employed in various defense industries, where those industries are, and how they could be helped to change their plants and resources over to non-defense industry—all of this with the cooperation of Federal, State and local agencies.

The sample disarmament timetable which we suggested earlier would take over five years to bring about a reduction of 50 per cent below 1958 levels. Meanwhile, some economists point out that present losses in productivity and employment, simply from letting the economic machinery run far below capacity, would equal a 100 per cent cut in armaments. They insist that by bringing production up to its full potential the country could have bombs AND butter if it wished—"butter" meaning all the desirable civilian programs, including foreign aid, which are denied or cut back.

On this point official opinion is not convinced. Congress, while voting more money for arms than is asked for by the military departments, uses the economy plea to pare civilian programs and appropriations for foreign economic aid and technical assistance; and our Government states that we cannot afford to take part in a world plan such as SUNFED (Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development) until we get disarmament.

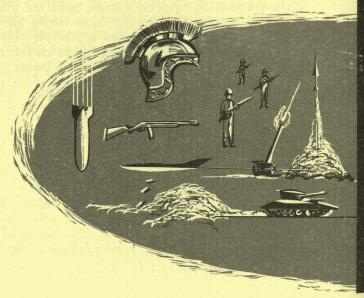
The overall problem of financing the transition will not be serious if any savings from disarmament are immediately used to finance other needed government programs or tax cuts. The danger of a depression will be minimized if we avoid trying to reduce defense expenditure and the national debt at the same time.



6. What Can WE Do to Prepare for Disarmament?

First of all—We can start. Get discussion going—in labor unions and Chambers of Commerce, in churches and civic organizations, with the neighbors. Help make plans in your community for other employment for defense workers, to prevent hardship for individuals. Make it a matter of pride that the American people can plan intelligently for peace.

We can keep informed. Try to gather an interested group—even if only two or three—to collect and share information, divide up work and consider local plans. Such a group can carry on friendly interviews with local industries managers, employees and agencies, and assemble for the local area the kind of specific knowledge which is needed but not now available. Official papers, such as the *Annual Economic Report* of the President, can be found in many libraries or ordered from the Government Printing Office in Washington. The Friends Committee on National Legislation will recommend other materials to interested groups.



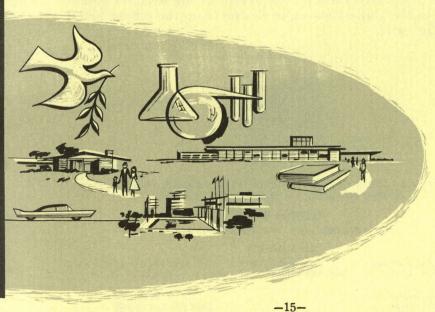
We can see to it that the economic machinery we have is well used. How does your local employment office function? Does your community have extensive contacts with the Small Business Administration? With the FHA? Do local firms make use of government research? What is your central labor union doing to help build a stable economy in your region? Local business or management groups? Your state government?

We can work for improved legislation. Become familiar with votes and views of your local representatives in the State Legislature and in the Congress. Tell them your views, in personal interviews where possible, and in clear, to-the-point letters on issues calling for legislation. And of course, search out and support good candidates for office.

The Employment Act of 1946 should be strengthened. Some such legislation as the Area Redevelopment Bill needs to be passed. Unemployment compensation systems need overhauling; they need appropriations and more liberal regulations providing for realistic time periods in which satisfactory job changes can be made.

We can encourage the mobilization and coordination of all government agencies, national and regional—to plan for and assist in carrying out the retraining and relocation of workers affected; to encourage research for the development of new products which can create new employment; and for the transfer to programs for the common welfare of productive capacity and labor now going into the arms race.

We can urge our government to give first priority to the search for political agreements and the basis for international disarmament under law so that the world may be rescued from the fear of war and the burden of armaments lifted forever from the backs of mankind.



IF WORLD DISARMAMENT WERE ACHIEVED, WHAT IS THE SIZE OF THE TASK OF TRANSITION IN THE UNITED STATES?

Appropriations for military defense, Atomic Energy Commission, military aid and defense support abroad voted by Congress in 1960 were more than	\$47,000,000,000
Personnel in the Armed Forces, June 30, 1960, not including Reserves	2,489,000
The value of lands, buildings, and movable property now held by the Department of Defense	\$169,939,000,000
In continental United States, the Department of Defense owns or controls	28,784,259 acres

This is a greater area than that of any one of the following states: Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia)

For Further Information, see: The Big Hand in Your Pocket, a booklet of current facts on the extent of the military establishment in the United States, available from the offices listed below, 25¢ each.



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