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NOTES
PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE
ON
CONDUCT OF WAR

BY
LIEUTENANT COLONEL W. A. HOLBROOK
CAVALRY

*Assistant Commandant
The Army Service Schools
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas*



FORT LEAVENWORTH:
Army Service Schools Press
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Notes—Preliminary Conference on Conduct of War

BY

LIEUT. COLONEL W. A. HOLBROOK, *Cavalry*

THIS subject is of very great interest at the present time, not only on account of the tremendous struggle now in progress in the Old World, but also because there is a growing belief that the U. S. will have occasion to put its principles into practice in the not distant future.

The book used as a text for these conferences is little more than an outline of a subject which has been more exhaustively treated by many other writers. Among these the best known is Clausewitz, whose writings followed close upon the Napoleonic wars. Although he spent twelve years in this work he never completed it to his satisfaction. The manuscript left by him was, however, finally published in the exact shape in which it was found. Clausewitz, who has given us this most profound analysis of war, is perhaps more responsible than any other man, for the trend of modern military thought in Europe, and, according to Colonel Maude, furnishes the key to the interpretation of German political aims—past, present and future. He reveals war, stripped of all accessories, as the exercise of force for the attainment of a political object, unrestrained by any law save that of expediency. That expediency is the controlling law in the present war, is shown by the ruthless way in which treaties have

been disregarded and the sovereignty of neutral nations violated.

Colonel Maude says that what Darwin did for Biology, Clausewitz did for the Life History of Nations nearly half a century before him; for both have proven the existence of the same law—the survival of the fittest. By fittest, is not to be understood those ethically best, but rather those most able to carry on the struggle for physical existence. Neither of these writers was concerned with the ethics of the struggle. To both, the phase or condition presented itself neither as moral or immoral any more than are famine or disease, but as emanating from a force inherent in all living organisms and which can only be mastered by understanding its nature. Likewise, when we consider war in its connection with the lives of nations, we come to look upon it merely as an instrument in working out the same great law of nature which applies to all forms of life—individual or national—the survival of the fittest.

I speak of Clausewitz thus at length because from his writings, and from those of his school, can be gleaned the thoughts which, it appears, are today a living and perhaps a determining force in the activities of most great nations.

Among these thoughts are found the following:

Clausewitz:

“Victory can only be insured by the creation, in peace, of an organization which will bring every available man, horse and gun, in the shortest time, and with the utmost momentum, upon the decisive field of battle.”

Von der Goltz:

“The best military organization is that which makes all the intellectual and material resources of a nation available for the purpose of carrying a war to a successful issue.”

Von der Goltz:

“The statesman who, knowing his instrument to be ready and seeing war inevitable, hesitates to strike first is guilty of a crime against his country.”

Lea:

“For a nation to suffer defeat through unpreparedness, is to all practical purposes as though it were on the field of battle.”

“The self-deception of a nation concerning its true military strength increases at the same rate as its actual militant capacity decreases.”

“Nations that expect to war in the future with hastily raised levies of volunteers against standing armies are doomed to death.”

“A man who enlists in the army has the right to demand that those who are his leaders shall know to the fullest extent the duties appertaining to their office.”

“The most promiscuous murderer in the world is the ignorant military officer. He slaughters his men by bullets, by disease, by neglect; he starves them, he makes cowards of them and deserters and criminals.”

We may not agree with the ethics of all the above quotations, but so long as they are advanced as rules of conduct by leading writers we must give them due consideration. It is likely that ethical considerations of civilization will, in the future, as they have done in the past, give way to the necessities of the case where the life of the nation is at stake. Hence in the discussion of war we must treat it as a condition neither moral nor immoral, but as a natural phenomenon incident to the struggle for existence which all living things must undergo.

It is in this spirit that the nations of the continent, taught by drastic lessons, have accepted the teachings with the result that Europe became an

armed camp. Peace was maintained by an equilibrium of forces, the unstable nature of which was recognized, and for years military writers have been picturing it as tottering to its fall. We are witnesses of its destruction. It must be reestablished after the present war, or the countries of Europe must submit to the domination of the victor.

The present war is not, as some have thought, the unexpected struggle arising from a comparatively trivial incident in Serbia. Such incidents are often made the occasion for war, but the causes will as a rule be found deep seated and of long duration. Most wars of the present day are brought about by a gradual change in economic conditions.

