

particularly the democracies, are more conducive to individual freedom than others; the same thing might be said of religious sects, social customs, and other restraining forces. The health of the individual, ignorance, or a nagging wife might also seriously impair personal freedom. Hence, while a policy of aggressive fulfillment, even at the risk of war, is necessary to preserve our democratic form of government, freedom for the individual must be achieved through the forces of education, and other forms of enlightenment and social improvement.

When a nation is confronted with the necessity of preparing for war its first interest settles upon its man-power, for men, in spite of the tremendous increase in the use of war machines, are still the principal factors in combat. The present struggle abroad involves the entire population of a country. Each individual in a very real sense is a combatant in this modern scheme of total war. The battle lines are the seas, the skies, the cities and towns, and the propaganda centers. The aggressive power of a nation lies in the ability of its people to withstand the rigors of warfare. Physical and organic stamina, faultless mental health, proper evaluation of propaganda, resourceful thinking, and competence in personal and community hygiene are all essentials in this struggle for existence. In this conflict ultimate victory will probably come to that nation whose entire population is best able to endure the hazards attending total warfare.

For the first time in the history of this country we have recognized the necessity of developing a peace-time policy of equipping ourselves for possible war. We have conscripted man-power, industry and the wealth of the nation in order to prosecute our program of preparedness. The experiences gained in the last war are being found useful to some extent, but newer methods and machines are rendering former practices obsolete. The ingenuity of the scientist and engineer, and their control over matter can readily change the machinery of war; men, however, are not so easily moulded.

As in the first World War, thousands of young men now are being conscripted into the military forces of the nation. In 1917 the country was shocked at the high percentage of rejection due to physical disability (about 30%); present incomplete returns indicate an even greater percentage of rejections. Whether or not this increase is due to insufficient data, higher standards, better examining technics, or to a failure of educational and public health measures, is not clear at this time. If this tragic health condition does exist in the favorable age group of 21 to 35, it is certain that the health of the total population would be found even worse if subjected to the same examination as required of those inducted into the service. In as much as we are confronted with the possibility of total war, this should be a matter of no little concern to each and everyone of us.

In view of the state of affairs existing in the Old World, and at the present time in this country, it appears that we shall need to recast to some extent our conceptions and methods of public education and of public health. No one, of course, can predict just how long we shall need to keep our forces of war mobilized, and our national affairs under the influence of military necessity. It is quite conceivable that the military may continue as a dominant policy in our national life for many years to come. Should this happen we may confidently expect to see our political, economic, social and educational institution increasingly yield to military influences. The directions these changes will take cannot be precisely stated at the present time. It is the responsibility of those of us in positions of leadership aggressively to guard the accomplishments of the past, and actively to influence future practices so that they shall coincide with a healthy philosophy of education in a democracy.

A number of steps have already been taken by educational and civic leaders to influence policies and practices in a manner which seems to be in keeping with