

The
NORTH
ATLANTIC
PACT

For Peace or War?

by
ABRAHAM CHAPMAN

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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What's all the hullabaloo about the North Atlantic Pact? What are pacts, diplomacy and military treaties to you?

It's headache enough, you might say, to juggle a shrinking paycheck, mounting rent and the high cost of food and clothes—which just don't balance. That's quite a feat these days, even with a normal paycheck. And these aren't normal times.

Jobs are getting scarcer. Unemployment has climbed to the neighborhood of five million. It's tougher to make a buck and make ends meet. And on the job things are tougher too. Speed-up is increasing and that feeling of job security is gone. The newspapers have given it lots of fancy names like disinflation . . . recession . . . economic slide, and the like. But whatever they choose to call it, what we can feel in our bones is the beginnings of an economic crisis.

These are the immediate problems and pressures we live with every day. To some of us they may appear as individual or isolated headaches, unrelated to the big movements of history . . . to the way the world is going and what they're doing in Washington . . . the national budget . . . the bills that are passed in Congress . . . and our diplomacy. But all our intimate and immediate worries, that seem so personal, are our share of a bigger thing: our country's foreign and domestic policy.

The small buying power of your dollar, that apartment or house you can't find, that dress you can't afford, that job you may have lost, that strike for higher wages that was broken, that wage cut, reduced commission, decline in sales in your store, are the price we are already paying for the "cold war."

The cold war isn't something far away, an anti-Soviet speech in Washington, something in Greece, China or Iran. The cold war is right here with you, dollars out of your pocket, your son in the army, and the ever-present bigger danger of a shooting war that would make the last war, with all its dead and ruins, seem like a small skirmish. That's why the North Atlantic Pact, the newest and most advanced step in the cold war, has caused such concern and aroused such deep feelings all over the world.

Today everything, everything we have and want and aspire for, hinges on whether there shall be peace or war. The high and mighty boys in striped pants and gold braid would like to decide this life or death question, this war or peace question, all by themselves in the quiet secrecy of the Pentagon and the State Department. We know their answer. The gentlemen of the State Department and the high military brass have a long record. They answer the war or peace question for the munitions makers and big corporations, not in keeping with the wishes and interests of the common people. They've got their answer down pat. Their formula has already given us two world wars—in one generation.

Now, resorting to the Hitlerite anti-Soviet arguments that plunged the entire world into the last war, these gentlemen are preparing a third war. They're working their old formula again. Again it is being peddled as an anti-Soviet war. And if they should succeed, you and I would again have to pay the real price, as we did in the last war.

Maybe you think that's far-fetched, Red propaganda? Hasn't the North Atlantic Treaty been formally christened and advertised as a peace pact? Why then all the protests against it? What are the actual facts?

THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY

The factual side of the treaty can be summarized quite briefly. It is an alliance of 12 nations: U.S.A., Great Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Portugal, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland.

As you can see, the geographical term "North Atlantic"

doesn't describe this alliance. Italy is a Mediterranean country; Luxembourg is a landlocked country; and the pact applies to an area extending from North Africa to the Arctic. It takes far more than geography to explain this pact.

It has also been claimed that this is a regional agreement within the framework of the United Nations. This is a technical point, but an important one. Those who raise it mean to say that it is a pact for the defense of a given region, in this case the North Atlantic community, although, as we have seen, the pact is not confined to any distinct geographical region. The United Nations Charter allows for regional agreements, to guard against the threat of new aggression from our enemies in the last war, namely Germany and Japan. To quote, for a moment, the exact language of Article 53 of the United Nations Charter: "No enforcement action shall be taken under regional arrangements or by regional agencies without the authorization of the Security Council with the exception of measures against any enemy state." By "enemy state" the Charter means any nation that was an enemy of the United Nations during the last war.

The North Atlantic Treaty runs contrary to the letter and spirit of the U.N. Charter on a number of important points. To begin with, two of the signers of the pact aren't even members of the United Nations: Portugal and Italy. What's more, Portugal, like Franco Spain, was in cahoots with the Nazis during the war.

Secondly, the Security Council was never consulted on the North Atlantic Pact, but, on the contrary, was conspicuously by-passed and directly challenged by the pact.

Most important, the North Atlantic Pact is the first major postwar agreement that doesn't even refer to preventing aggression from a former enemy state, namely Germany. The regional agreements in existence, including the Soviet-British agreement and all the regional agreements that the Soviet Union has entered into, are directed against the rebirth of an aggressive, strong Nazi Germany. The North Atlantic nations, on the other hand, led by the U.S. and Great Britain, are rebuilding a strong Western Germany in which former Nazis have been allowed to rise once again to positions of power.

