

The  
POSSIBLE  
PEACE



ROLAND  
HUGINS



## *Notice*

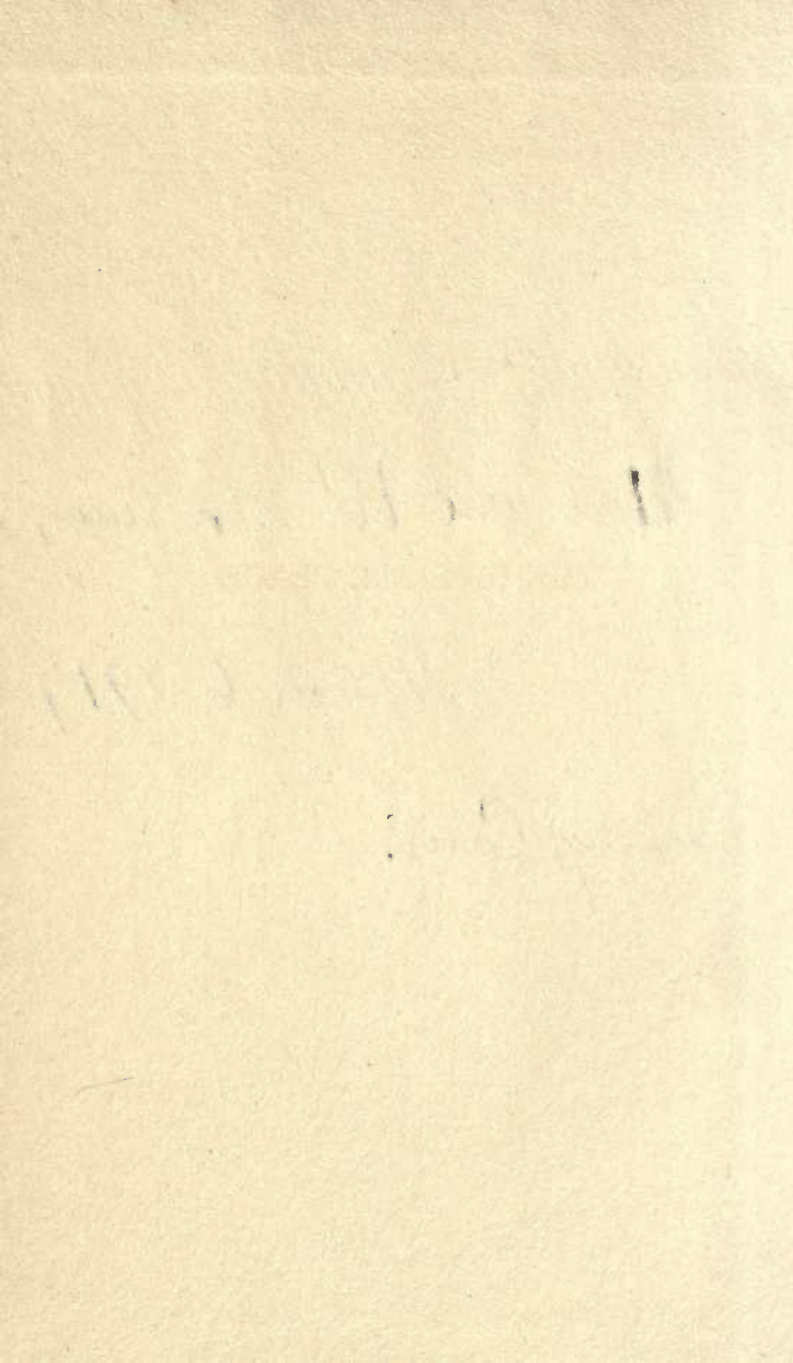
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Malbone W. Graham, Jr

March 6, 1917

Berkeley, Calif.



**THE POSSIBLE PEACE**





# THE POSSIBLE PEACE

A FORECAST OF WORLD POLITICS  
AFTER THE GREAT WAR

BY

ROLAND HUGINS



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TO MY  
MOTHER  
THIS BOOK IS  
LOVINGLY DEDICATED



## FOREWORD

The world war approaches to an end. I do not mean to say that its end in actual time is near; of that we know nothing; it may last a month more, or a year or three years. But mentally we—America and the world—are in the final stage of the struggle. We are thinking principally of the problems of the settlement. We have passed through the early stages of astonishment, horror and despair. We have emerged from the long months wherein our nervous force was exhausted in hope, expectancy and anger. We are war-weary—however much some of us may attempt to cloak our weariness behind declarations of our tenacity and our invincibility. We are prepared to maintain the present cruel tension as long as necessary; but we realize that the coming of peace, if not imminent, is at least inevitable within the discernible future. And our best thoughts are directed toward that peace we climb so painfully to reach.

What kind of a peace shall it be? How long

will the peace last? What will the nations do, once their ears and minds are no longer dulled by the incessant roar of guns, to make the recurrence of these world catastrophes less probable? On these questions the opinion of mankind is concentrating with an intensity and unanimity never before bent, perhaps, on any problem whatsoever.

A number of times I have heard Mr. Norman Angell remark on the optimism of peace advocates in the United States:

“American pacifists are certainly hopeful persons. Talk with one of them for five minutes, and in nearly every instance he will draw from his pocket a complete scheme for the federation of the world. Only follow this arrangement, he will declare, and you shall see the end of war.”

A stable peace between the great nations has been the hope of many of the ablest and best of men for generations. They have urged many plans. And obviously, up to the present moment, all their plans have failed. War is a knot that has defied all fingers. Possibly there is no person alive with mind keen enough at once to cut through all the tangled issues of war and

peace, and to state his truth in such a manner that the world will be convinced of it. Where an Emanuel Kant, a Tolstoy, a Jaurès, and ten thousand less conspicuous no less earnest men have failed, who dares to think his proposals carry the magic they missed?

I have at least tried to avoid the error of proposing a neat and facile scheme for insuring international peace. I have not attempted to minimize or slur the difficulties. My discussion does not disclose any sovereign remedy, any infallible program, for abolishing wars. It attempts a humbler task: to state clearly the nature of the problem; and its purpose will be achieved if it defines the international situation in accurate terms.

I do not attach so much importance to the outcome of the present war as do those whose sympathies have been strongly enlisted for one side or the other. Whatever the result, it seems to me, the general problem of international peace will not be much nearer a solution. I am unable to entertain any strong hope that a new and better era is just around the corner, and I do not, therefore, advocate disarmament as an immediate step. For the United States I favor a large

measure of preparedness, and to this view I am no lukewarm adherent. I maintain that this country should spend, squander, if you please, large sums on armaments—for reasons I hope to make clear in the course of the discussion. Nothing has done more harm to the cause of American “pacifism” than its recent identification with a policy of keeping our military and naval forces in an impotent condition. If the conclusions I have reached hold true, they constitute at once a plea for peace and an argument for preparedness. To some persons this may appear a paradox; but only to those, I think, who have been led to take a distorted view of pacifism and its program.

I do not write as a partizan or advocate of either side or of any country in the present struggle. I am actually neutral. I must insist on this. The neutrality of my attitude does not spring from a studied effort to avoid partizanship; it springs from the inherent nature of the conclusions I have reached. I do not believe that any one nation, any one man, or any one military caste, can be made to bear chiefly the responsibility for this war. It resulted from a vicious system, not from personal wickedness.



It is the most terrible drama ever enacted, but its Iago cannot be designated.

To write on the subject of permanent peace in the midst of such a war as this yields both an advantage and a disadvantage. The conflict in Europe affords us all an intimate sense of war's reality, and keeps before our minds images, faint or vivid, of its methods, its consequences, its horrors. It corrects our speculations with the touchstone of visible fact, and bares the power of influences formerly hidden. Its terrible red illumination brings all human actualities into sharp relief.

But on the other hand, the war has deafened a good part of the pacifist's audience. The bulk of the people in belligerent countries, and in slightly lesser degree their intense sympathizers in neutral countries, are not really interested in the problems of peace at all, however much the word may be on their lips. Their effective interests center in the problem: How can we win? Pacifists have often been represented as fanatics who want peace-at-any-price. But the truth is that most persons in these heated days have been converted into fanatics who want victory-at-any-price.

My own view is that any impartial analysis of the causes of this war, and of possible future wars, must of necessity displease both pro-Allies and pro-Germans. It will bring to light facts highly distasteful to the citizens of every great nation involved. It will puncture the comforting belief that we alone are honorable and good and that the enemy is dishonorable and wicked. For after all the notion that on our side fight white angels and on our opponents' side fight black powers of evil, is one of the delusions bred by strife. The soldiers in German and Austrian trenches are very much the same as the soldiers in French and Russian trenches, neither fiends nor demi-gods, but mostly brave and unfortunate men.

It ought, as a matter of fact, to be recognized as a misfortune that American opinion has succumbed so completely to Old World prejudices. Many Americans seem unable to recognize any neutral point of view, any American point of view, any judgment "above the battle." They see only the possibility of a blind partizanship for one side or the other. The terms "pro-German" and "pro-Ally" sum up their ideas

on the war. And this superficiality may entail grave consequences for America herself. It is impossible for the United States to formulate a wise foreign policy unless it arrives at a sane interpretation of world politics. To throw, if I am able, a little light on the correct policy for America, is one of the main aims of my discussion.