In his book, "America and the World's War," Roosevelt, after stating that it is a crime against our nation not to be prepared so as to guard ourselves and hold our own in war, goes on to show that it is possible to make out a case in favor of every nation engaged in the present war. He says in effect:

The English feel they fight not only for themselves but for justice, civilization and lasting peace. Russia regards the welfare of her whole people as at stake, and that success means an end of militarism in Europe; that the conflict was essential to growth of freedom and justice. The Germans believe they are in a fight for life—Teuton against Slav—civilization against what they regard as a menacing flood of barbarism. They believe the war was an absolute necessity to German national existence; believe they are fighting for the existence of generations yet to come. The French feel, with passionate conviction, that this is the last stand of France. If she fails now, she will lose for all time her place in the forefront of modern civilization.

Of Austria-Hungary, Serbia and Montenegro,

the same is true. To each of these peoples the war seems a crusade for justice and right. France and England believe their existence is at stake, and that it depends upon the destruction of the German menace; while Germany believes that, unless she can cripple the western powers, she cannot protect herself against the mighty Slav people.

* * *

Last year I attended a dinner at the Commercial Club, Kansas City. One of the speakers, after paying a tribute to commerce, went on to say that commerce was the foundation of civilization. That by means of accumulated wealth resulting from commerce, communities are able to build churches and schoolhouses, establish parks, museums, art galleries, and bring into being all the attributes of the city beautiful. The next speaker got up and said that business is civilization. By the same token it might have been stated that civilization is war. I believe it is possible of demonstration that a high degree of civilization, as measured by the standards of business, and a long continued peace are incompatible.

Civilization creates new wants and goes hand in hand with invention. Labor-saving machines result and the products of labor are greatly multiplied. This causes abnormal consumption of natural resources which must be supplemented from outside sources, and the surplus products of manufacture demand outside markets and safe lines of transportation thereto.

As long as a country has plenty of room within its own borders, little attention is paid to outside markets; but when the density of population increases greatly and natural resources are becoming exhausted, or when a large surplus production

awaits a market, the search begins. When more than one nation is so situated, competition arises. War is the logical result of extreme competition which, in some cases, may be averted or postponed by diplomacy backed by proper military preparation.

Adams, in his book "The New Empire," in a study of trade routes from earliest times, arrives at the same conclusion. He starts with the propositions that: (a) Self-preservation is the most imperious of instincts and (b) that in his efforts to prolong life man has followed the lines of least resistance.

"Without food or the means of defense death is inevitable. Few communities have succeeded in entirely feeding and arming themselves from their own resources and they have supplied their deficiencies from abroad. No man will knowingly use inferior weapons in war, but the apprehension of want is almost as drastic as the fear of defeat. Even savages try to improve their tools. For example, in the stone age inhabitants of Central Europe imported jade axes from the confines of the Desert of Gobi because jade takes a better edge than flint. The cost of conveying jade from Khotan to Germany represented prodigious sacrifice. From the beginning men have obtained wares from strangers." Thus we see built up trade routes, rivalry, competition, war. Such has been the history from the beginning, and such it is likely to continue until the end.

If we examine the situation in Europe at the outbreak of the present war, we find that Germany's 208,000 square miles were crowded to a density of 311 per square mile, and that the population was increasing at the rate of more than 1,000,000 per year. It did not require the gift of prophecy to foretell that one day it would have to burst its bonds in order to find an

outlet for its teeming millions. On one side we find Germany's neighbors of a density of 20 per square mile; on the other, a density of 191. When the flood of population reaches such a height over the lower levels all around, great indeed must be the artificial barriers to keep the lowlands from being inundated. The break would naturally be through the line of least resistance. No nation of Europe wanted to be responsible for that least line. So we find the artificial barriers being constantly raised higher, until Europe has, for years, been described as groaning under excessive military burdens.

If we care to pursue the examination, we will find that practically all the uninhabited portions of the globe have been parcelled out among the nations of the earth whose density of population was fast reaching the safety limit. England, with a home density of 376 per square mile, had acquired 13,123,000 square miles of colonial territory. France with a home density of 191 per square mile, had acquired 4,165,000 square miles. Belgium, with a density of 666, had added 913,000 square miles, or ninety times the home area. Germany with a home density of 311, had colonial territory aggregating 1,026,000 square miles. Russia, with a home density of 20 per square mile, needed none, and had few colonies. It will be seen that Germany's colonial possessions relative to population were comparatively small, and they were located in a portion of the earth not well suited to the white man. Since the Franco-Prussian War the industrial growth of Germany has surpassed all belief. Production has far outrun its growth in population. This great production has resulted in an unusual demand for natural resources, which means a corresponding demand for more territory and wider markets.