Just after the Pact was signed, American-British-French agreement on a policy for Western Germany was also announced. Western Germany is to be a very important cog in the North Atlantic set-up. The very conservative Parisian daily, *Le Monde*, reflecting the fears of the people of France, observed on April 6:

“German re-armament is contained in the Atlantic Pact just like the yoke is included in an egg.”

On April 8, the *New York Times* reported that the German Nazi generals, not in jail, have drafted a plan for the enlistment of a Nazi army in the Atlantic Pact bloc for war against the Soviet Union.

On March 23, the *Chicago Daily News* noted editorially:

“A military alliance of the nature of the North Atlantic Pact is not—contrary to the cheering—a step toward peace. It is a preparation for war. That being so, it calls for realistic efforts to add German strength . . . to the allied military potential in Europe. . . .”

As you can see, the thinking behind the Atlantic Pact is the exact opposite of the thinking behind the regional agreements described in the United Nations Charter. Far from being directed against the rebirth of an aggressive Germany, the policy behind the Pact encourages a re-Nazified Germany. General Clay's message to the members of the Associated Press on April 25, 1949, made it clear that U.S. policy aims to incorporate a reactionary Western Germany as a major ally of the North Atlantic bloc.

THE PRICE OF THE COLD WAR

Since this pact is the climax, to date, of the cold war, let's look into the mathematics of the cold war, and see what we are being asked to underwrite. On the basis of the North Atlantic Pact, and its Siamese twin, the proposal to lend-lease U.S. arms to the countries that have signed the pact, as well as other planned military expenditures, the cold war will have siphoned the staggering sum of \$24,000,000,000 out of our

pockets by the middle of 1950. The bill is itemized in an article in the Big Business magazine *U.S. News & World Report* (April 15, 1949) entitled: "24 BILLIONS TO STOP RUSSIA: TAXPAYERS' BURDEN STILL RISING."

Mr. Cold War is the uninvited guest with the voracious appetite eating at your table and draining your resources.

Now, for the first time, even official sources are beginning to admit this inescapable fact. Early in April, the Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors to the President, Mr. Edwin G. Nourse, delivered a report at the Pentagon to a select audience of key people.

He admitted that to provide even \$15 billion for military spending, the President's Budget had to cut down "the scale of social services for education, health and social security." He demonstrated that the military services are getting more of our taxes in one month than is spent in an entire year for slum clearance, public health, federal aid to education, and rural electrification all together.

And while you and I are paying for this program, in taxes, in less social services, in less that we can buy for our dollar, and less jobs, this money from our pockets and food off our table is being used as a subsidy for a few giant corporations who manufacture all these armaments at the highest profits in the history of American corporations. That's the vested interest of Big Business in the war program.

Today graft and corruption, traditional methods by which the corporations feather their nests while we foot the bill, are very much in the picture. Even the Hoover Commission, reporting on the armed forces, has admitted "staggering waste." Its report could not ignore such items as:

Army plans for 838,000 tropical worsted uniforms—"enough for all the enlisted men in the Army and then some"—at \$129 each. That's a pretty taxpayer's penny—and somebody stood to profit from it.

Or the Air Force construction program which includes the building of 910 family houses in Alaska at the cost of \$58,350 per house.

Or the Army's quest for funds to modernize 102 *more* tanks

than the Army actually possesses, amounting to \$10,000,000 for "non-existent" tanks. And this barely scratches the surface.

Far more is involved than the "staggering waste" that the Hoover Commission complains of—not in opposition to the war program, but to streamline it. Even if the "staggering waste" were eliminated it would remain a program of guns instead of butter.

THE HITLER ROAD

That's the road down which Hitler dragged Germany. That's the kind of program, blueprinted by the big German industrialists, that produced the Nazi state and Nazi aggression. The same kind of road, paved by American industrialists and financiers, can lead only to fascism in the United States and to world war.

Look at how this cold war is changing life in America. See how it has done away with the progressive features of the Roosevelt policies and the New Deal. That's no accident. A program based on war preparation and lowered living standards has to be accompanied by an organized campaign to prevent the people from fighting for their living standards and for peace. Because the Big Boys of the corporations, who are writing the government ticket today, know where their program is leading, and how unpopular it really is, they gave us the Taft-Hartley Act to weaken the unions in the hope that they would be able to push through their tighten-your-belt-and-eat-less nightmare. And despite all the election promises, the spirit of Taft-Hartley marches on in Congress.