This war is like the sun and we like spell-bound men forced to gaze at it. It blinds us; it often makes us feel that all emotion is inadequate and all logic futile; but we cannot tear our eyes away. It has made more than half the world mad; it constantly threatens to claim new victims. Our only hope is to put before our eyes some smoked glass of truth, some shaded spectacles of understanding, so that we may see through it and beyond it to a better solution of human difficulties. I have some sympathy with those who think the spectacles cannot be found. G. Lowes Dickinson recently remarked: "History has never been understood, though it has often been misunderstood. To understand it is perhaps beyond the power of the human intellect."

But the effort to understand it, however inadequately we may be equipped for the task, is the one endeavor supremely worth while.

R. H.

Ithaca, N. Y.

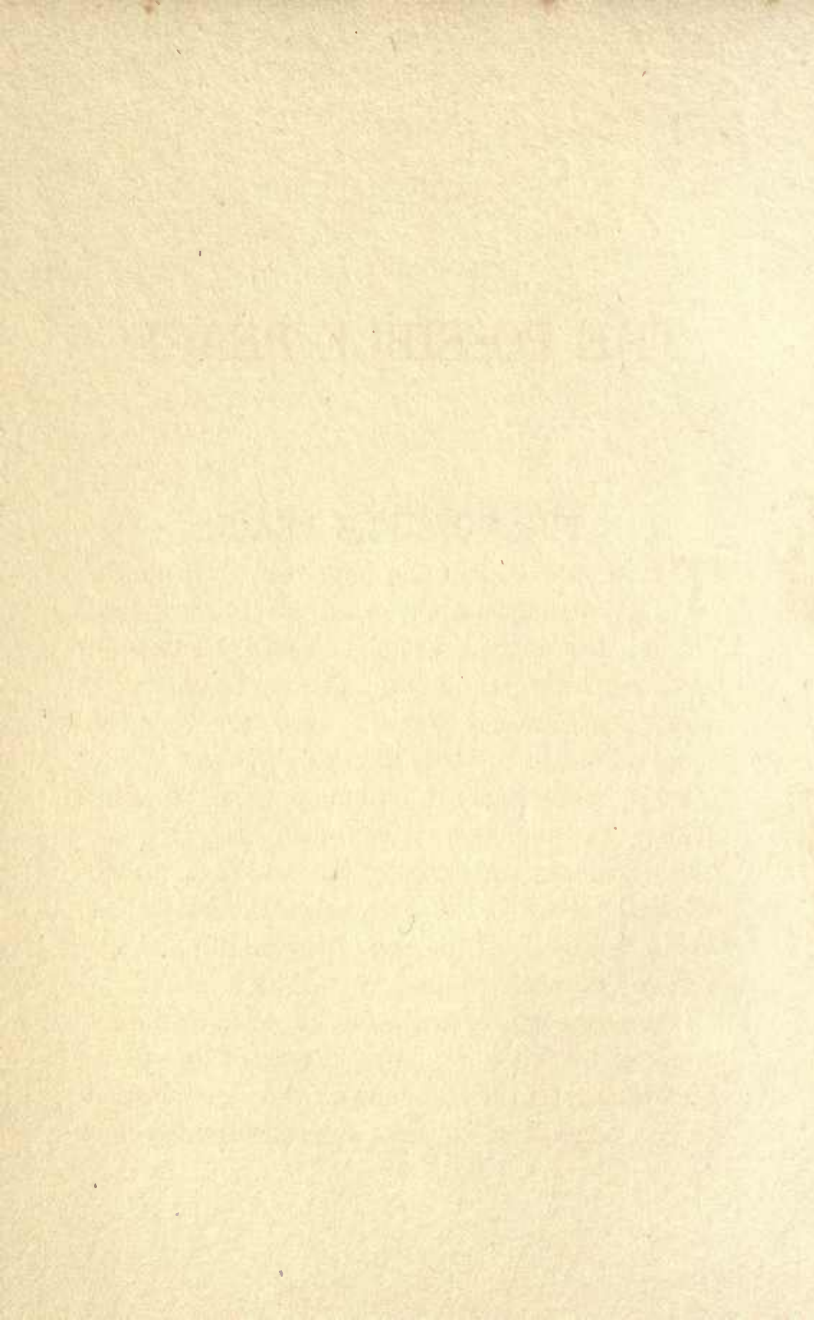
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**THE POSSIBLE PEACE**





# THE POSSIBLE PEACE

## I

### THE COLLAPSE OF PACIFISM

**T**HIS war will in the long run, it seems to me, strengthen the cause of International Peace. But at the present moment it has served to discredit the professional peace advocate with many hard-headed people. And for this the peace advocate has only himself to blame.

I was in England attending a peace conference during the summer of 1914 (of all times!). We began our sessions early in July and for a month offered free advice to Europe on the subject of war's futility. At the end of the month Europe plunged into the greatest war of all history.

Our peace conference came to an abrupt end. Some of us felt very much chastened in spirit. For during that idyllic month when we prattled on the edge of a volcano, our discussions fre-

quently turned on the "impossibility" of a general European war. We pointed out that modern methods of transportation and communication had knit the world into one vast community; that modern inventions in the instruments of destruction had made its losses too appalling to be faced; and that the interlacings of commerce and finance were so complex that the nations could not afford to sever them. A great war, a world war, was absurd. It was unthinkable. It was impossible.

And in this view we were merely voicing again what had been asserted in peace circles for a number of years. It was a favorite theme, this demise of Mars. If any one doubts that even the acutest of the pacifists were fond of scoffing at the possibility of a great conflict, let him turn and reread pacifist literature; let him, for instance, glance at the War Number of *Life*, October 2, 1913, wherein David Starr Jordan, Norman Angell, and other prominent peace advocates give their testimony. Mr. Angell starts his statement with this: "If by 'Universal Peace Among the Leading Powers of the World' you mean the cessation of military conflict between powers like France and Germany,

or Germany and England, or Russia and Germany, that has come already.”

It is true that Mr. Angell and his fellow pacifists did not always talk in this happy strain. It is further true that their contention had behind it a definite purpose: an endeavor to put brakes on the quickening race in competitive armaments. But let us be fair with ourselves. Here is an instance where pacifists allowed their hope to vitiate their judgment. They proclaimed their ability to gage contemporary history, and they made a total miscalculation. The impossible war came. Armageddon confounded the prophets.

The war took most of us in America by surprise. We had been listening to the pacifists, and to European statesmen when they arose to make speeches. We knew the Powers were heavily armed, but we thought their armaments were meant to repel attack and to “preserve peace.” We saw no adequate cause for a gigantic quarrel. We imagined the world was agitating itself mainly over schemes of social reform—workingmen’s compensation and insurance, government ownership and inheritance taxes. Many of us held a comfortable philoso-

phy of social evolution—something to the effect that mankind was moving from a past state of predatory struggle, through a present state of commercial rivalry, to a future state of world coöperation.

Then a preposterous thing happened.

The heir to the Austrian throne, whose name we did not know, was assassinated in a town whose location we had to look up afterward on the map. That did not excite us in the slightest, for assassinations in the Balkans had occurred before. But for some mysterious reason that murder was a match. From it the whole world caught fire. After a brief pause, the diplomatic situation became suddenly "grave." At the end of twelve more days all the chief Powers of Europe were at death grips.

The war brought to many of us a desperate consternation. We went about saying such things as these: "The world has collapsed," and, "The war is shattering the foundations of civilization," and, "Things can never be the same again." In all this, of course, we merely revealed how far we had misunderstood what was taking place. The world has not collapsed. Only the idealized, pacified world of our imag-

inations has collapsed. "Civilization" has not changed. We simply had been defining civilization in abstract and sentimental terms. We had lived through contemporary history, but we had not seen what was going on under our eyes. The ten years, for example, between 1904 and 1914 were crowded with significant and highly tragic events, and had we watched and interpreted these events we should not have been surprised at the war. But we were completely out of touch with reality.

During the Napoleonic wars, we may be sure, men thought the world had collapsed into a new shape. The disturbances introduced by the French Revolution were as cataclysmic for Europe as the present conflict. Yet human life flowed through and past those shattering times intrinsically unchanged. The world, it is true, has never been quite the same since Waterloo. But in looking back now at Napoleon's period we do not regard it as a break, a total severing with the past. It stands out rather as an important historical incident—that is all. So with the Great War that began in August, 1914. Fifty or one hundred years hence it will rank as precisely that—an historical incident.

A tale is told of a French lieutenant who, playing the piano, was entertaining a group of comrades in a château close to the firing line. The roar of the German guns could be heard; and the lieutenant was playing Wagner. One of his fellow officers reproached him, "How can you bear to render German music?" The lieutenant replied, "What was once beautiful is still beautiful."

And so it is with men and their activities. What was once powerful to move them is still powerful, and what was true of the world to-day was true yesterday, and will continue to be true to-morrow. How shall we hope to remold the world, if we do not know the world we are dealing with?

## II

### INCURABLE OPTIMISTS

**T**HIS war may restore to us our historical sense. And we are badly in need of it. We shall perhaps slough off that naïve optimism which thinks the world can change to a new set of ideals and motives over night, or in a year; and that a few argumentative pamphlets and a few sugary after-dinner speeches can suddenly alter the instincts and passions of men. We shall again be able to take the long view.

