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<div align="center">Militarism as an Important Force in Modern States</div>

Introduction

Militarism has remained a definitive feature of modern states since the development of capitalism and its expansion as imperialism. The examples of German and Japanese militarism can show what effects it had on the world. However, it evolved into a modern trend, which has its violent legacy in the post-colonial world.

The description of militarism

Militarism is defined as "the belief that a country should maintain a strong military capability and be prepared to use it aggressively to defend or promote national interests" (Definition of Militarism). "Militarism is not specific to capitalism", - Karl Liebknecht wrote in his book Militarism & Anti-Militarism (K. Liebknecht). However, he goes on to continue: "The capitalist stage of development is best met with an army based on universal military service, an army which, though it is based on the people, is not a people's army but an army hostile to the people…" (K. Liebknecht). Another source defines militarism as the description of a "society in which war, or preparation for war, dominates politics and foreign policy" (Militarism and Antimilitarism). Thus, it is logical to formulate the following pattern: capitalist societies attempt to maintain a strong military capability, ready to promote national interests by way of wars; that mindset dominates both in politics and foreign policy. Having that in mind, it is easy to describe two cases of militarism in the twentieth century.

German militarism

German social and economic growth in the nineteenth century led to redefining the nation's attitude towards the army. The German Empire was born during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870-1871. The victory consequently strengthened the army's status and stressed it as a symbol of German national pride. Growing prominence of the military resulted in prioritizing their role in the nation's destiny (Chickering, 198). The process was followed by the militarization of the culture. Such 'military virtues' as obedience, discipline and vigilance were given much attention. Military motifs were introduced into schools. This way, one of the primers used for instruction had individual letters linked to specific military objects, for example: the letter 'P' was associated with 'pistol' (Pistole) and the letter 'K' – with 'bullet' (Kugel) (Chickering, 200). School instruction was accompanied by army-like discipline that sanctioned children's corporal punishment.

The militarized culture was propagated through festivals, parades and other expressions of 'patriotism'. Veterans' associations became the mouthpiece of official propaganda. International tensions and Germany's pursuit of national goals encouraged aggressive tendencies in the society. This policy produced its fruit in aggressive nationalism. Heinrich Class, the leader of the Pan-German League, had his book published in 1912, where he blamed the Jews for all the country's troubles (Chickering, 211).

Those are some of the characteristics that brought Germany into World War I and its outcome halted the negative tendencies for a while, manifesting again in the 1930s.

Japanese militarism

Japanese industry and trade expanded rapidly during World War I due to the fact that its economy was barely influenced by the effects of the war. It was followed by the dramatic growth of the population and that brought about problems, since the country was

heavily dependant on imported resources. Most of raw materials were imported from elsewhere, which made Japan very vulnerable.

Since China was torn by revolutions, the Japanese viewed that country and especially its resource-rich region of Manchuria as a target of expansion. In the 1920s the military became distrustful of the civilian government and began to oust civilians from all offices. Meanwhile, military extremists started to take control of Japan's foreign policy. The Kwantung Army, stationed on the Kwantung Peninsula (Southern Manchiria), was run by extremist officers who had plans of seizing the whole territory of the region. Finally, they organized an incident in order to justify the invasion. A bomb was exploded on the track of the Japanese-owned South Manchuria Railway (Japan's Military Aggression in East Asia 1931-1937). Although it caused little damage and no loss of human life, it was used as a cause to bring in troops to 'protect' the railroad.

This aggression was followed by annexing other Chinese provinces and occupying French, English and Dutch South-East Asian colonies. Later developments led to signing a pact between Germany and Japan and Japan's entry into World War II.

Evolution of militarism

Based on the above two examples, it is easy to see some common traits of militarism. It is founded on national pride, territorial claims, need for resources and strife for dominance. Militarism is propagated by government or its bodies (army) and is strongly supported by local population. Militarism is aggravated by challenges that a particular country faces. For example, Turkish militarism was provoked by its Pan-Islamic aspirations and British militarism was caused by Britain's intention to keep its hegemony over its territories and retain raw material producing areas.

One of the examples of British militarism is the Anglo-Boer War, which took place in South Africa in 1899-1902. Its primary target was control over the gold mines in the

Transvaal. The outcome of the war also affirmed British control of South Africa and, thus, strengthened its status as a global power (The South African War).

That mentality was retained and used again by the Western powers in a refined form in the 1950s and 1960s in numerous wars fought in Africa and South-East Asia to keep control over territories rich with mineral resources and over key areas, such as the Suez Channel.

Violent legacy in today's world

As oil became commodity number one in the world at the end of the twentieth century, it is obvious why world powers have been paying so much attention to oil-rich regions of the Middle East. The degree of control over oil fields will determine the strength of any particular country in the nearest future. Moreover, a chain of 'democratic' uprisings that swept over North African and Middle Eastern countries was a harsh response made by Western powers in return to the idea of their own gold-backed currency that would have caused chaos in debt-laden Western countries (Washington).

Conclusion

It is obvious that blunt twentieth-century militarism that was a natural product of the emerging capitalist society has evolved into a more subtle form of manipulation manifesting in 'democratic' movements and 'wars with terrorism'. The primary goal of those operations is to secure the position of puppet governments that would be flexible and play to the interests of international corporations.

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