There are two ways in which a nation, whose population has become overcrowded, provides for its maintenance. First, by increasing the intensity of cultivation so that larger crops may be produced from the same area. This Germany has done in a marvelous degree, and yet is scarcely able to supply the wants of the present population, leaving no margin for the increase of future generations. Second, by engaging a considerable portion of its population in manufacturing industries and exchanging surplus products for additional food supplies. This, too, Germany has done in a manner to bring unprecedented prosperity to the country. This situation, however, demands larger natural resources, and Germany has been looking for what she terms "her place in the sun," and in this way we may find one of the causes of the present war.

Homer Lea has attempted to formulate a law of natural progress: "A nation, in order to preserve its equilibrium between over industrial production and under political development, should withdraw from industrial occupations, for military purposes, a portion of the male population. First, not greater than what labor-saving inventions can, by being substituted therefor, more than replace by increased productive energy. Second, the number of men so withdrawn not to be more nor less than that number which is deemed imperative to acquire and to hold whatever additional national resources are necessary for the increasing productivity of the nation." He says: "Productive energy increases in geometrical ratio to increase of civilization. Resources of a country diminish in increased ratio to the increase of both population and productive energy."

Germany has kept well within the stated law so far as her standing army is concerned. It has

even been demonstrated that the devotion of a large number of her male population to military pursuits has proved to be an asset, rather than a liability, in her material development. It is said that those who serve in the army have more than the time so served made up to them by increased longevity; also, the services of each such man are considered, in civil life, worth about \$100 per year more, by reason of the training and discipline he has received.

INTRODUCTION TO VON DER GOLTZ

In the introduction to his treatise on the Conduct of War, the author impresses upon us the fact that it is impossible to discover two situations exactly similar; and that, even if we did, the personal equation of those concerned in carrying them out would be so different that the application of even unquestioned rules for the Conduct of War would and could not be expected to produce constant results. Of the truth of this there can be no doubt; and it is possible, too, that book learning may lead us into the error of overestimating the value of cast iron rules of generalship and the extent of our own knowledge. There are many people ready, however, to keep a commander from falling into error. I read, over a year ago, when von Hindenburg was making his drive in the Mazurian Lake region, that he received about two baskets full of letters daily, advising him how to conduct the campaign.

It is not alone in modern times that those who have least to do in making war profess the greatest knowledge of the art. For in the days of the Romans we hear the Roman general, about to depart for the war, calling upon any such as claimed to have special knowledge, to come with him and demonstrate their knowledge in the field or refrain, while

sitting at home, from indulging in criticisms of the campaign.

A ROMAN GENERAL'S OPINION OF "MILITARY CRITICS"

Lucius Aemilius, a Roman consul, who had been selected to conduct the war with the Macedonians, B. C. 168, went out from the Senate House into the assembly of the people and addressed them as follows:

"In every circle, and, truly, at every table, there are people who lead armies into Macedonia; who know where the army ought to be placed; what posts ought to be occupied by troops; when and through what pass Macedonia should be entered; where magazines should be formed; how provisions should be conveyed by land and sea; and when it is proper to engage the enemy, when to lie quiet. And they not only determine what is best to be done, but if anything is done in any other manner than what they have pointed out, they arraign the consul, as if he were on trial. These are great impediments to those who have the management of affairs; for everyone cannot encounter injurious reports with the same constancy and firmness of mind as Fabius did, who chose to let his own authority be diminished through the folly of the people, rather than to mismanage the public business with a high reputation. I am not one of those who think that commanders ought never to receive advice; on the contrary, I should deem that man more proud than wise, who did everything of his own single judgment. What then is my opinion? That commanders should be counselled, chiefly, by persons of known talent; by those, especially, who are skilled in the art of war, and who have been taught by experience; and, next, by those who are present at the scene of action, who see the country, who see the enemy; who see the advantages that occasions offer, and who, embarked, as it were, in the same ship, are sharers of the danger. If, therefore, any one thinks himself qualified to give advice respecting the war which I am to conduct, which may prove advantageous to the public, let him not refuse his assistance to the state, but let him come with me into Macedonia. He shall be furnished by me with a ship, a horse, a tent; and even with his travelling charges. But if he thinks this too much trouble, and prefers the repose of a city life to the toils of war, let him not, on land, assume the office of a pilot. The city, in itself, furnishes abundance of topics for con-

versation; let it confine its passion for talking, and rest assured, that we shall be content with such councils as shall be framed within our camp."

—*Livy, Book XLIV, Chapter 22.*

The fact that bare theory may sometimes lead us into error does not, however, give us excuse for neglecting theoretical work. Wolseley, while expressing the hope that his officers will not become book-worms, goes on to say that none of them need hope to rise to distinction unless they spend many hours a week in close study. General Sherman used to tell us that war was the best school—but when war was not available military schools must be substituted. We are at present so far removed, in point of time, from any great war of the past that we are unable by direct contact with the actors to gain the necessary knowledge. We therefore study their work and the conclusions drawn from it enunciated by students of military history.