The Great War does not seem, on the surface at least, to show historical continuity with the Hague conferences and peace jubilees of recent years. But it shows a strict continuity with the Franco-Prussian War and with the struggles of the Napoleonic period. It harmonizes perfectly with nearly all of the European wars, nearly all of European diplomacy, and nearly all of European colonial expansion, recent and more remote, throughout the nineteenth century. It

may not have been an "inevitable" outcome; it certainly was a natural outcome. And its natural sequel will be other wars, due in part to issues created by this one, and more fundamentally to those deep-lying causes which made this and preceding wars possible.

There are many persons who like to talk of this as the war which will end war, and the last great upheaval. They are the permanent and incurable optimists. They are precisely the sort of persons that went about some three years ago declaring that another great European war was "impossible." No disaster, no falsifying of prophecies, can shatter their dreams. They cannot see that a man's hope for universal and permanent peace will be great only in proportion as his respect for history is small.

That another big conflict will follow *soon* on the establishment of peace is most unlikely. The costs and ravages of war will be too fresh in every mind. But just as no individual can recall the sensations of a great pain, so the world will not keep the horrors of this struggle long in memory. The agonies will fade from view as the years go on, and only the glamour and the glory will remain. Those who suffer most in



war find relief in death; the "heroes" who survive forget their hardships and learn to boast of their exploits. The task of the peace advocate is not how to keep the world from war during the five years following the finish of this one; that will be relatively simple. The real task is how to prevent the war that is coming ten or twenty-five years from now. Israel Zangwill has said a shrewd thing: "No generation likes to die without seeing this famous thing—War—with its own eyes. Every generation must have its own war, and so the latest date for the Next War is fixed by the life of the generation now being born."

We must rid ourselves of the myopic view of history. Whatever the military decision, permanent peace will be no nearer. There is no conceivable outcome which will clear away the real difficulties of the pacifist. The war may be a draw, or something approaching a draw, leaving two huge armed camps nearly equal in strength. Or the Allies may be beaten, and France and England reduced to fourth-rate powers, as Spain and Holland were reduced. Or the Central Powers may be beaten, and Austria partitioned as was Poland, and Germany

wiped out as was Carthage. We cannot, indeed, according to our several sympathies, view these alternatives with indifference. But the military outcome, whatever its nature, can in no way solve the issues of war and peace. Old animosities will persist; new hatreds will have been created. In the belligerent countries, we know, bitterness is growing; it has already entered the hearts of the women, so that it is sure to rankle for another generation at least. So far as feelings go this will be a harder world wherein to secure peace than the world of 1910. It will be riven by deeper hatreds, wickeder rivalries.

And all the old causes of friction, opportunities for misunderstandings, and clashes of interest will remain the same as before. During the next fifty, one hundred years, the relative population, strength, armament, wealth of the nations, are bound to alter greatly. New markets will be created, new territories opened to capitalistic enterprise. Some of the old alliances will weaken and melt away, others will take their places. Some of the now powerful nations will weaken, races now feeble will take on new vigor. The face of the Orient and Africa is likely to be transformed. The temper, ambition, leader-

ship, form of government, of this people and that, will undergo changes. And all these growing, expanding, jostling political units will find again and again that their plans, their interests, their imagined interests, their pride and their aspirations, will rub and clash with one another. The most probable outcome will be new trials of strength, further armed conflicts.

There is one hope. It may be that this débâcle will strip bare the real causes of war and give our collective wisdom (what is left of it) a chance to deal with them. By the extent of its terrors and devastations it may constitute itself a merciless exposure. It may tempt us to diagnose our disease, and give us courage to perform a surgical operation on ourselves. But we have no certainty that we shall succeed. We may cause ourselves a great deal of pain, by the cutting of boundaries and the excision of sovereignties, and still miss the roots of the disease—should our diagnosis be wrong. Nearly everything depends on that—the correctness of the diagnosis. When the Congress of Vienna met in 1815 it neatly adjusted all the vexing problems of nationality and dynasty in the Europe of its day, and celebrated the beginning of a last-

ing peace. But neither the Congress of Vienna nor the Holy Alliance laid hold of the roots of dissension. Only the permanent optimist can have faith in any congress or settlement that will dispose of war.

It should be accepted as axiomatic that there are no automatic tendencies in human history. Wars are not "inevitable" in any ultimate sense, nor is there any resistless "evolution" toward a warless millennium. We are dealing here with a complex problem of the human will. It may be that during the next centuries the inhabitants of this planet will concern themselves chiefly or exclusively with the peaceful development of commerce and culture, or it may be that they will concern themselves largely with military efficiency and the problems of power. There are sturdy forces working for each result. The pacifist believes he will win out, because he thinks he has right and truth on his side, and he believes in the dictum "Truth will prevail." Yet what makes truth prevail? Truth inherently has no more control over men's actions than error, as history has demonstrated a thousand times. Truth prevails only if men possess, first, the acuteness to discern it; and, sec-

ond, the willingness to fight and sacrifice themselves for it. It is conceivable that this great war, unparalleled in its sufferings and wastes, will prove the bloody angle at which mankind turns from centuries of warfare to an age of peace. But we do not dare be sure.

### III

#### THE WORLD UNMASKED

**V**ERY little truth is at this moment emerging out of Europe. Intellectuals in the belligerent countries—the scholars, scientists, and men of letters—have succumbed to the war spirit almost as completely as the men in the street. Most of what is written is vitiated by bias and tinged with hate. The world has never had to read so much garbled history, so distorted biography, such sickening adulation of allies, and such ghastly misrepresentation of enemies as in these frenzied months since August, 1914.

And yet, paradoxically, the true features of European politics are coming into view for the first time in a number of decades. The misrepresentations have overshot their mark; they are so obviously extreme and false that the facts stand out all the more sharply. We have learned about certain secret dealings which were formerly hid from us; and, what is more im-

portant, we are able, in the light of this appalling dénouement, to give proper significance to events we had considered unimportant. It is now possible for any impartial person, particularly a neutral, to trace a more or less accurate picture of recent history. It is not a pleasant picture, but one worth examining.

We see that nearly every nation was pursuing a selfish policy of national aggrandizement. Europe was practising *Realpolitik*—which means a program of plunder. The international domain was breaking up. The larger Powers were constantly adding big slices to their territories. One occasionally encounters the notion that during the periods between wars the nations go to sleep, and drowsily preserve the *status quo* until the crash of a great war again awakens them and throws territory into the melting pot. Nothing could be further from the fact. The world in times of "peace" is by no means static. Imperial issues are being decided all the time. During the decade from 1904, when England completed the *entente* with France, to 1914, when the war broke out, a half dozen small nations were seized, absorbed, wiped out.

In 1908, in defiance of law, Austria incorporated Bosnia and Herzegovina into her empire. Immediately after the Russo-Japanese War Japan threw a treaty into the scrap basket and extinguished the sovereignty of Korea. Russia destroyed Finland's nationality and suppressed its constitutional rights in "truly Russian" fashion. During the war with Tripoli, Italy occupied the Ægean Islands, Rhodes, Kos, and the Dodekanesian Archipelago, which belonged to Greece if to any one. England, by a bargain with France and a swindle of Turkey, put Egypt under her sway.

Morocco was a part of the international domain, in the same sense that Mexico, South America, and China are now parts of the international domain. But Morocco was weak and was flanked on the east by French Algeria. The French began aggressions. Germany, who considered she had as valid commercial and political rights in Morocco as did France, objected. The conference of Algeciras, called in 1906, and attended by all the great Powers, solemnly guaranteed the independence and integrity of Morocco. This guarantee was a public and international ratification of the Anglo-French and



Franco-Spanish declarations of 1904. But France had concluded *secret* agreements with England and with Spain which permitted her to despoil Morocco. In 1911 she tore up the public law of Europe and trampled out Moorish independence. Germany was given "compensation" in the French Congo.<sup>1</sup>

Persia was struggling toward constitutional government, but was hampered by Russian intrigue. In 1907 an Anglo-Russian agreement was concluded, giving Russia a sphere of influence in the North of Persia, England a similar sphere in the South, and leaving a neutral Persian sphere in the middle. Within a few years Russia pushed her way into Persia and suppressed the Government. She silenced opposition with the most wanton cruelties, such for example as hanging up prominent Persians by the heels and disemboweling them, or nailing horse-shoes on their feet and driving them through the bazaars. England stood aside.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the history of the Moroccan adventure see "Morocco in Diplomacy," E. D. Morel, 1912.

<sup>2</sup> For the history of the Persian affair see "The Strangling of Persia," W. Morgan Shuster, 1912; the pamphlets of Professor Edward G. Browne; and "Justice in War Time," Bertrand Russell, 1916, pp. 180-202.

