

repel from these shores. This is a problem for the United States primarily. The program of obtaining supplies from Canada formerly brought in from outside the hemisphere, combined with longer-term schemes for the development of Canadian resources till now neglected as uneconomic, may solve the problem in time. But this is a subject that will require attention in the very near future.

It has become plain that the defense agreements have barely scratched the surface of what remains to be done to bring the two countries into practical collaboration. These are emergency meas-

ures, it is true, taken to meet extraordinary contingencies, but it would be short-sighted not to realize the direction in which they are tending. The one positive outcome of this war, already apparent, promises to be the drawing together of the English-speaking nations in an economic unity of permanent significance for the future of the world. The commodity problems of the Americas are such that there can never be a permanent solution within the borders of this hemisphere alone. Closer relations between the Americas and the British nations of the Commonwealth can help to solve them.

## The Role of Adult Education in a Defence Program

By MORSE A. CARTWRIGHT

From an Address presented at the Maritime Conference on Adult Education, Nov. 9, 1940

IT seems to me, in my own country at least, that adult education may play a very great part indeed in the problems of defense—problems that are common both to Canada and the United States. Primarily we must agree to think of the term “defense” in its widest sense. It must include our material defense, yes—ours and our neighbors. But it must also include the defense of our social institutions, of our way of life and of our economy. Above all, it must include a willingness to defend, and to fight for, our attitude toward the spiritual considerations that raise our civilization above that of the beasts of the field. Our attitude toward and belief in freedom comes first. And from our attitude toward freedom springs our attitude toward the more concrete forms of common

decency, common morality, religion, family life, tolerance. Out of these, in turn, come our common concepts of loyalty and faith. These latter supply the elements upon which our governments must be based if they are to endure. Taken in their entirety, these common elements, forms and concepts comprise a democratic system, to which we adhere in the face of a frightened world seeking false safety in the empty promises of totalitarian dictators. It is in the promotion of public understanding of these factors that adult education finds its most important responsibility.

My remarks about this important new responsibility of adult education reveal the stage that our thinking now has reached in the United States. We are behind Canada in that respect for we have had the doubtful advantage of months that may even stretch into years during which presumably we have been, and shall be, making up our minds to the

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. M. A. Cartwright is the well known Director of the American Association for Adult Education. A report on the Maritime Conference on Adult Education at which Dr. Cartwright's address was delivered is contained on p. 93.



necessity of a supreme effort and a supreme sacrifice. You, having reached a decision, can go ahead calmly with faith and confidence, your doubts reduced to a minimum. We, on the other hand, must justify each action leading to our own defense by some sort of logical process, even though to the more thoughtful and far-seeing of us the final result is inescapable. And there is lurking in the minds of some of us, the awful fear that there may not remain time for this deliberate and characteristically democratic process of making up our minds. In any case, it seems to us that adult education can heighten and speed up this process, and that out of a wide public understanding of issues may come a unity that will not only facilitate decision but—of equal importance—will assure prompt and solid action when the time for action appears.

It will interest you to hear, perhaps, of the plans for adult education now underway in the United States, in that these plans, if they possess validity at all, are as operative after a declaration of war (if that should come to us) as they are before. Also they afford certain possibilities of collaborative action as between Canadian adult education and that in the United States.

We reason that adult education must accept a new set of responsibilities connected with our national defense. These new responsibilities derive entirely from the exigencies of the international situation, and they are felt with terrific force by a set of agencies, both public and private, that for many years have stressed the close inter-relationship between adult education and democratic processes. We reason that adult education should and must erect an important bulwark for the national defense, in increasing public understanding of the issues of national policy involved and—through public understanding again—in easing the social strains that inevitably accompany a great national effort.

We see the problem resolving itself into one of mass education, utilizing all the media in general use in adult

education, such as the forum, the discussion group, the radio listening group, the film forum, the library reading group, the social and group work organizational programs, the public night schools, university extension, adult education councils, workers' education groups, etc. I could multiply the list indefinitely, for there are as many as forty different general types of adult education all of them capable of being utilized in the present emergency.

Two methods of approach suggest themselves: the first, a direct frontal attack upon the general public at all levels of educational experience; the second, an indirect approach through the civic and educational leadership in the various communities. The first relies upon combined intellectual and emotional appeal, induced through widespread use of the mass meeting, the pamphlet, the radio and the motion picture. The second is more legitimately educational and intellectual in its appeal to the leaders to bring about a diffusion of knowledge and understanding among the population.

We propose to make both of these approaches, but in the reverse order. That is, our first moves are now being taken with the civic leadership on a national basis. We plan that the second step of mass education should then take place as a logical sequence under local community initiation and control. With the local ground well under cultivation, the opportunities for national service to these defense ends follow logically, through the use of national radio networks, the production and distribution of motion pictures, and the publication of many popularly written, simple statements of fact and opinion in book and pamphlet form and through the popular media of magazines and newspapers.

