

EDITORIAL

America and the World Go to War Against the Common Foe

by Bruce Director

March 20—For the first time since 1945, the United States is in a real war. Not the endless, imperial geopolitical wars that the U.S. was roped into by the post-World War II remnants of the British Empire, but a real war against a real enemy. Not a human enemy, but an invisible enemy: a virus that is threatening the health and well-being of all mankind. It is being fought in alliance with over 170 nations that are also fighting the disease. The international collaboration now emerging among the nations out of necessity, creates the basis for reversing the failed policy of sanctions. Expanded cooperation with Russia and China in the area of scientific development is especially urgent.

President Trump has assumed the mantle of a wartime President. The World War II economic and political mobilization has been invoked by political and business leaders from across the American economic and political spectrum.

Rapid changes are emerging in the axiomatic assumptions underlying American economic policy. The monetarist-debt system that started its long unraveling more than 50 years ago, is collapsed. Its proponents, discredited but not disregarded since the 2007-2008 financial crash, are now revealed to be the fools they always were. A return to the policies that made the United States the science-oriented industrial powerhouse that won the last war, is now understood to be a matter of survival. How to get there, is the only real question worth discussing.

The dramatic collapse of financial markets has led many to focus on the need for emergency financial re-

forms. Certainly, the financial turmoil has been exacerbated by the over-ripe rottenness of the system that existed long before the emergence of COVID-19. It was made worse by the Obama administration's decision to bail out Wall Street and the City of London instead of rebuilding the physical economy. But, unlike 2008, the crisis at hand is not primarily a financial crisis. It is a wartime crisis. Physical economic measures are required to meet the emergency, as well as a long-term perspective to rebuild and reorganize the American economy on the basis of scientific and technological progress.

During World War II, the nation could rely on the massive infrastructure development that FDR had implemented previously. Today, the decades of globalization and monetarism have devastated the U.S. physical economy and scattered vital supply chains throughout the world in pursuit of cheap labor, which, in addition to being morally wrong, created a now evident national security crisis. Those who ridiculed Trump's efforts to reverse the effects of globalization and his insistence on bypassing the World Trade Organization and other multilateralist arrangements, in favor of direct, nation-to-nation trade deals, look very short-sighted in retrospect.

Nothing less than a return to a full-set industrial economy in the United States, and all other countries, is sufficient to both meet the current crisis, and secure the long-term future. Already there are calls for a new national industrial policy, and the creation of new government-directed funding mechanisms to gear up produc-

tion of needed goods. Financial reforms that would otherwise be unthinkable, can be implemented as wartime measures. To implement this requires a shift in the underlying axioms of today's generations. Tinkering with financial markets, even the implementation of urgently needed changes, will not restart the physical economy. A wartime mobilization will. Under such conditions, urgently needed financial reforms, specifically the Four Laws of Lyndon LaRouche, can be forced through as a necessity.

LaRouche often said that only those who lived through the World War II experience as adults had any sense of what a functioning physical economy really is. Although the number of those with such experience has now dwindled, the principles on which the war mobilization was based, are embedded in the American culture, waiting to be called forth, provided today's generation can recognize that axiomatic change is what is required.

He set forth in his voluminous legacy the axiomatic shift that must now take place. In his post-war study of physical economy, he focused on the causal relationship between creative scientific and artistic discoveries and physical economic progress, the which must be the basis for economic policy.

In a 1994 [essay](#), "The Coming Disintegration of the Financial Markets," LaRouche reflected on his post-war studies:

The sum total of the lessons for statecraft from history and pre-history, is that creative, revolutionary progress in scientific and analogous knowledge is not an occurrence on the periphery of man's vision: It is the essence of human existence, it is what distinguishes us as the Mosaic heritage specifies, as in the image of God the Creator by virtue of our developable individual potential for creative reason.

The anomalous aspect of the mathematical picture of a growing economy is that the essence of the economy is not the production and consumption of objects, but rather the upward transformation of the cycle of consumption for production of the means of improved human existence. The creative powers of reason are the source, the cause for that growth upon which the avoidance of social collapse depends absolutely. The

anomalous aspect of the economic process is that the characteristic feature of a viable economic policy of performance is human creative reason, that principle of reason which the economic doctrine of the late John von Neumann and the contemporary "Chaos" theorists implicitly deny to exist.

