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EDITORIAL.

WE of the peace movement do not pretend to think alike about most things. In fact, on most things, we have all sorts of widely different ideas.

But, on one thing, we agree; that the onset of another world war would be the greatest catastrophe conceivable.

We know that there are a few who welcome war, because it means a chance to gain either glory or money.

We know that there are small groups of men who are deliberately planning war, are almost ready for war, because they see it as the only way to solve their many problems; political, social, economic.

But we of the peace movement say; if you are Christian or Buddhist or atheist, capitalist or Communist or nothing in particular, another world war will tear down all your hopes and plans, will nullify all your work, will smash and mutilate men and structures of men on a scale that is beyond assessment.

That is why we say to Christian and atheist, capitalist and Communist; don't deceive yourself that your own beat is more important than the question of peace and war. Because, if you allow another war to be started, you may not have a beat to follow.

We know that this "east-west" war is very close; that huge stocks of arms have been piled up; that much warlike propaganda has been disseminated to convince us that war is inevitable, even necessary.

And in the past, when such a stage has been reached, no one has ever succeeded in preventing the war.

Yet we say this; there is one thing that has never been tried. Never before have the ordinary people, who carry the burdens and sorrows of war, but gain no riches or power, really set out to prevent a war.

We of the peace movement are convinced that this is the only thing that can possibly stop a third World War—the unity and determined work and action of every honest man and woman who will not tolerate the plan to "solve problems" by war.

Above all, we are concerned with the one real threat of world war at present—that between the United States and the Soviet Union, which will automatically involve Australia, Britain and many other countries.

But this does not mean that we wait for that war to start before we act. We know that would be too late.

We know that wars are already in progress; wars in Indo-China and Malaya, for instance, where imperial armies are being used to dam and delay the tides of national independence and social change which have been painfully developing in colonial Asia for many generations.

And, with the insane phrase "Send Australian troops" still ringing in our ears, we see that in this there may be the beginning, quite soon, of the third World War.

We see that the policies of our leaders, slavishly subordinated to the Pacific strategy of the dominant American military and industrial circles, can produce nothing but hatred and conflict in the Pacific; that the policies of intervening in Asian affairs, of rebuilding imperial Japan, of making Australia a key rocket research and military base, and of prolonging the suicidal chase for "super-atomic security" are all linked together and all point straight to war.

We see too that, like Christians, Puritans and Chartists at other stages of history, we are reviled and hated by those who represent and espouse these policies of war.

We are called names—we are "evil charlatans," "enemy agents," "hypocrites" and "Communists," as all people have been in history who dared to expose and oppose the dearest plans of authority.

We accept these miserable shoutings as clear indications that we are striking home to the truth—and more, that our resistance is regarded as dangerous to the prosecution of the plans for war.

Yet we know that smearing, banning of halls and restriction of hard-won democratic rights are also part of war preparations. And that those who insist on peace will have to face more than insults.

That is why this great, first Australian Peace Congress is not just a meeting to consolidate the efforts of peace workers from all over Australia.

This congress must be our real starting point in understanding the issues and the dangers, in determination, and in the will to draw all sections of our people into our struggle for peace.

To-day there can be no greater betrayal than the pursuit of policies which will plunge our country into war; no greater loyalty than to work to keep Australia free from the horrors of atomic conflict.

The fight for peace must become a living reality for every Australian. Only this can ensure a safe and happy future. It is to this end that our Congress is dedicated.