

Editors' Foreword to *War Inc.*

In *War Inc.* Seymour Melman sought to introduce a new generation of readers to his lifelong critique of the operation of the war economy in the United States, and the ongoing process of deindustrialization that has destroyed much of America's once formidable manufacturing industries. Aimed at a wide variety of readers, the book draws on and synthesizes Professor Melman's prior research and books, especially *Pentagon Capitalism*, *The Permanent War Economy*, and *Our Depleted Society*. It also extends some of the arguments and research of his major 2001 study, *After Capitalism: From Managerialism to Workplace Democracy*.

After Professor Melman's death the responsibility and privilege of completing the editing of the manuscript came to us. Ben Abrams worked with Professor Melman throughout the process of creating *War Inc.* as his research assistant. As editor of *After Capitalism* and former research assistant, Patrick Deer was also familiar with the project's design and intentions. Our work included restructuring of the chapters and in some cases reordering of material. The phrasing of some sentences has been changed in order to clarify their meaning, however, we attempted to remain faithful to the book's spirit and design and sought to preserve the style and tone of the original throughout. The current edition also includes a biographical Afterword by Jonathan Feldman, which places the book in the wider trajectory of Seymour Melman's career.

The manuscripts of *War Inc.*, along with sections of Seymour Melman's unfinished memoir, *I Did Not Change My Mind*, may be found with the rest of his papers in the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library at Columbia University: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/archival/collections/ldpd_4079724/index.html Readers interested in following up on the book's arguments and on current initiatives on economic conversion and reindustrialization should also visit the Economic Reconstruction website at: www.economicreconstruction.com.

As editors, we aimed to keep *War Inc.* as close to Professor Melman's original intent: to produce a book aiming at the widest possible readership, intervening in a wartorn present, and offering, in workplace democracy, economic conversion and reindustrialization, a vision of an alternative future. The book has already found an international readership through its Italian translation as *Guerra SpA: L'economia militare e il declino degli Stati Uniti* (Città Aperta Edizioni, 2006). Though *War Inc.* was written in 2003-2004, the issues that it presents continue to command urgent attention today. Deindustrialization and war economy continue to degrade the material basis for the lives of countless ordinary citizens.

Ben Abrams

Patrick Deer

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