The cynical policy of robbing and gobbling up smaller, weaker nations has been followed in this grasping world of ours for a long time. The pillaging has gone on as a recognized thing, but as quietly as possible, and always in the name of manifest destiny, or national expansion, or the safety of the empire—or some cloaking phrase of that sort. At present the great nations, as if they were enacting some ludicrous satire, all condemn predatory seizures and seek to pose as champions of the small nations. Concerning this pose Georg Brandes, the distinguished Danish critic, has recently commented as follows:<sup>3</sup>

“Germany, forgetting her treatment of the Danish, Polish, and French elements within her borders, now stoutly maintains that she wages war to uphold the right of the smaller nations to freedom and sovereignty. She is championing this principle against Russia, whose iron heel has ground the Finnish people in the dust, who has reduced the Poles and the Jews to a state of supine servitude. She is fighting the cause of international morality against England and Russia, whose allied conspiracy against Persia’s independence significantly illustrates the

<sup>3</sup> *New York Times Magazine*, March 26, 1916.

attitude of the modern world powers toward their weak and defenseless brethren.

“Germany’s loudly proclaimed solicitude for the welfare of the smaller nations, even were it seriously meant in the present circumstances, can only impress the impartial observer as a ghastly joke. Even so is Britain’s championship of the weaker powers of a recent date. We need not go back to her 700 year-long treatment of the Irish people. But was n’t it England who, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, for purely political reasons that had nothing to do with right or wrong, without warning assailed the neutral and defenseless Denmark, bombarded Copenhagen while the Danish Army was concentrated in Holstein for the purpose of defending the country’s neutrality, purloined its fleet, and gave Norway to Bernadotte as a reward for his treachery?

“During the last twelve years five small nations have been deprived of their sovereignty. No voice of protest has been heard from any of the great Powers—for good and sufficient reasons. The Transvaal and Orange Free States lost their independence when England annexed their territory—which, by the way, she has gov-

erned excellently ever since. Persia lost her independence as a result of what in England has been called the 'Robber Treaty' between Russia and Great Britain. As a consideration for allowing England a free hand in Egypt, and for permitting her to break her promise to evacuate the country, France and Spain were permitted to split Morocco between them.

"Korea's fate points with tragic prophecy to the fate which threatens Belgium. In a treaty signed by Russia, England, and France, Japan had guaranteed Korea's independence. Korea's queen was murdered by the Japanese, as was Austria-Hungary's heir by the Serbians. Shortly afterward the Japanese deluged Korea and forced the country to join them in their war against Russia. Both Russia and Korea protested and demanded that France and England intervene, but neither power then felt a moral urge to intervene. The pledged guarantee did not enter into consideration, and Korea's independence was left to die."

Every single big nation, with the possible exception of the United States, has been playing the same game. Call it imperialism, *Realpolitik*, dollar diplomacy. It amounts to nothing

more or less than cold-blooded aggression. The responsible leaders of European countries have not been concerned with justice, democracy, rights. They have been concerned with their own class interests, and with the supposed interests of the nations they governed. These rulers, cabinet ministers, diplomats, military chiefs, have been ever alert, ever intent on their ends. They have had no respect for the *status quo*, but have been ever trying to change it. They constantly strove to tilt or upset the "balance of power" in their own favor. They have always endeavored to overreach their rivals, and were always in fear of being overreached. They sought continuously to form new alliances, and did not scruple to pledge the military and naval forces of their nations in secret agreements which they hid even from their own countrymen. They are military cliques, and they had military ends in view. They plotted not for peace, not for war, but for *successful war*. The present slaughter is quite the natural harvest of the seed that has been sown.

It was a world, further, of recurrent crises. To take only recent instances, Germany, in 1908, when Austria seized Bosnia, threatened Russia

with war, and mobilized her armies along the Russian frontier "in shining armor." Russia backed down. During the Tangier crisis of 1905 and the *Agidir* crisis of 1911, England and the Triple Entente offered war to Germany.<sup>4</sup> Germany backed down. In 1914 both sides, over a Balkan dispute, threatened war, and neither would back down. The "inevitable" war was upon us.

These successive crises—and I have mentioned but three of the more conspicuous—were often accompanied by outbursts of journalistic fury. A section of the press in France, Germany, and England has been frankly jingo. Often even the more sober papers, like the *London Times*, have descended to scurrilous abuse of other countries, and they have been instrumental in working up periodic "scares." The method of these scares is to alarm the country with reports of increased armament in foreign countries; and the result is to increase armament in one's own country. England passed through a number of naval scares in recent years. One of the greatest was in the year 1909. Mr. McKenna, first lord of the Admiralty, ac-

<sup>4</sup> See "Morocco in Diplomacy," E. D. Morel.

cused the German Government of secretly accelerating its naval program. He had received his information from Mr. Mulliner, manager of an English munitions plant. The information was incorrect, for Germany had been acting in good faith. But the scare led to large increases in the British naval budget, and helped to embitter Anglo-German relations.<sup>5</sup> France and Germany have each experienced army scares in late years, resulting in further mutual increases in armament. The last big scare in Germany occurred in 1913, when it was reported that Russia was greatly augmenting its armies, and pushing new strategic railroads into Poland.

It has been said with some force that so far as causes are concerned, this was not a people's war. The assertion is partly true, but its significance can easily be exaggerated. The people in the great belligerent countries may have been to some degree misled by an inflammatory press, and unquestionably they were in some respects deceived by their diplomats. Yet in a general way the people everywhere knew what was going on. In nearly all European nations nothing has

<sup>5</sup> For a description of the naval scare of 1909 and for further references on it, see "Justice in War Time," Bertrand Russell, pp. 205-208.

been so popular as "a vigorous foreign policy." The German people have immense love and pride for their powerful army: Ohne Armee kein Deutschland. The English people have an immense pride and love for their overwhelming fleet: Britannia Rules the Wave. The French people have taken kindly to the idea of *Revanche*, and they gave a striking evidence of their military temper in their support of the Three-Year Law in elections directly preceding the war.

In a word, we have been and are living in a *militaristic* world. The world of August 1, 1916, is the same as the world of August 1, 1914, except that now certain tendencies then partially repressed are given free play. We look about us; everything is on a grand scale. The interminable colonial wars of yesterday along the frontiers have been supplemented by gigantic battle lines through the heart of Europe. The absorptions and seizures of territory that have been ceaselessly going on are replaced by more direct assaults: Belgium is conquered; Servia and Montenegro wiped out; England tears away some half million square miles of German colonies; Japan contemplates the military domina-



tion of China. Malice and inhumanity move millions; whole nations give themselves over to motives of revenge. It is our old militaristic world, with every evil attribute raised to a higher potentiality.

## IV

### “RATTLING INTO BARBARISM”

**A**S I said before, I am actually neutral. In these partizan days nearly everything written on the causes of the war takes the form of an arraignment of one group of the belligerents, or a defense of the other. In justice it is not either side which should be indicted, but Europe; it is not the Teutonic Powers or the Triple Entente that needs defense, it is civilization. I seek only to state the bald facts, letting blame fall where it will. I maintain that it is a fruitless, indeed impossible task to apportion correctly the responsibility for this war. Two men in a fight cannot both be right. But they can both be wrong.

This war can be understood only when seen down the vista of a long perspective. It is a historical result. It is not a sudden outbreak, like a seizure of hysteria or a demoniacal frenzy. A number of Americans have amused them-

selves by making elaborate analyses of the events during the last twelve days of July, 1914, when telegraphic dispatches were flying thickly to and fro over Europe. While such studies have their value, too much significance should not be attached to conclusions derived therefrom. The crisis itself cannot be interpreted unless the complex issues out of which it sprang are envisaged. And many of the communications that passed between the various governments tended rather to conceal and obscure those issues than to elucidate them.

Discussion of the underlying causes of the war would fill many volumes; indeed, already does. Permit me space for one brief summary, from an unbiased English source:<sup>1</sup>

“In surveying the larger causes of the war, the diplomacy of the last fortnight may be left altogether out of account. Ever since the conclusion of the Anglo-French Entente in 1904 the war has been on the point of breaking out, and could only have been avoided by some radi-

<sup>1</sup>“Justice in War Time,” Bertrand Russell, pp. 83-85. Other impartial British accounts may be found in “The Origins of the Great War,” H. N. Brailsford, pamphlet of the Union of Democratic Control; and “How the War Came,” pamphlet of the Independent Labor Party.

cal change in the temper of nations and governments. The annexation of Alsace-Lorraine had produced a profound estrangement between France and Germany. Russia and Germany became enemies through the Pan-Slavist agitation, which threatened the Austrian influence in the Balkans and even the very existence of the Austro-Hungarian state. Finally the German determination to build a powerful navy drove England into the arms of Russia and France. Our long-standing differences with those two countries were suddenly discovered to be unimportant, and were amicably arranged without any difficulty. By a treaty whose important articles were kept secret, the French withdrew their opposition to our occupation of Egypt, and we undertook to support them in acquiring Morocco—a bargain which, from our own point of view, had the advantage of reviving the hostility between France and Germany at a time when there seemed a chance of its passing away. As regards Russia, our deep-seated suspicions of its Asiatic designs were declared groundless, and we agreed to the independence of Tibet and the partition of Persia in return for an acknowledgment of our suzerainty in Afghanistan. Both

of these arrangements show that, if good will and reason presided over international affairs, an adjustment of differences might have been made at any time; as it is, nothing but fear of Germany sufficed to persuade us of the uselessness of our previous hostility to France and Russia.