As we study the war now in progress we are impressed with the great importance attached to rapidity of mobilization and concentration. In countries ready for war these matters have been worked out in the greatest detail. But as they are part of the conduct of war that can be provided for in time of peace, the author has omitted their discussion in the present treatise.

It is, however, of much interest to note the great preparations made in Western Europe to gain the advantage that comes from rapidity in these things. The railway net of Germany that provides seventeen strategical R. R. lines to the Russian frontier shows the importance she has attached to this subject. Untold millions have been expended in the construction of strategic railways and in the completion of her railway net.

But war has to be carried on sometimes where

railways are few or nonexistent and therefore the author begins his work after concentration is completed, which, in spite of the important role played by the plans of mobilization and concentration, remains the most important part of the war. This work, therefore, excluding the system of intelligence, the publication and transmission of orders, limits itself to a discussion of the various ways of manipulating troops that can be used in war.

THE RELATION IN WHICH WAR STANDS
TO SOCIETY

The governments of all civilized nations maintain permanent diplomatic missions to regulate their political relations one with another. These missions are largely engaged in smoothing out the difficulties that arise between them. A large part of our people have indulged the vain hope that all differences might be so determined and, as a means to bring this about, arrangements have been made between many countries providing for the submission of their differences to courts of arbitration. The Peace Conferences at the Hague have encouraged the world to believe that in them was to be found the means of avoiding war, and many have held to this idea with pathetic determination. Doubtless many differences of a minor nature, which do not affect the honor or the existence of nations, will be adjusted in accordance with this idea. When the question is one resulting from the natural growth and expansion of a state, the struggle becomes inevitable.

In all ages war has established the land marks of history.

“During the past 3,400 years there have been only 334 years of peace. Nations have succeeded one another with monotonous similarity in their rise, decline and fall.

“Wars—victory—a nation. Wars—destruction—dissolution.”

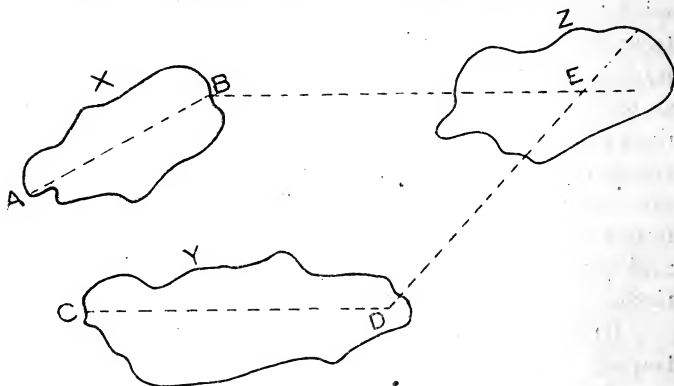
From the beginning, nations have had their origin in war. “Their periods of greatness have been coincident with their military prowess and with the expansion consequent upon it. When nations cease to expand the zenith has been reached. And as in the individual there is no standing still—so with nations when they cease to grow a gradual decay sets in. There is an invariable law of national existence that the boundaries of political units are stationary only momentarily—they must either expand or shrink. It is by this law of expansion and shrinkage we mark the rise and decline of nations.”

China is no exception to this law. “Of the twenty-five dynasties that have ruled China, each was founded by a soldier and each in due time heard from surrounding armies the melancholy taps of its approaching end.” The effort to prevent war by arbitration is an effort to substitute transitory and ephemeral forces for those which are immutable; changeless to all except very great periods of time. International arbitration fails to differentiate between the sources of war and their immediate precipitating causes. Disputes arising between nations are generally the manifestations of a deep seated source of trouble which will ultimately lead to war. Sometimes these outward manifestations are so widely separated from the coming war that they seem scarcely connected with it. And again they are followed so closely by war that they are considered its cause.

We are told that investigation shows that when two nations go to war, their interests have for years been moving along converging lines. That the time of the approaching war is fixed by the angle of

these lines of convergence and the rate of march along them.

These lines of convergence often depend on the political conditions of the countries involved. Let this be illustrated by the following diagrams:



Let X represent a country which has in the beginning an abundance of room, natural resources and markets. So long as this condition exists, little heed is given outside regions, and the development moves along A-B until the limits of home resources are being reached. When this occurs, attention is directed toward outside regions as, for example, Z. When a second nation Y is similarly situated and its attention is drawn to Z as an advantageous trading point, the lines of interest of X and Y converge on Z. The intensity which these nations are travelling along those converging lines will determine the time of conflict. Note our growing interest and that of other nations in the markets of South America. Will arbitration be able to pry these lines of convergence so far apart as to prevent war? It is entirely safe to say that diplomatic missions will not always be able to achieve success in these directions and that the regulation of political relations will, in

the future as in the past, be carried on by means of war when they have passed the realms of diplomacy.