It's no mystery. This cold war is the beginning of the worst deal that ever hit American labor. Taft-Hartley and 5,000,000 unemployed are, unfortunately, only a first installment. If it goes on, unchecked, we'll be counting our dead, not only our unemployed.

Even the conservative chief economic advisor to the President admits that this war economy way is the Hitler way, and we all know what the Hitler way meant for labor. But Murray, Green, Reuther and Dubinsky are still trying to

palm off this program as a Fair Deal for labor. Where is this Fair Deal? Where is the repeal of Taft-Hartley? From its record to date, the 81st Congress is exactly like the 80th Congress—only more so. Instead of better times we have worse times—under the President and Congress these labor leaders assured us would bring prosperity and a New Deal. Instead of wage increases, the Murray-Green, Reuther-Dubinsky leadership has surrendered labor's wage increases—while the corporations rake in fabulous profits. Instead of fighting for labor's rights they are off on a crusade against all those who really put up a battle for labor's interests—and they call it fighting Communism. Instead of resisting and opposing the schemes of the corporations, as labor leaders should, they have made a deal with the corporations and support the war program of the corporations despite the heavy price the workers are paying for it. In plain English, that's known as a sellout.

And not only labor is menaced. We are witnessing the constant whittling away of the Bill of Rights. Witch-hunts and loyalty orders. The official branding of organizations that want peace and abundance as subversive. A drive to outlaw the Communist Party and all minority parties. The whipping up of an atmosphere in which speaking for peace is branded "treason."

The campaign to outlaw the Communist Party, whether through the trial of the Communist leaders at Foley Square, or legislation in Washington, is borrowed straight from Hitler's book. That's the familiar fascist way of dealing with popular resistance. It is the spearhead for the outlawing of all opposition to war and fascism in America. In this atmosphere the civil rights program has been abandoned by Congress and the Administration . . . the drive against the rights of the Negro people has taken on new momentum . . . anti-Semitism, and persecution of the foreign born and the national groups in our country have mounted. That is the logic and the true nature of the cold war.

The main target of the cold war and the potential hot war is the Soviet Union and the new people's democracies. But we, the American people, are already paying for it, and we will pay far more if the plotted war is allowed to break out.

WHAT FOR?

For what are we asked to pay this heaviest price in the history of our country? The main reason given for the North Atlantic Pact and the heavy burdens of the cold war is defense against aggression. As good Americans, as patriots, we would willingly make sacrifices that are for the good of the people, for the defense and security of our nation. But is the U.S. in danger of attack? Is there a threat of Soviet aggression?

Not even the masterminds of the Atlantic Pact think there is any danger of Soviet aggression. Every now and then they admit it. Such ardent supporters of the Pact as John Foster Dulles and Walter Lippmann have been compelled by events to admit it. But we can't go by their testimony. In their war zeal they don't stick to the truth. We've got to reason this out for ourselves, on the basis of the known facts.

To begin with, the Soviet Union has time and again repeated its readiness and willingness to negotiate and settle differences between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. and to conclude a peace pact with the United States. Washington, not Moscow, has slammed the door abruptly in the face of Soviet Premier Stalin's peace proposals.

Or let's take the budget of the Soviet Union for 1949. 19 per cent of the total Soviet budget is for the maintenance of its armed forces. This sum is 34 per cent *smaller* than the amount that the Soviet government spends for social and cultural measures. Contrast this with the budget of the United States for 1949 in which cold war and war-related expenditures comprise more than half of our budget, while only a measly 6 per cent of the budget is for expenditures related to the welfare of the American people.

There's a reason for this, a simple one. There are no corporations in the Soviet Union standing to profit from war preparations and war itself. There is no economic grouping in the Soviet Union that has a vested interest in death and destruction. That's what the American titans of the corporations don't like about the Soviet Union. They don't like the fact that the profit system has been replaced there by a socialist system which has demonstrated its strength, durability and the devotion of its people.

Many people outside the Soviet Union have also come to the conclusion that a system based on the people's ownership of the economy, a real people's control of the state, government, moving in their own way to socialism, fits their needs better. That is what is involved in the profound changes that are taking place in the countries of Eastern Europe that the American press contemptuously refers to as the "Iron Curtain" countries. That is what is involved in the great changes that are taking place in China today.

That is why these peoples, these countries, stand for peace not war.