“No sooner had this grouping of the European Powers been brought about than the Entente and the Alliance began a diplomatic game of watchful manœuvering against each other. Russia suffered a blow to her pride in the Austrian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Germany felt humiliated by having to acknowledge, though with compensation, the French occupation of Morocco. The first Balkan war was a gain to Russia, the second afforded some consolation to Austria. And so the game went on, with recurring crises and alternate diplomatic victories first for one side, then for the other.

“In all this struggle, no one on either side thought for a moment of the welfare of the smaller nations which were the pawns in the struggle. The fact that Morocco appealed to Germany for protection against French aggression was not held to put England and France in

the wrong. The fact that the Persians—the intellectual aristocracy of the Moslem world—had freed themselves from the corrupt government of the Shah and were becoming liberal and parliamentary was not regarded as any reason why their northern provinces should not be devastated by Cossacks and their southern regions occupied by the British. The fact that the Turks had for ages displayed a supremacy in cruelty and barbarism by torturing and degrading the Christians under their rule was no reason why Germany should not, like England in former times, support their tottering despotism by military and financial assistance. All considerations of humanity and liberty were subordinated to the great game: first one side threatened war, then the other; at last both threatened at once, and the patient populations, incited cynically by lies and clap-trap, were driven on to the blind work of butchery.”

In Lord Roberts' phrase, Europe was rattling into barbarism. There can be no doubt of that. But the vital fact for the American to grasp is that all the nations were rattling down the road together. There were no laggards among the great Powers in this rush toward the Pit. Each

was following an imperialistic and militaristic policy and each must share the responsibility of the final catastrophe.

An intense partizanship for either one side or the other in this struggle deadens the mind and hardens the heart. It hides or minimizes facts that are desperately clear to those on the other side of the controversy. There can, as a matter of fact, be not even a start of clear thinking on the international situation until we have rid ourselves of the silly illusion that the nations we hope to have win are ninety per cent. right, while the opposing nations are almost entirely wrong.

Any thorough-going pro-German will tell you that Germany was placed in an extremely perilous position. That she was menaced on the north by Russia, a semi-barbarous nation of 170,000,000 people, ruled by a cruel and unscrupulous autocracy. That the other great nations of Europe, jealous of Germany's increasing power and commercial vigor, leagued themselves with Russia and threatened Germany with an overwhelming coalition. That they isolated her, ringed her round, put her in a military vice. It is plain at the present moment, the pro-Ger-

man will tell you, that the Central Powers are fighting against great odds for their very existence, for their right to continue as independent nations, and that they are justified in using desperate means against opponents wickedly bent on their destruction. The Germans are, in a word, on the "defensive."

Any thorough-going pro-Ally will tell you that Germany had started on a career of world domination. That the greatest menace to the peace and security of civilization is Prussian militarism. That the Teutons have been preparing for this war for years, and that they are bitten with a meglomaniac passion to bring other nations under the sway of their authority, language, and Kultur. That the German temper and method is well summed up in frightfulness. That England, France, and Russia are merely withstanding a premeditated assault upon them, and that they will do civilization a service in suppressing this mad marauder. The Allies are, in a word, on the "defensive."

Phrases, phrases! The obvious facts contradict the extreme advocates of either side. Under the operation of that militarist philosophy which dominated Europe both sides prepared



for war. Both sides were equally threatened, and both sides are repelling dangerous assaults. One may, as a matter of fact, make out a good case against either of the great contestants, if one chooses to marshal all the facts that militate in one direction. The view which is at once the more generous and the more accurate is that all the nations were caught in the net of a vicious system, a system which they had jointly inherited. They are all victims.

In Germany people talk heatedly about the “conspiracy” whereby England placed Germany in the jaws of her neighbors. There is a dole of truth in the accusation; but why should England be blamed? England did precisely what every other European power did—sought powerful military allies wherever she could find them, and fended against any coalition aimed at herself. There is a great deal of heated talk in England about German “preparedness.” Of course Germany was prepared. Great heavens, they were all prepared! England’s fleet was on a two-power standard, and she was building like mad. Germany, France, and Russia practised conscription, and for years had organized their fighting strength to the last man. France and

Russia were each spending more money on their armies in the years preceding hostilities than Germany spent. These competing preparations could not be disregarded by any European statesman, and each nation lived in chronic fear of its rivals. That German fears of Russia, for example, had some foundation was evidenced in an article entitled "Europe Under Arms" by the military correspondent of the *London Times*, June 3, 1914. Russia, he explained, had raised her peace-effectives by 150,000 men, "making a total peace strength of about 1,700,000, or approximately double that of Germany." . . . "The Russian reply to Germany is next door to a mobilization in time of peace, and it quite accounts for the embittered outburst of the *Cologne Gazette*, and for the German pot calling the Russian kettle black. . . . There are signs that Russia has done with defensive strategy. . . . The increased number of guns in the Russian Army Corps, the growing efficiency of the Army, and the improvements made or planned in strategic railways are, again, matters which cannot be left out of account. These things are well calculated to make the Germans anxious."

The accusation that Germany was in a special

sense “prepared” gains color chiefly from the astonishing military prowess she has shown when outnumbered in men and resources five to two. But this fighting superiority of the Germans (which no fair-minded man would deny them) does not arise from any specific preparation, overt or secret, made in a *military* way. It results, first, from certain creditable traits in Teutonic character: thoroughness, exactness, organizing ability, and scientific efficiency, that are as helpful in the arts of peace as in the arts of war. And it arises, secondly, from the fact, not so creditable, that Germany has drafted for years a very large proportion of its highest ability into the army. German militarism is not more—or less—reprehensible than rival militarisms; it is far more able. Price Collier declared in 1913 <sup>2</sup> that Germany is ruled by a small aristocracy of brains. He estimated the number of this aristocracy at roughly fifty thousand men, “eight thousand of them in the frock coat of the civilian official, and the rest in military uniforms.”

I am not defending Germany—although she

<sup>2</sup> “Germany and the Germans, from an American Point of View,” Price Collier. See pp. 220-222.

certainly needs defense against the hysterical tirades of our American Anglomaniacs. The strength of a case for Germany does not lie in the excellent things she has done, nor in the wrong things she has omitted to do, but rather in the misdeeds of her enemies. Germany has been often enough excoriated in this country. She has been arraigned again and again for her violation of Belgian neutrality, for her program of frightfulness, for her apparent indifference to the Armenian massacres, and for her military temper; and on these counts an arraignment is justified. But there are other nations who equally with Germany deserve the attention of those who have appointed themselves to wield the moral lash. France and England deserve arraignment for their conscienceless support of the barbarous Russian autocracy, for their strangulation of freedom on the seas, for their constant bullying and overriding of small nations, and for the general unscrupulousness and mendacity of their international conduct.

Many Americans speak of the "neutral opinion of the world" always with the implication that it means the opinion of the United States of America. They do not seem to realize that

there exists, for example, a great body of neutral opinion in Europe and that it differs in vital respects from our own. The men of Holland, Spain, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland take, on the whole, a saner view of this war than those Americans who have been most successful in making themselves heard. They are not so blindly, so fatuously partizan to one side or the other as our pro-Allies and our pro-Germans. They take the view that ALL the great Powers were to blame for the war. They know that the German atrocities advertised in England are paralleled by Russian atrocities and French outrages quite as revolting; they understand that war brings out some of the most ungracious and odious aspects of human nature; but they are unwilling to heap all the abuse due human nature at its worst on British politicians alone or on Prussian Junkers alone; and finally they show a healthy skepticism toward the fine pretensions of the great and revengeful Powers that they are fighting for “civilization” or for “liberty” and “democracy.”

And the European neutrals are nearer right than fanatical American partizans. The basic truth about the war is this: that each of the

fighting nations is more to be commiserated than condemned. Before hostilities started responsible European statesmen were willing to risk a great war at any time they thought their chances in a war good, rather than yield to their rivals on a point of imperial policy. Of that folly millions now eat the bitter fruit. A continent suffers endless agony, heartbreak and death. Neutrals who keep their heart and head do not feel indignation, but only a vast and consuming pity.

## V

### VIA THE ALLIANCE

**S**HOUVALOV, the Russian diplomatist, was one time talking with Bismarck. I think it was during the Congress of Berlin. Shouvalov remarked:

“Vous avez le cauchemar des coalitions.”

And Bismarck answered, “Nécessairement.”

“The nightmare of coalitions!” In that phrase, as nearly as in any other, the history of European statesmanship during the last two hundred years may be summed up.

Modern nations, in their diplomatic and military games, fear to play a lone hand. They seek partners, companions, supporters. During that silent, alert struggle we fictitiously call “peace,” each cabinet and chancellory manoeuvres, with loans and concessions and secret bargains, for help in the next war. Some of the alliances formed are understood by all the world to be binding and absolute, such as the recent

alliances between Germany and Austria, France and Russia. Others, under the name of *entente*, are disguised or implicit, such as the demi-semi-agreement between England and France. When war breaks out, the alignments often look illogical. At present Turkey, Bulgaria, Austria, and Germany fight shoulder to shoulder—surely an odd aggregation. Against them stand England, Russia, France, Japan, Italy—an even odder aggregation. Coalitions are formed for one purpose alone: military advantage.