The intense rivalry, national jealousies and race hatred will often baffle diplomatic skill. We may, therefore, assume that until human nature has changed and the present law of the growth, continuance and decay of nations has been superseded, war will play its old time part and upon it will be founded the birth of new nations and destruction of old.

Foreign writers speak of the inevitability of war and the necessity of being prepared for it as being so clear as to be transparent. Since war is the continuation of political aims (politics dependent on the law of growth) with no superior power to enforce the decrees of courts of arbitration, recourse must be had to this court of last resort. In casting around for a means of preserving peace it is found that the best safeguards are sound military organization. If a nation builds her artificial barriers high enough, another nation which, by the laws of growth, must burst its bounds, will find its line of least resistance running across some weaker nation. When nations are prepared for war, the result of collision is very great and there is a corresponding reluctance to enter upon it. A weak state surrounded by stronger neighbors invites war, and the author states that if states neglect their military organization from false motives, they court this danger from their own supineness.

What constitutes the strength or weakness of nations? When we apply the test do we find our own nation strong or weak? The idea that the U. S. is a strong nation prevails among the greater part of its inhabitants. If the idea of war with any foreign power is suggested, it, as a rule, provokes a

smile coupled with some remark pointing to our unvarying success in wars of the past and of our unlimited resources for future conflict. Doubtless our histories are largely to blame. They made the war of 1812 a shining example of success, but the true story of the conflict is to us both interesting and unpleasant.

Our wonderful resources and vast accumulated wealth are elements of potential strength. But in order that they may be of real use in an emergency, they must be called into play long before the outbreak of war. It is a far cry from a mountain of ore to a battleship. Natural resources must be greatly transformed before they become available for war. The hearings before the military sub-committees show how largely the element of time must be considered in applying our wealth and resources to the purposes of war. We have large numbers of men out of which to manufacture soldiers, but perhaps at no period of the world's history have training and organization been of greater importance than at the present day. Strength will only be found in numbers when combined with training and organization.

Great accumulation of wealth excites the cupidity of others and is perhaps more likely to be the exciting cause of war than a remedy. Our attention is often called to the patriotism of our people, and no doubt in many localities it is of high order. But does it surpass that of the Japanese, for instance, where unlimited numbers are always willing to volunteer for the most forlorn hope? Bravery and courage, too, are likewise placed among our assets. But read of the heroic conduct displayed in the present great war—can we hope to excel in these respects?

Napoleon tells us that poverty and privation are the best schools for the soldier. In this respect the schooling of the American soldier has been bad. The standard of living is too high—meat two or three times per day—good clothing, good houses. It must be noted, however, that poverty and privation must not be such as to destroy the physical strength. I once visited the Cockerell Iron Works at Serang—near Liege, Belgium. I saw men handling machinery who received 2 francs 75 centimes per day with which they provided for their families—black bread, coffee without sugar, a small piece of meat on Sunday—the cheapest sort of clothing. Here we find the schooling for the soldier pretty good. The Belgian soldier is pretty well satisfied with a loaf of bread for his ration.

When the life of a people degenerates into the individual scramble for accumulation of wealth, it is probable that success brings with it a decay of military virtues. Wealth cannot buy (after war comes) battleships, nor as a rule cannon, nor ammunition. Nor can it at any time purchase patriotism or valor, or courage or other military virtues.

“With wealth comes vanity; with vanity arrogance; opulence and arrogance provoke war, while at the same time the nation possessing these characteristics has become more or less defenseless and sooner or later must pay the penalty.”

It is true the cost of war is in almost direct proportion to the accumulated wealth of a country. The simple ration, clothing and small pay prevailing in poor countries will not answer in a country like the U.S. Notwithstanding the effect which the accumulation of wealth has on individuals, it is of almost vital importance that a nation on going to war should have abundant resources at its command.

We may perhaps enumerate, as elements of strength in any nation:

1. Racial homogeneity.
2. Sufficient numbers without overcrowding.
3. Wealth sufficient to provide for materials and expenses of the war, but not of such proportions that it has become the ruling factor in individual life.
4. Military preparation (which means increase in military value).
5. A strong government capable of curbing popular passions.
6. Isolation.