In accordance with this reasoning, therefore, the American Association for Adult Education is this month announcing its Emergency Defense Program under five main headings. The first under this program includes the distribution, through the *Journal of Adult*



*Education*, of materials designed for the intellectually elite—the leadership. These materials will deal with the philosophic, economic and moral issues of the present international and national situation. Attempts will be made to analyze and explain the ideologies involved in the world conflict. This is adult education for the group in the United States that needs it least—the intellectually and educationally privileged, as it were. In size, it constitutes the smallest part of our program.

The second is a field effort—a typically American performance involving a speeding up process in organization. The number of local councils, associations, and committees will be multiplied and the local councils now established will be strengthened and aided by various national services. The local councils will be encouraged to constitute themselves the educational service branches of the local defense councils, now springing into existence all over the country. A series of special conferences, regional in nature, on adult education and national defense will be arranged. They will cover the country and will afford opportunity for discussion of defense issues and for the exchange of information concerning local defense programs.

The third step is one of national service to the field agencies and individuals in the local communities. Two publications will be regularly issued for distribution as general follow-up to the field efforts. The first of these, now tentatively named "Community Councils in Action" will aid in the solution of organizational and program problems. The second—a more ambitious effort and designed to be of service to leaders and students of defense problems alike—will constitute a guide to the general study of American defense. In some respects it will not be unlike the excellent "Food for Thought" series of the Canadian Association for Adult Education. The series will be called: Defense Topics and will consist of original articles, compilations, annotations and digests all dealing with issues in the national defense and the defense of democratic culture.

Written in simple style, with a certain amount of illustration, with selected bibliographies, this publication will be particularly useful to adult group leaders as well as to members of the groups. Each issue will feature at least two major defense topics, with of course a large amount of supplementary material dealing with other topics. The first issue, to be out shortly for instance, as its two features deals with the defense employment situation and with the international tension in the Orient. The contents will be highly factual, though opinion will not be barred when so labelled. The material will all come from carefully authenticated sources, many of them not available generally either to the public or to the educational leadership. At least eight of the papers will be published during the first year.

The fourth step in this program carries the Defense Papers one stage further. Syllabi, study guides and leader aids for discussion groups desirous of undertaking consecutive study of defense issues will be provided in a new series to be known as "Defense Digests". The Digests will cover many of the topics dealt with in the Papers, but will be more specific as to content and in greater detail. A considerable number of such publications is contemplated, depending upon the degree of usefulness attained.

The fifth enterprise consists of the preparation of study guides and discussion questions based upon existing and readily available sound motion pictures. Selections are being made by the Association staff from a large number of films. Careful analysis of these pictures will result in a series of discussion questions, annotated references to reading and other materials for study, so that even a lay or unprofessional leader can conduct an interesting, informative and provocative course from the films and the printed key to their use.

These are some of the problems upon which the American Association is at work. Do they not afford ample opportunity for cooperation and collaboration with the similar group in Canada? I bespeak that collaboration in increas-



ing measure as the months go by. Interchanges of this character can be productive only of good. Already we have profited from the experiences of the Canadian Association and we make good use of its publications as well. We can continue to exchange our ideas and the lessons learned from operation to our important mutual benefit.

There is finally another aspect of the problem that must not be overlooked. Many thoughtful educators in Great Britain, in Canada and in the United States are deeply concerned at what will happen to the moral and intellectual fibre of society throughout the world after peace is attained. There is the dire possibility of course that after the eventual and inevitable collapse of Hitler, the ensuing peace might well be worse than the awful destruction of the war itself. The threat of civil revolution throughout the world, aided and abetted by militant Bolshevism, is something to ponder.

It is necessary, if this sort of cataclysmic collapse of society is to be avoided, that there should be carefully thought through plans of reconstruction. And that education, particularly adult education, should play a great part in such a world reconstruction is as in-

escapable as it is desirable. Many of you, no doubt, are familiar with the famous, and in the best sense, historic document that came forth at the close of the last war—the British Ministry of Reconstruction Report of 1919. Something like that document must be written for the whole world. Not one but many nations must collaborate in the writing of it. It is none too soon that those of us who are concerned with education should be addressing our thoughts to the problems inherent in world educational reconstruction. For educational opportunity of high quality, for the adults of the world no longer subject to school discipline, may mean, exactly and fearfully the difference between disaster and orderly readjustment to changed conditions. Social realignment, vast in its implications, is sure to follow world conflict. Learning and understanding on the part of millions now untouched by education will be vital and quite probably of actual life and death importance. We dare not close our eyes to our part as educators in such a gigantic task. We would not if we could! Should we not make our preparations now? We people of the two most western countries have both the ability and the precious time. Have we the will to do so?