While nations are at grips, and the passions of war are dominant, these military combinations take on a look of cohesion and solidarity which they really lack. Just as belligerents heap calumny and abuse on their enemies, so they lavish praise and promises on their allies. They are fighting and dying for one another; why should not their friendship persist? But we know that it will persist so long as the nations find an advantage in continuing it, and no longer. These military combinations, formed for selfish ends and uniting for common action nations most dissimilar in government and spirit, are sure to fall apart when need for common action has lapsed. In the past, alliances



have ever been shifting and coalitions short-lived. There is no better reason to suppose, for example, that the pact between the "Pledged Allies" will endure, than there was in the early nineteenth century to suppose that the coalition against Napoleon would remain a united international group.

Concerning the alignment in the world war, Mr. Norman Angell has pertinently remarked:<sup>1</sup>

"A year ago Italy was in formal alliance with the Powers that she is now fighting. Japan, a decade since, was fighting with a Power of which she is now the ally. The position of Russia shows never-ending changes. In the struggles of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries England was always on the side of Russia; then after two generations Englishmen were taught to believe that any increase in the power of Russia was absolutely fatal to the continued existence of the British Empire—that statement was made by a British publicist less than ten years ago. Britain is now fighting to increase, both relatively and absolutely, the power of a country which, in her last war upon the Continent, she fought to check. In the war before that one,

<sup>1</sup> *Saturday Evening Post*, July 17 and July 24, 1915.

also fought upon the Continent, England was in alliance with Germany against France. As to the Austrians, whom England is now fighting, they were for many years her faithful allies. So it is very nearly the truth to say of all the combatants respectively that they have no enemy to-day who was not, historically speaking, quite recently an ally, and not an ally to-day who was not in the recent past an enemy. . . .

“One of the very few things that history teaches us, with any certainty, is that these military alliances do not outlast the pressure of war conditions.

“No international settlement that has followed the great wars ever settled or endured. The military alliances on which they were based have been, as the facts presented clearly show, unstable and short-lived.”

The nations have been playing the game of recurrent war; and in this dance of death the partners change often. Indeed, it is startling to look back and see how the citizens of the great nations have hated and slaughtered one another, and then, a generation or less later (for the purpose of annihilating former friends), have locked arms. What a commentary on human

character—this fickleness and faithlessness in national compacts!

And yet—granting the conditions—what were the statesmen of Europe to do? The world is militaristic. Each nation pursues, with greater or less intensity, the policy of selfish aggression called imperialism. Each nation is to some degree the object of jealousy and fear on the part of its neighbors. If wars are considered inevitable, or even highly probable, then it behooves one not to be caught between the anvil and the hammer—unflanked by friends. Germany has had the nightmare of coalitions. England has never been free from the dread of a continental coalition against her; and it has been a cardinal principle of English diplomacy to keep the Continent divided against itself. No great European Power has had the courage or the will to stand alone.

Of course this system of alliances and *ententes*, while it safeguards a single nation in event of a direct attack, actually makes wars more certain. Or more accurately, it makes certain the participation of nations in conflicts where no interest of their own is involved, outside of that mischievous corollary of alliances,

“the balance of power.” Wars cannot be localized. If Austria fights with Russia, Germany does not dare to stand aside. If Germany is at war with Russia, France feels her position imperiled unless she joins in. The world war now raging arose out of a dispute in the Balkans. Its stake was the hegemony of the Near East, and directly concerned only the statesmen of Austria-Hungary and of Russia. But the European nations had strung themselves along two cords, called at the time the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. When Servia jerked the handle, the whole of Europe tumbled into pitched battle.

I have no desire to exaggerate the unscrupulousness of international politics. On the other hand there is no need for a neutral to blink ugly facts, as they are being blinked by belligerents. And there can be no question but that the great Powers, in making their alliances, have cynically disregarded the principles of progress and liberty. We have already noted how this ruthless rush after military advantage has crushed down the small nations and weaker races. In similar fashion the military alliance has been made a foe of liberal government. Enlightened

and progressive nations have sought the aid of backward and semi-barbarous nations. Democracy has bolstered up despotism. Reform in internal politics has been sacrificed to foreign bargains.

A striking illustration of this recreancy to liberal principles is afforded by the parallel instances of Turkey and Russia. Both of these nations are but semi-civilized, politically, economically, morally. I realize that many complimentary things may be justly said of the quality of the Russian people; and that much praise may be rightly given to the character of the individual Turk. But there can be no honest difference of opinion on the oppressive character of the Russian and Turkish governments. They are both autocratic and tyrannical; they have blighted the liberties and happiness of every race that has come under their rule. And yet, with little or no compunction, they have been courted, flattered, and financed by the leaders of European civilization. Russia was once the foe of republican France and parliamentary England; she is now their dearest ally. For years the ruling classes of Germany were in close cooperation with the Government of Russia; they

now marshal their powerful armies to "destroy Tzarism." Britain fought the Crimean War against Russia to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire; now, by an ironical *volteface*, she fights to enthrone the Russian Tzar in Constantinople.

Who, in all this sinister jockeying, has given thought to the welfare of the Russian or Turkish peoples? The bargains between Germany and Turkey, England and Russia, were utterly conscienceless. The story of the disastrous effect of the British Entente on Russian internal politics has been often told.<sup>2</sup> Let me merely recapitulate the story in the words of Georg Brandes, the Danish writer and critic.<sup>3</sup>

"Russia has ever been dependent on the Occidental money market. She needs money, credit. But before the Western banks could be accommodating it was necessary to instil a spirit of friendliness and confidence in the small investor. As long as Russia appeared to the English capitalist as a hostile power or as an uncertain despotism constantly threatened by revo-

<sup>2</sup> See "Persia, Finland, and our Russian Alliance," pamphlet of the Independent Labor Party, 1915; and "Justice in War Time," Bertrand Russell, 1916, pp. 171-179.

<sup>3</sup> *New York Times Magazine*, March 26, 1916.

lution, she appealed in vain for English funds. But from the moment King Edward visited the Czar in Reval, and the Czar returned the visit on the Isle of Wight—from that moment it became the policy of the English press to represent Russia as a benevolent power steadily progressing toward constitutional liberty. Then the English investor pulled out his pocketbook. Exactly as in France, the press, the politicians, and the upper classes entered into a silent conspiracy for the purpose of praising and glorifying the benevolent character of the Russian Government.

“It will be remembered that a Constitution had been wrested from the Czar in October, 1905. The election to the first Duma took place with the reactionary forces in full control of the provinces, under intense excitement. A great hope was germinating in the Russian people, and the elections returned an enormous majority of progressives to the Duma. They had to fight step by step a reactionary ministry and a court which bitterly regretted the privileges which terror had forced them to grant. The Duma could have defied the autocracy had it been able to say to a discredited and bankrupt Govern-

ment: 'Your cashbox is empty, your credit exhausted. Behind us stand Russia and Europe. Recognize our constitutional rights and we will vote taxes and authorize loans. Refuse and neither London nor Paris will advance you a penny!'

"But the Duma could not speak in this strain, for already in March, 1906, the big loan had been negotiated, and when the Duma assembled in May the government coffers were full. In vain had Russia's struggling patriots beseeched liberal Europe not by new loans to sign the death warrant of the new Constitution! In less than three months the Duma was dissolved; Stolypin reigned without parliament; martial courts pronounced and executed death sentences all over the country. The second Duma assembled in 1907; it was even more radical than the first. Stolypin's counterstroke was to accuse the Social-Democrats, the most influential branch of the Duma, of treasonable conspiracy and to impeach them before a tribunal composed of members of all parties.

"The commission reported its unanimous findings to the third Duma—the Socialists were found not guilty. Then the *coup d'état*: thirty-



five members were arbitrarily examined before a special committee. Seventeen were sentenced to prison for terms ranging from four to five years, and ten were sent to Siberia for life. Two died in prison, one became insane, one, the party orator, contracted consumption. All of them were treated like low criminals, were shackled, and occasionally knouted.

“The dissolution of the second Duma marked the end of Russian liberty. In his pamphlet, ‘Russian Terrorism’ (1909), Kropotkin has shown that during the period of nominal liberty the number of prisoners rose from a daily average of 85,000 in 1905, to 181,000 in 1909. He has told of the ravaging diseases in the overcrowded prisons and of the extensive use of torture. During 1909 the military courts sentenced on an average three prisoners a day to death. The number of political exiles to Siberia reached, according to official figures, a total of 74,000.

“These terrifying results would have been impossible without the coöperation of France and England with the Russian Government. The nonsensical assertion, seriously advanced, that the Anglo-French-Russian alliance will have a

beneficial effect on Russia's internal affairs—that the war has enlisted Russia among the liberty-loving powers—is only a clumsy attempt to mislead the public. The famous revolutionary leader, ——,<sup>4</sup> declared at the outbreak of the war this to be his belief, and in order to prove the sincerity of his conviction he returned to Russia, declaring his intention of putting himself at the disposition of his country. Upon reaching the border he was arrested and sentenced to life exile in Siberia.”

<sup>4</sup> The name is left blank in Brandes' article; undoubtedly he refers to Bourtseff.