As to the first of these, homogeneity, I would like to relate an incident out of my experiences during the recent Colorado strikes. I took the first Federal troops to Trinidad where the situation was very tense. Policemen had been displaced by strikers. Many properties had been destroyed and there had been large loss of life. Not long after my arrival in Trinidad I caused the strikers to be assembled in order that I might address them. Among other things, I tried to impress upon them the greatness of the U. S., telling them that the small number of men I had with me was but a symbol of its power and authority, and that as large a force as needed would be sent to establish and maintain order. Having made, as I thought, my point, a Greek striker on the outside of the crowd was heard to remark: "The first thing we know the United States think they own this whole damn country!" Men of his stamp are not an element of strength.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Financial institutions render periodic statements of assets and liabilities. If the U. S. were to render a similar statement as to the assets and liabilities of its military standing some might say "insolvent".

Among the liabilities we would probably find enumerated the Monroe Doctrine, the Philippines, Hawaii, Panama Canal, hoarded wealth, nonhomogenous population, unpreparedness, etc. On the other side of the balance sheet; natural resources, large territory, numerous population, patriotism, bravery, etc. To the military man the balance sheet would be quite unsatisfactory. There are two ways in which it might be made to present a better showing. 1st.—By decreasing the liabilities, discarding the Monroe Doctrine, and eliminating all colonies, giving up our demands for an open door in China, surrendering our rights as to the freedom of the seas, etc. 2d.—Allow the liabilities to stand and assess the stockholders to provide ample means of defense. The assessment must be made before war comes, else defeat must be the result.

The best military organization, according to Von der Goltz, is that which renders available all the intellectual and material resources of the country in the event of war. Where all the resources of men are available it must follow that many are not trained to a high degree of efficiency. If a large number of untrained men are called into the service, the regular establishment is necessarily weakened by the details of officers to look after the increased force; if numbers are called in beyond the ability to provide for their instruction and control, general weakness will result. Bernhardt, in considering this subject, has come to the conclusion that greater strength will be added by high training of small units. The newspapers tell us of the great importance that Kitchner attached to the training of soldiers. A large part of the army England has raised is still in England. The fact is, the value of untrained troops is so comparatively small that Kitchener seemed willing to risk

defeat rather than put new troops in until they have had several months intensive training.

With the forms of organization in the various countries, you are more or less familiar. Great Britain and the United States are the only great powers adhering to the volunteer system. Both of these countries have believed what they termed their "splendid isolation" gave warrant to this form of raising armies both in peace and in war.

But splendid isolation is very much a thing of the past. The English Channel has grown very narrow by reason of modern means of transport, aerial and otherwise. Oceans have shrunk amazingly and when a great maritime nation once gains control of the sea, it is comparatively an easy matter to carry on overseas expeditions. The size of a single expedition landed would depend on the carrying capacity of the ships available. Germany is credited with sufficient shipping to embark more than 300,000 men at one time. Isolation must therefore be counted on less and less as a guarantee of protection. England has been forced to the conclusion that compulsory service is essential to the safety of the nation, and in the United States that idea is now appearing and receiving much consideration.

I believe every man owes a certain part of his life to the government which protects him; that compulsory service is the only fair, just and democratic way; and that the United States should adopt a method of raising armies more in accord with this idea, the size of the army to be proportioned to the necessity of the case. These necessities are measured by the degree of envy and cupidity excited in other nations on account of its accumulated wealth and by the intensity with which it is travelling, with other nations, along convergent lines of inter-

ests. At present, we are quite lacking in reserve of trained men with which to strengthen our regular establishment in time of war. Even more than the lack of trained men will be felt the lack of trained officers and non-commissioned officers.

THE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WAR AT THE PRESENT TIME

The statement of Von der Goltz that war nowadays generally appears in its natural form, i.e., as a bloody encounter of nations in which each contending side seeks the complete defeat or, if possible, the destruction of the enemy, finds vindication in the present war, as well as in the two or three preceding ones. There has been no thought of gaining success by merely massing troops on the borders of another state. Rather it has been a determination to come to close contact and bloody decisions from the start.

Nations following the precepts of Clausewitz realize full well the futility of going to war with anything less than their entire strength. For this reason we have seen the increasing military budgets of European powers and a corresponding growth in the size of their armies, until we hear of the ability of European nations to put a trained army of from 14,000,000 to 20,000,000 men in the field.

The present war has shown the futility of trying "to gain victory without fighting solely by dint of maneuvering." Air craft is perhaps largely responsible for the decrease in the value of maneuver. Large masses can rarely be shifted from one part of a battlefield to another without it becoming known to the adversary in time to permit him to meet the movement.