Earlier in the same piece, LaRouche said:

During the late 1940s, after the 1930s depression, and following the war, experiencing the recession of 1947-48, and the 1949 economic recovery sparked by the Cold War revival of the Korea conflict, all we veterans who were reasonably sentient were aware of the anomalous fact that, during the twentieth century to date, the only prosperous periods had been those associated with relatively larger expenditures for the costs of war. During those days, the U.S. and other governments were frequently charged with seeking warfare as a way of organizing an economic recovery! Thinking about the story behind that apparent economic anomaly did not make warfare less wasteful of life and material; tracing out a few economic facts made clear the reasons for the anomalous appearances.

The characteristic of modern regular warfare is exceptionally high rates of technological attrition. Technologies are developed during a few years of forced-draft, which would have required decades otherwise. As some of the Manhattan Project's veterans described this to me in some detail, the intensity of scientific collaboration in that undertaking packed decades into about five years of research and development ...

The top of the mountain is fundamental (axiomatic-revolutionary) progress in science. Slightly down the slope, there is the elaboration of these most crucial discoveries at the summit of the mountain into subsidiary discoveries. At both levels, the new discovery prompts the design of demonstration-of-principle experiments. As these experiments are refined, the lessons of the successful experimental designs are taken to a place a short distance down the slope

from the two levels of scientific work: Here we encounter the transformation of the successful experimental designs into machinetool or equivalent principles. Downstream from the advanced machine-tool-design sector, we have the new machine-tools revolutionizing product designs and productive powers of labor at the base of the mountain, where production occurs.

This is the process that is beginning to take shape. A huge effort to develop therapeutics and vaccines is underway, in private and government laboratories, in the U.S. and elsewhere. Previously unheard-of rates of progress are being reported. A vaccine is already being tested on humans after only a few weeks. Bio-technologies that have been under development over the recent decades are being pushed into overdrive to develop therapeutics to treat the virus. Exemplary is the work of the U.S. pharma company, Regeneron, which had already developed a unique method of using genetically engineered mice to produce human anti-bodies, which are then harvested and mass produced for use in the development of medicines.

This process has already led to the development of successful treatments for several chronic diseases, but even Regeneron's accelerated process usually takes years from development to final product. In the fight to develop a treatment for COVID-19, Regeneron expects to have a candidate available for mass production and trial by early summer, a period of mere months. A panoply of new scientific developments is being employed in the fight, in the U.S., China and Europe, which will undoubtedly have applications far beyond the immediate emergency.

Further down the economic mountain is the rapid retooling of existing industries to manufacture the goods needed for the effort. In his March 20 press conference, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, once an intense Democrat opponent of Trump, invoked the World War II mobilization to announce his efforts to get New York-based manufacturers to retool their factories to make much-needed ventilators, protective equipment and supplies. Displaying the famous image of Rosie the Riveter, Cuomo said, "Ventilators in this fight are like the missiles of World War II."

President Trump also stressed the ability of American industries to retool their production capabilities to produce the goods needed for the fight. This has always been a feature of the U.S. economy, as witnessed in the World War II mobilization. During the 2008 financial crisis, and elsewhere, LaRouche repeatedly called for the retooling of the U.S. automobile and aerospace industries to meet the urgent need to rebuild American infrastructure. Obama ignored LaRouche's recommendation, and instead, decided to downsize the production facilities and bail out the investors.

This time it can be different. Many U.S. companies have already begun the process of retooling to make ventilators, personal protective equipment and other needed supplies. Companies that may need temporary government backing, such as the airlines, will only receive it on condition that the support be used to back the employees and not the executives and investors.

These measures are, of course, small relative to the size of what must be rebuilt as the virus is conquered, but they represent a shift in thinking, that, if understood and nurtured, could portend a paradigm shift. Under these conditions, financial reforms of the type demanded by LaRouche, such as a return to Glass-Steagall banking, national banking, a credit system and a New Bretton Woods system, are ripe for implementation, either de facto or de jure, as war-time measures.

Similarly, a four-power agreement among the U.S., Russia, China and India to establish a new set of international relations is an immediate prospect. The original Bretton Woods agreement was the result of a war-time conference convened to lay the foundation for the post-war recovery. A New Bretton Woods agreement to lay the foundation for this post-war recovery can grow out of the international collaboration now emerging to fight the virus.

LaRouche often spoke of the sudden change in thinking that occurred in the U.S. on the morning of—and days immediately following—the attack on Pearl Harbor. Suddenly the axioms that had seemed to be so solid in the past, were no longer valid. People were forced to look toward the future, instead of clinging to the past. Citizens and their leaders became instruments of a higher mission. This must happen again today.