## VI

### WAR FOR WAR'S SAKE

**I**N politics the professional pacifists are failures. They have as yet made very little progress in dislodging the causes of war. But one service they have rendered. The service is somewhat academic; but none the less important. They have met and overthrown the militarist philosophy. The doctrine that war is a good thing in itself, that slaughter on the field of battle purges a people and keeps a nation morally sound, that collective homicide is an agency of racial progress—these beliefs the pacifists have exposed as fallacies. They have not merely scotched this snake; they have killed it. No intelligent person, who has followed the discussion, can now believe that war has any justification by itself—aside from its ends.

The philosophy of force does not in itself create war; it serves rather to justify it after the fact. It has helped to disguise the hideous-

ness of war, like a cloak and mask on a skeleton. Many honest men have subscribed to it. A few of its more pungent expressions are :

“Slaughter is God’s daughter.”—*Coleridge*.

“War is the foundation of all the high virtues and faculties of men.”—*Ruskin*.

“Perpetual peace is a dream, and not even a beautiful dream. Without war the world would stagnate and lose itself in materialism.”—*Von Moltke*.

This philosophy has found its most candid and forceful expression in certain German writers, typified by Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi.

The success of this doctrine—that collective homicide is in itself beneficent—has been due partly to its large admixture of metaphor and mysticism. When examined closely it seems rather barren of logic. The militarists have been employing monstrously bad biology, just as they have made use of monstrously bad economics. They have taken a figure of speech from Darwinism, have spoken loosely of the struggle for existence, and have urged that strong nations should survive and weak nations go to the wall. Reflection shows that such talk

is divorced from the reality. Nations do not fight as units, like giants bandying blows. They fight through their agents, armies and navies. They send out their healthiest, bravest, most courageous men to die. The weak, diseased, cowardly, selfish, are left behind—to breed the next generation. On the battle fields of Europe a calamitous inverse selection is going on, whereby the truest, the most ardent, and the most self-sacrificing young manhood is being extinguished, and the nations drained of their best blood. The action of modern war is not eugenic, but cacogenic.<sup>1</sup> It is an agency for the deterioration of the stock, almost rivaling, in its evil results, vice, and the restriction of child-birth among the better classes.

In similar vein there has been a deal of footless assertion that without war the sterner virtues would disappear. We shall have the sterner virtues so long as we continue to breed the sterner human stuff. War makes an exhi-

<sup>1</sup> This truth was stressed by Herbert Spencer as early as 1873. Twenty years later it was elaborately expounded by Novikov. And recently, still another twenty years later, it has been emphasized by pacifist writers, notably David Starr Jordan and George W. Nasmyth. Certain minor qualifications can be made, but the central contention, that military selection tends to eliminate the best, is unassailable.

bition of fortitude and self-sacrifice—only to destroy them. War brings out in fullest intensity some of the very best and some of the very worst aspects of human nature. Courage puts a man in the forefront of the fray, and makes certain that he shall be cut down. By eliminating the brave, a long and sanguinary war lowers the race's stock of courage. Nor is there any counterbalancing gain in courage among the survivors. They may receive training in fortitude, but their descendants are no more intrepid than they otherwise would have been. Acquired characters are not inherited; biologists are well agreed on that point. Courage is the heritage of the race, and so far the supply has never run dry. The sterner virtues have plenty of opportunity for employment in the arts of peace—in man's immemorial struggle with nature. Our miners, sailors, lumbermen, explorers, trainmen, firemen, and policemen, like our soldiers, need to be contemptuous of danger. These soldiers of industry, however, risk life and limb not for the sake of the risk itself. We admire as heroes firemen who give their lives in fighting conflagrations; but we do not start blazes to give firemen a chance to die heroically.

And if we want to keep courage on tap we must not spend it needlessly.

The persons who speak of the spiritual values of war, and would be willing to send thousands of young men to their death in order to gain those values, speak always as Pharisees. They maintain that in peace a nation stagnates and sinks into sloth and selfishness. They do not personally feel the enervating effects of peace: they are thinking of others. Mr. Roosevelt, for example, inveighs against the "soft ease" that enfolds us in times of tranquillity. He himself finds, despite peace, stimulus to a volcanic activity; but he worries lest the rest of us should not be kept moderately busy. Mr. Roosevelt is here not only presumptuous but blind. How much "soft ease" is enjoyed by farmer lads, miners, and mill workers—in short by the bulk of the men who fight wars?

The militarists have erected for us a bogey; the specter of a world that has lost its virility, its ideals, and its intensity—a marrowless world wherein men have become cowards and sybarites, frivolous triflers, incapable of an honest belief or an honest sacrifice. And then they ask us, how would we like such a world, held in the

grasp of a pleasure-sodden peace? Well, we should n't like it, certainly. But we by no means are compelled to admit the applied assumption, that such a world is the only alternative to a world of recurrent war. It does not follow that when nations shall have ceased, if ever, to settle their disputes by collective homicide, that all moral fiber is going to be drawn out of men and women.

We can accept, without cavil, the whole of the militarists' idealism, in so far as it does not make a fetish of war for its own sake. Soldiers justly refuse to regard themselves as murderers or bloody-minded butchers. The soldier is not one merely who goes out to kill; in a more essential sense he is one who offers his life for his country. Many of his motives and emotions are noble: the spirit of self-sacrifice, high loyalty to cause and country, the stern rapture of embattled manhood, and the contempt for danger and death where honor is involved. These are splendid moral values—but only when enlisted in a worthy cause. War in a bad cause is always inexcusable. The tragedies of armed conflict are not hallowed simply because naval cadets experience thrills when they pledge the



king, or because junior officers find lumps in their throats when they take the oath on the swords.

War can never be justified aside from its ends. But the militarists are quite right, it seems to me, when they insist that there are things worth fighting for, things more precious than life. No robust nation ever believed in unqualified non-resistance. The doctrine is repugnant to every virile instinct; and it gains little impetus from the religion of that Jesus who lashed the money-changers from the temple. To challenge injustice is the soul of honor. The ordinary man will continue to believe that there are two kinds of justifiable wars; war for defense, and war for chivalry. Just as he will fight to protect himself against violence or a woman against outrage, so he thinks it right for a nation to fight for its independence and its territory, or to go to the rescue of the injured and oppressed. He would resist the robber nations and the tyrant nations. He does not hold with the peace-jingoes who declare in the words of Benjamin Franklin that "there never was a good war or a bad peace."

But along with his generous impulses the or-

dinary man possesses an amazing fund of credulity. In every war the people believe they are battling for "defense" or for "righteousness." They are easily befogged by phrases. The virtue of the nation is readily enlisted in any war, right or wrong. It is one of the great tragedies of the world that countless good men die for bad causes. There have been but one or two really righteous wars in the last three hundred years, outside of rebellions and revolutions. Most wars are like the present unrighteous conflict, wars of mutual aggression. The world is not done with armed conflict. Very possibly the way to permanent peace lies through a series of new Holy Wars, whereby the nations bent on justice shall curb the nations bent on conquest. There is always a stock of desperate idealism in the world, and of even more desperate weariness; and they could find their outlet here. But Holy Wars cannot be fought until the nations divide themselves into the just and unjust, the generous and the greedy, the truthful and the tricky. That division has not yet been made.

## VII

### RALLYING ROUND THE FLAG

“**M**AN,” says the militarist solemnly, “is a fighting animal. Pugnacity is bred in his bone. We shall always have war because the combative instincts of the race must every now and then break through the thin veneer of civilization. You cannot remedy the quarrelsomeness of human nature.”

And so the militarist, feigning a sigh, resigns himself to the fatalistic view that peace is an idle dream. There is only one defect in this fatalistic view: it does not correspond with the facts of crowd psychology as we see them before, at the beginning of, and during a war.

What happens in time of peace? Is there a slowly rising tide of suppressed rage, seeking an outlet somewhere, more and more difficult to restrain, until finally it forces the Government to declare war on somebody or other? Not at all. Peace long continued tends to become a

habit; it does not rouse an appetite for war. If the inhabitants of a country are naturally quarrelsome they take it out on themselves, in lawsuits, duels, tavern brawls, and riots. There is such a thing, of course, as the war fever; but it is distinct from native pugnacity.

Men are the creatures of moods. The war mood sometimes precedes the declaration of war, but usually follows it. The men who declare wars, or bring about situations that make war "inevitable," are small groups playing the game of high politics. Once the war has started the overwhelming majority of citizens rally to the defense of the country. Indeed, what else is there to do? The enemy is massing his armies and ships against us. Our frontiers and our ports are in imminent danger of attack. Every impulse of patriotism and nationality calls us to guard the fatherland. It is too late now to talk about the causes of this war. We must defend our hearth and home. And so the nation moves in solidly behind its leaders. Socialists, trade-unionists, pacifists, are all swept into the current. Compulsion can be used to deal with the "traitors" and slackers who refuse to support their country in its hour of peril; but com-

pulsion is seldom necessary. The war fever is soon pandemic.

In modern countries, even where conscription exists, men volunteer for the army eagerly—millions of them. They flock to the colors for various reasons; for there is no standard reaction to war. Some of them look on war as a supreme adventure, a sporting enterprise that contrasts favorably with the dullness and staleness of peace. Some are caught by the glamour of war, and the heady music of the fifes and drums. Many are moved by loyalty to leaders and country, and by the spell of old traditions. And others go with reluctant feet, impelled by a sense of duty, or shame, or a love of honor that is stronger than the fear of death.