It therefore becomes, more than ever before, a matter of heavy fighting and decisive engagements

in order to bring success to one side or the other. Consequently, in countries where much thought has been given to war, we find states putting forth their whole strength in any quarrel in which they may have engaged. Putting forth their whole strength does not necessarily mean, however, that every man of the required age is thrown into the struggle. Many must be retained at home to keep the routine administration going. Others may be held in training ready to replace losses and to strengthen portions of the line where needed.

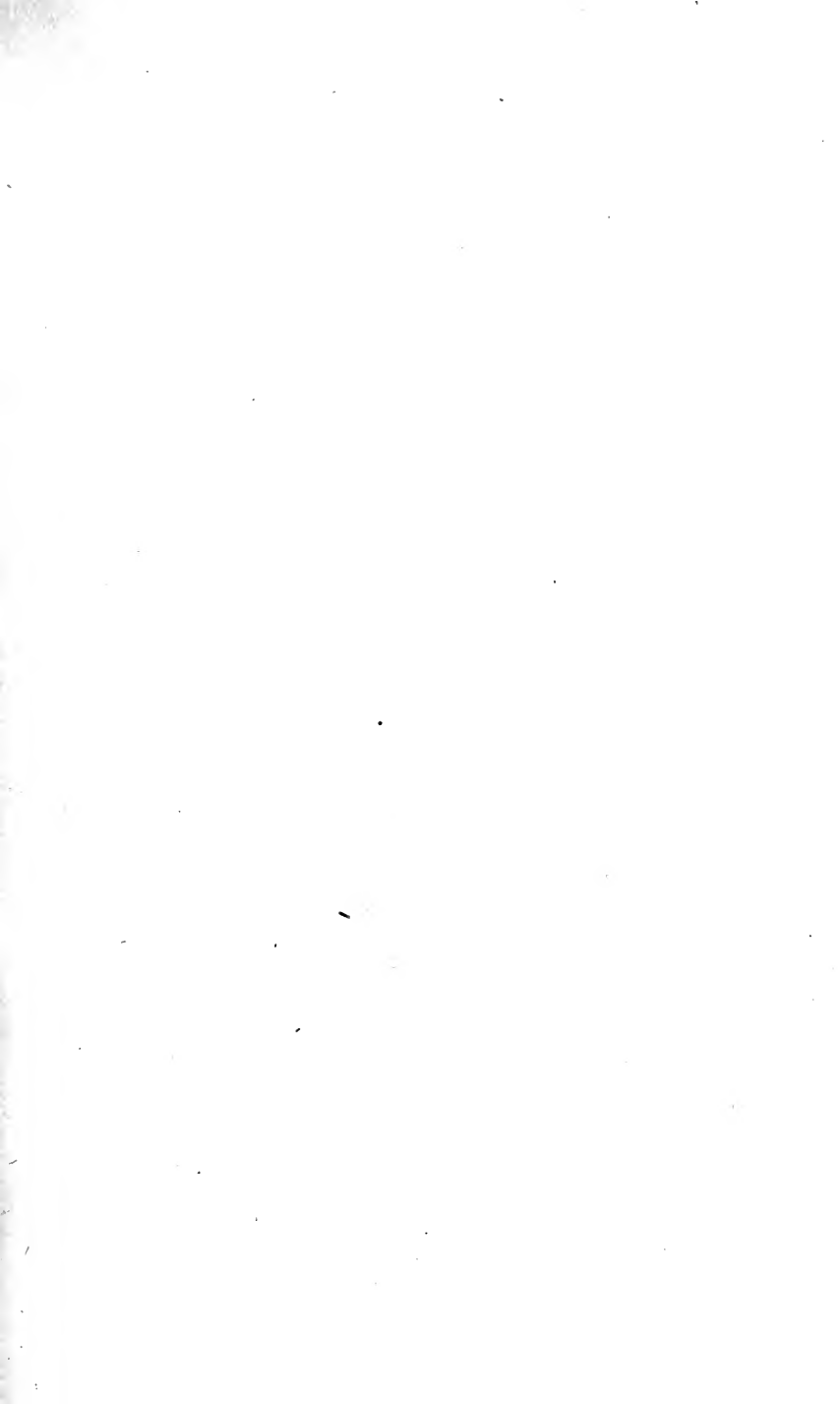
The putting of less than the whole strength of a country into a quarrel could only be conceivable in cases of great disparity in strength, trivial causes, etc. Sometimes a great power may try to apply pressure on a weaker state, to bring about correction of abuses, by sending a comparatively small force for the purpose—e.g., our expeditionary force to Vera Cruz. Had the United States and Mexico been of approximately equal strength, war would have been inevitable. The passions of the people would soon have been roused until the full strength of both nations would have been brought into play.