The great design for peace outlined by President Roosevelt was based on the successful cooperation between the United States, the Soviet Union, and all the United Nations in the winning of the war. The idea behind the United Nations was that only the cooperative effort of the whole world, and above all the cooperation between the two largest and most powerful nations in the world, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., could provide world peace. It was no secret when the United Nations was born that the United States and the Soviet Union are built on different economic foundations—and represent two different systems—capitalism and socialism. The great design for peace was built on the simple idea that the capitalist system and socialist system could exist in the same world peacefully, without wars.

This is the only foundation on which peace can be built. But it stands in the way of a handful of U.S. economic royalists who have been gripped by the fatal fever of an American-controlled century. The dreams of an American economic empire extending all over the world depend upon controlling other countries and their economies for the greater profits of American banks and industrialists. With this in mind the men behind the Atlantic Pact are trying to stop the new tide in human affairs, and are attempting to destroy the peoples' democracies and the Soviet Union, to conquer them all for Wall Street. For this purpose the U.N. is an obstacle because it includes the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies. The North Atlantic Pact tries to set up a wall of arms against the progressive tide, and falsely labels it "Soviet expansion."

It aims to utilize American power in defense of reactionaries and fascists all over the world who are hated and opposed by the people. Article IV of the Pact provides for intervention by the United States and the signers of the Pact against internal political changes within a country. As Johannes Steele, the anti-fascist news commentator, points out in his *Report on World Affairs*:

“Article IV is a political and diplomatic absurdity. The Pact will do for Italy and France what Hitler and Mussolini did for Spain. It actually means, in effect, that if the fascist dictatorship of Salazar were overthrown in Portugal, the signatories of the Atlantic Pact would be forced to intervene to maintain it.”

In addition to the Pact, U.S. policy in the postwar period has concentrated on building and preserving a vast ring of military, naval and air bases in all parts of the world, encircling the Soviet Union and the peoples' democracies. From the Arctic to South America, across the Pacific and the Atlantic, from the Philippines to Greece, hundreds of American bases have been built. And U.S. arms and/or troops have intervened in China, Greece and other countries. These aren't defensive measures. They can only be explained as war preparations. Behind the war drive and the Atlantic Pact are the aggressive designs of Wall Street.

This isn't a Soviet invention or Red propaganda, as the newspapers would have you believe. This whole drive of American big business to conquer markets and the economic control of entire nations is not something new or accidental. It has deep roots and can be traced back for half a century to the crusade of the American corporations to establish an empire under their control.

It began in 1898 with the Spanish-American War, which was an aggressive war in the interests of the American corporations, resulting in the conquest of the Philippines and Puerto Rico, the annexation of Hawaii and the establishment of U.S. economic control over Cuba.

A wise American, Mark Twain, denouncing the American war of aggression against the Philippine Republic, *while it was being waged*, declared:

“There must be two Americas: one that sets the captive free, and one that takes a once-captive’s new freedom away from him. . . .”

The understanding that there are two Americas is not a foreign idea. It is as American as Mark Twain. Two Americas—the America of the corporations and the America of the common people.

IT MEANS WAR

Some of the most ardent supporters of the Pact are spilling the beans.

The Wall Street Journal, which supports the Pact, minced no words in its editorial of April 5:

“Yesterday the Atlantic Pact was signed; today the United Nations General Assembly meets. The juxtaposition of these two events is so graphic as almost to suggest it was intentional—designed to blazon forth, that is, the triumph of jungle law over international cooperation on a world scale. For, propaganda notwithstanding, the Atlantic Pact does nullify the principles of the U.N.”

That’s Wall Street talking, straight from the shoulder. They don’t even like the efforts to woo the people into support of the Pact with talk of peace. It’s a jungle pact, a war pact, an open defiance of the United Nations. And as President Truman stressed at the ceremonies launching the Pact, it is only “the first step.” There’s already talk of a Mediterranean Pact and a Pacific Pact or East Asian Pact.

Now the President proposes to lend-lease arms to all the signers of the Pact, at an additional cost of billions of dollars to us. This means to arm Europe against its own people as well as for war.

It is an aggressive program, and not a defensive scheme. As Henry Wallace asked pointedly in a national broadcast on the Pact:

“Supposing the Soviets had military bases on the Mexican border? The Canadian border? Or Cuba? Could

the treaty which puts guns in our faces be called a pact of peace?"

