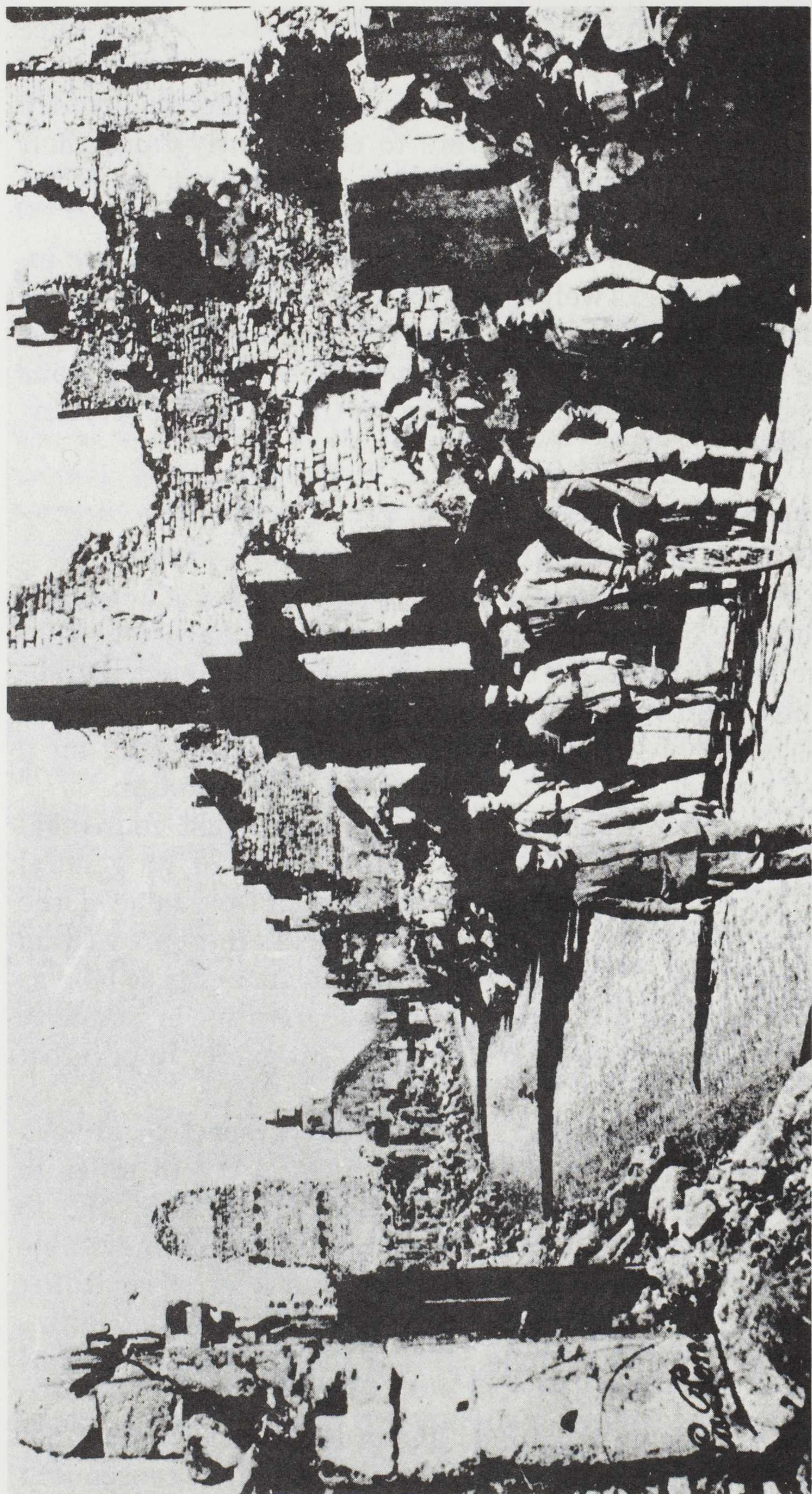




Verdun, 1915. No serious capitalist historian would deny that the fundamental cause of the First World War, which destroyed so much of Europe, was economic competition for capitalist markets and raw materials. The current U.S. struggle against Japan and West Germany is merely an updated version of this.

unemployment of millions of workers who are the most vital resource that the country has.

What *Business Week* has done with its 20-page analysis of the decline of the U.S. position in world economic affairs is to present a completely one-sided view, geared specifically to evoke a herculean effort to recoup the vast super-profits which it claims the U.S. ruling class has lost as a result of the relative decline of its imperialist share of the world capitalist market.

Business Week proposes a vast reindustrialization plan to overtake the competitive edge that rivals of the U.S. have in certain industries at the present time.

It is of supreme importance for the vanguard of the American working class to clarify what the industrial decline of the U.S. is all about and not, in the confusion, fall prey to assuming the ideological standpoint of the ruling class, particularly as it pertains to both Japan and West Germany.

NOT RECENT PHENOMENON

The position of *Business Week* is that the industrial decline of the U.S. is a recent phenomenon, but it is not. What has to be borne in mind is that both Japan and Germany have been capitalist rivals of the U.S. for the better part of the twentieth century. This was also the case with Britain as well as France.

Imperialist competition was the cause of the first imperialist war which caused so much destruction in Europe and in other parts of the world and took 20 million lives. There is scarcely a serious capitalist historian who would dare to deny that the fundamental cause of the First World War was basically the economic competition for capitalist markets and raw materials of which the current U.S. struggle against Japan and West Germany is merely an updated, space-age version.

The basic motivation for the U.S. struggle against both Japan and Germany in the early thirties was not just to defeat Hitler and Tojo but to break the back of German and Japanese competition against the U.S. and its allies. Having defeated both Germany and Japan, U.S. imperialism and its allies found themselves face to face with an invincible socialist fortress in the USSR.

Rather than cripple West German and Japanese industry to