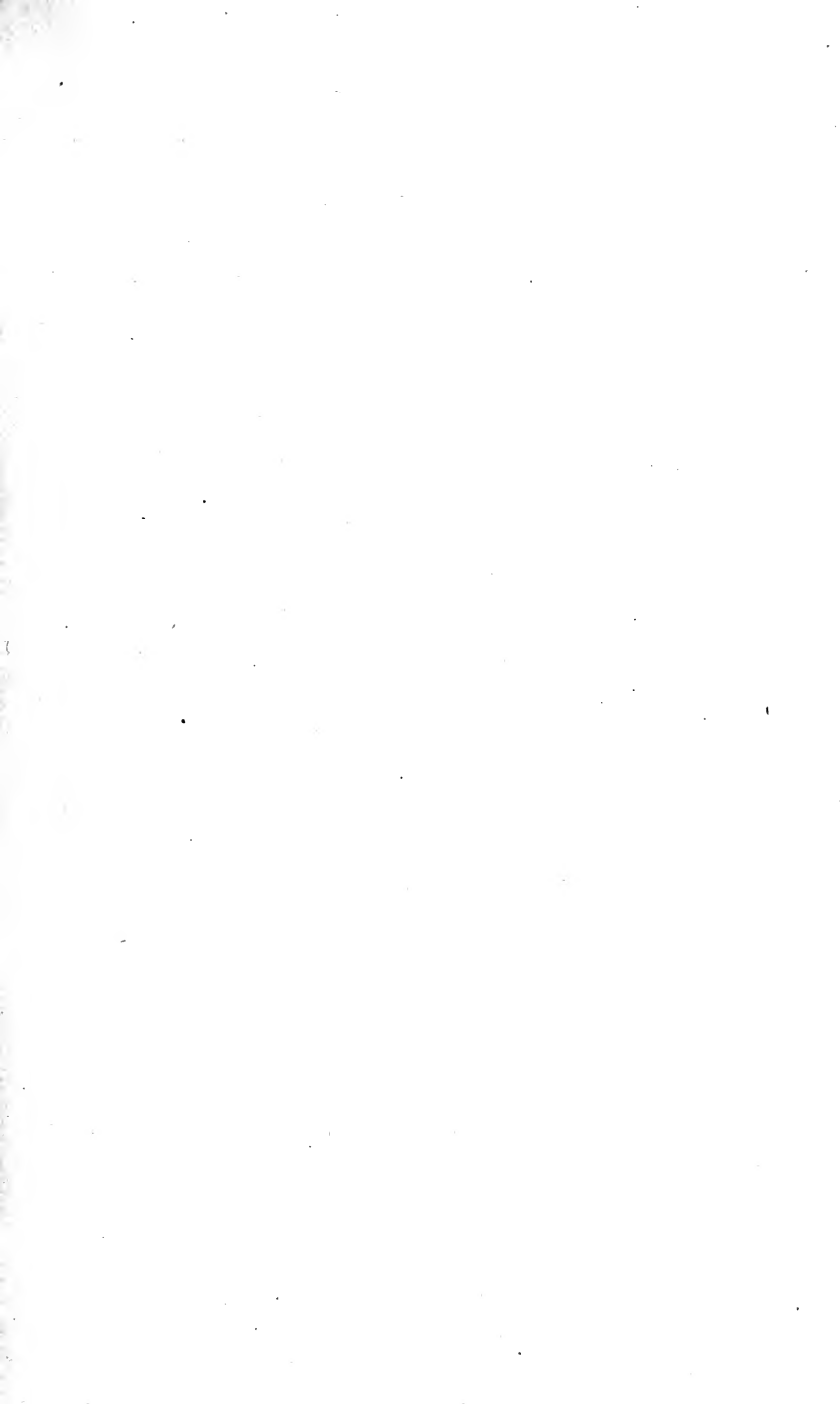
It follows that in modern warfare isolated blows with a fraction only of the fighting force will not answer the purpose. Every effort must be put forth to compel the enemy to accept the desired terms of peace.

War therefore takes on its absolute form—the destruction of the enemy—which means the destruction of the power of resistance of the enemy. Even in its absolute form it does not mean the entire destruction of the enemy's forces. The loss of a portion will generally make a sufficient impression on the whole mass to bring about the desired end. Napoleon says the moral is to the physical as 3 to 1.

A rapid defeat of a considerable portion of the enemy will bring this powerful moral force into play. When the destruction has proceeded far enough, the enemy will feel himself unable to continue the struggle and peace will result.









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