But the cat was really let out of the bag by Rep. Clarence Cannon (D., Mo.), Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, in a speech on the floor of the House on April 13, 1949. Tearing the fig leaf off the North Atlantic Pact, he said:

"Moscow and every other center in Russia, we must hit within one week after the war starts. . . . Only land based bombers could reach Moscow with a lethal charge. With the signing of the North Atlantic Pact we would have ample land bases and within a week we could blast every nerve center, every center of communications and production, every military concentration and every naval, submarine and air base."

There it is, all spelled out. The Pact is an aggressive, military measure, to promote a war bloc against the Soviet Union and the people's democracies. Rep. Teague (D., Tex.), interestingly enough, criticized Rep. Cannon for divulging secret information, for disclosing what he called "our plans."

Rep. Cannon tried to convince us that it would be a war in which American blood wouldn't be shed, that the nations of the North Atlantic Pact would do the dying for the American corporations. He said:

"We will blast at the centers of operation, and then let our allies send the army in, other boys, not our boys, to hold the ground we win."

(*The New York Times*, April 14, 1949.)

This is not only an evil plan, but a plan that cannot succeed. Another war would not be a push-button, pushover war, fascinating as this horrible idea may seem to some people. It can only lead to disaster for those who unleash it.

WAR IS NOT INEVITABLE

The peoples of Europe and Asia will *not* fight a war for Wall Street. They not only dread the idea of another war,

but are proving daily their growing strength, their growing determination to prevent another war. There are not only two Americas. Today the entire world is divided into two camps: the camps of peace and war.

The big thing, the important thing, is that the forces of peace are growing stronger. The peace camp is more numerous and more powerful than the war camp. That is why *war is not inevitable*, why a new war can still be prevented. The peace camp includes the Soviet Union and the people's democracies of Europe; the New China which already embraces well over two hundred million people who know how to fight for their interests; the great colonial liberation movements, numbering many millions of fighters for freedom, that have arisen in Eastern Asia, as well as Latin America, the Middle East and Africa; the powerful people's movements in France, Italy and the countries of Western Europe. And that's not all. It includes the rising peace movement of the United States.

The warmakers fear this world peace movement, rooted deep in the soil of every country in the world, made up of people who have their own idea of what the shape of the world should be, people who do not intend to serve as cannon fodder in the unholy war proclaimed so callously by Rep. Cannon. And they are telling the warmakers and the whole world, in unmistakable terms, that they will not be part of another war, a war against the Soviet Union and the new democracies, that the only fighting they will do is for peace and the friendship and freedom of the peoples of the world.

And it's not only the Communists who oppose the Atlantic Pact. That's another lie. The overwhelming majority of Americans want peace, and the opposition to the Pact increases as its war character is exposed and becomes evident to more and more Americans. There is not only a tremendous desire for peace in our country, but it is beginning to find voice and expression, in different forms and different ways.

The Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, sponsored by more than 500 of the leading artists, writers, scientists, educators and religious leaders in the U.S., with more than 8,000 delegates, reflected the diversity of Americans

for peace and showed how they can be united to defeat war. The Progressive Party is organizing nationwide meetings for peace, with Henry Wallace and members of parliaments from Europe as invited guests. Strong voices for peace are being raised in Protestant churches. The Quakers formally oppose the Pact. The Farmers Union has voted against it. Local unions and trade union leaders are now speaking out for peace, and against the Pact, even though the national leadership of the CIO and AFL is betraying the sentiments of American labor for peace.

The sentiment for peace is here, deeper and more widespread than most of us realize. But it has not yet been organized and united, with the result that its strength and potency have not made the impact that it can and should on our national policy and the course of developments toward war. This sentiment for peace in our country, organized into a fighting movement giving battle to every major move of the warmakers and allied with the world peace camp, can tip the scales against war, can slow down and defeat the war drive.

The hour, of course, is very late. The dangers of war have increased as a result of the Pact. But war is still not inevitable. We the people have the power to defeat the war drive. That's why you are so important. Your voice, your effort, may mean the difference between war and peace. That's why you have to pull your oar in this fight.

Remember, the North Atlantic Treaty has not been ratified yet. Don't let it be steamrolled through Congress. Let your President, Congressman and local newspaper know what you think of this Pact. Ask your Senator to vote against it. And don't stop there. Get your union and other organizations you belong to, to act for peace. Fight for American-Soviet friendship, for the preservation of the United Nations, for peace, before it is too late.

Not a war pact—but a Pact of Peace and Friendship with the Soviet Union—is the crying need of the hour.