

Spending for Peace

We thank Julius Duscha for calling public attention to the corruption and waste that often afflict government spending on defense. But his article "The Disarmament Blues" [Part III, Arms and the Big Money Men, May], which describes fears that a depression would follow disarmament, is unduly pessimistic.

May the women add a note of optimism? Building schools, playgrounds, hospitals (or any other spending, public or private) creates almost twice as many jobs as the same amount of spending on defense contracts and would put to work a larger proportion of the unskilled workers, including Negroes and inexperienced teen-agers who make up so many of the unemployed. Furthermore, defense spending steals from the civilian sector (which is 90 per cent of the economy) most of our scientists, engineers, and technicians. . . .

We agree with President Johnson: "Any lessening in international tensions that permits significant arms reductions consistent with national security will increase our ability to raise our rate of economic growth."

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