At the beginning of a war there is a great outburst of martial enthusiasm. And there is little chance of a reaction later. War generates its own moods. The longer it rages, the deeper hate bites into the national consciousness. The people, men and women alike, begin to heap all the wickedness in the world on the head of the enemy. They come to see the foe as a fiend and themselves as champions of virtue and truth. This is equally true, of course, on both sides.

An inflammatory press regales the public daily with tales of the enemy's atrocities and inhumanity. To beat the enemy, to smash him, relentlessly to punish him, seems a sacred duty. The war-madness gets into the blood. Some of the best men show the most bitterness. Personally, they know, they did not want or will this barbarous war. It could not have come about, they think, except through the folly and iniquity of a designing enemy.

Of course a nation could not slide so readily and unanimously into the war mood had not the way been prepared by the previous state of the national mind. The public regards war as more or less a normal incident in the life of the nations and it is habituated to the thought of armed conflict through the incessant preparation for it. It leaves international negotiation in the hands of its leaders, preferring on the whole that they should pursue a "spirited foreign policy." It wants the nation to stand stiffly for its "rights" everywhere. It does not bother to scrutinize those rights too closely; it supports "my country, right or wrong." Further this public mind, blindly trustful and a little inclined toward jingoism, is open to suggestion. Gran-

diose schemes of empire make a great appeal to the imagination of the multitude. Nearly every people has its imperial dream. The "all red route"—a chain of British colonies from Cape Town to India—has been very popular in England. The Germans fancy the idea of a Teutonic Empire stretching from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf, symbolized in the phrase "Drang nach Osten." The Italians hope again to see the "Roman eagles on the wing" and dream of a new Mediterranean Empire. The Japanese want to garrison the whole Far East. And some persons in the United States find their imaginations stirred by the notion of One Flag from the Pole to the Canal.

The amazing unanimity with which the people fall in behind their leaders once a war is declared offers temptation to a Government distracted by dissensions at home. Politicians are open to this lure; they know that the internal squabbles that seem now so menacing will look trivial in wartime. A war affords them the opportunity to occupy the greatest seats in the world, and to become national idols—should they win the war. Sometimes it happens that a frenzied populace forces or appears to force the

Government into a fight. The war fever was raging in the United States before McKinley signed the declaration that began the struggle with Spain. Italy entered the present war partly because of popular clamor. "The street has done this," said the German Chancellor. But even where popular enthusiasm precedes the outbreak of hostilities, there is likely to have been some manipulation of sentiment. Unfortunately the classes that control Governments are the classes that have most to gain, financially and politically, from militarism. And they do not hesitate to use the press and the platform to inflame the public mind.

One of the most sinister aspects of the psychology of war is the fact that noncombatants enter into the fray—with tongue and pen—so avidly. Men who never see the firing line, who declaim in clubs or sit at desks and scribble, are among the fiercest in their exhortations to hate. They do their envenomed best to poison the public mind. The truth is that noncombatants usually *enjoy* war. They will not admit it; although the most honest might confess to a shamefaced feeling that the world has been a more interesting place to live in since August,



1914. War is the modern circus. Here we see life *in extremis*, with all its old glory and precipitousness. This enjoyment of war is most apparent in the elderly. In England the present conflict has sometimes been called an "old man's war." The phrase does not mean—Heaven knows—that the old men are doing the bloody work of the trenches. It is simply a comment on the fact that before the war it was the old men who incited most loudly to hostility against Germany, who have hounded the younger men on, and who now are the shrillest in their cries for vengeance. John Galsworthy has painted a vivid type-portrait of these patriot spectators:

"The first thing he does when he comes down each morning is to read his paper, and the moment he has finished breakfast he sticks the necessary flags into his big map. He began to do that very soon after the war broke out, and has never missed a day. It would seem to him almost as if Peace had been declared, and the Universe suddenly unbottomed, if any morning he omitted to alter slightly three flags at least. What will he do when the end at last is reached, and he can no longer tear the paper open with

a kind of trembling avidity; no longer debate within himself the questions of strategy, and the absorbing chances of the field; when he has, in fact, to sweep his flags into a drawer and forget they ever were? It would haunt him if he thought of it. But sufficient unto his day is the good thereof. Yes! It has almost come to that with him; though he will still talk to you of 'this dreadful war,' and never alludes to the days as 'great' or to the times as 'stirring' as some folk do. No, he is sincere in believing that he is distressed beyond measure by the continuance of 'the abominable business'; and would not confess for worlds that he would miss it, that it has become for him a daily 'cocktail' to his appetite for life. It is not he, after all, who is being skinned; to the pursuit and skinning of other eels the human eel is soon accustomed. By proxy to be 'making history,' to become victorious in the greatest struggle known to man since the beginning of the world—after all it is something! He will never have such a chance again. He still remembers with a shudder how he felt the first weeks after war was declared; and the mere fact that he shudders shows that his present feelings are by no

means what they were. After all, one cannot remain forever prepossessed with suffering that is not one's own, or with fears of invasion indefinitely postponed. True, he has lost a nephew, a second cousin, the sons of several friends. He has been duly sorry, duly sympathetic, but then, he was not dangerously fond of any of them. His own son is playing his part, and he is proud of it. If the boy should be killed he will feel poignant grief, but even then there is revenge to be considered. His pocket is suffering, but it is for the Country—and that almost makes it a pleasure. And he goes on sticking in his flags in spots where the earth is a mush of mangled flesh, and the air shrill with the whir of shells, the moans of dying men, and the screams of horses.”

## VIII

### BLOOD AND BONES

WE do not think of war in particulars. We do not visualize what it means to the individual combatants. If we did we could not tolerate the thought of it. Instead we speak coolly in abstractions—of “flanking movements” and “mass formations,” of “drives” and “great offensives,” of “rear guard actions,” of “artillery preparations,” and of “a policy of attrition,” with scarcely a thought of the gehenna of agony these smooth phrases cover. War is possible only through the failure of human imagination.

There are certain hard-grained fellows who look with contempt on persons who shudder at the horrors of war, and dub them sentimentalists. My own opinion is that any one who does not feel vastly “sentimental” over the horrors of war is either a wretch or a fool. War is the last word in human anguish and

heartbreak. In these days when all the able-bodied males of populous nations set out to kill one another and to tear one another to pieces with infernal machines, the casualty lists run into millions. It subjects untold thousands to tortures as fiendish as were ever devised in the chambers of the Inquisition. Contemplating it, all emotion is inadequate. No pen can describe its terrors; there is no use to try. And yet we would be wise to hold in mind a realistic picture or two of what war signifies to those who engage in it, rather than to gloss over the realities with colorless terms from military technique.

“There is no agony of body or mind,” writes a soldier returning from the front, “which I have not seen, which I have not experienced. Gas? What do you know of it, you people who have never heard earth and heaven rock with the frantic turmoil of the ceaseless bombardment? A crawling yellow cloud that pours in upon you, that gets you by the throat and shakes you as a huge mastiff might shake a kitten, and leaves you burning in every nerve and vein of your body with pain unthinkable; your eyes starting from their sockets; your face turned yellow-green.

“Rats? What did you ever read of the rats in the trenches? Next to gas, they will slide on their fat bellies through my dreams. Poe could have got new inspiration from their dirty hordes. Rats, rats, rats—I see them still, slinking from new meals on corpses, from Belgium to the Swiss Alps. Rats, rats, rats, tens of thousands of rats, crunching between battle lines while the rapid-firing guns mow the trench edge—crunching their hellish feasts. Full fed, slipping and sliding down into the wet trenches they swarm at night—and more than one poor wretch has had his face eaten off by them while he slept.”<sup>1</sup>

In one of the most faithful descriptions<sup>2</sup> of the Western campaign that has yet appeared, an English correspondent tells of war as he saw it in France. I give a few brief extracts:

“In the country of the Argonne men fought like wolves and began a guerrilla warfare with smaller bodies of men, fighting from wood to wood, village to village, the forces on each side being scattered over a wide area in advance of their main lines. Then they dug themselves

<sup>1</sup> Romeo Houle, in the *New York Times*, June 4, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> “The Soul of the War,” by Philip Gibbs, 1916. The quotations are from pp. 288, 293, 313.

into trenches from which they came out at night, creeping up to each other's lines, flinging themselves on each other with bayonets and butt-ends, killing each other as beasts kill, without pity and in the mad rage of terror which is the fiercest kind of courage.

. . . . .  
“ ‘We did not listen to the cries of surrender or to the beseeching plaints of the wounded,’ said a French soldier, describing one of these scenes. ‘We had no use for prisoners and on both sides there was no quarter given in this Argonne Wood. Better than fixed bayonets was an unfixed bayonet grasped as a dagger. Better than any bayonet was a bit of iron or a broken gun-stock, or a sharp knife. In that hand-to-hand fighting there was no shooting but only the struggling of interlaced bodies, with fists and claws grabbing for each other's throats. I saw men use teeth and bite their enemy to death with their jaws, gnawing at their windpipes.’

. . . . .  
“ ‘The greater number of the bodies,’ writes a soldier, ‘still lie between the trenches, and we have been unable to withdraw them. We can

see them always, in frightful quantity, some of them intact, others torn to bits by the shells which continue to fall upon them. The stench of this corruption floats down upon us with foul odors. Bits of their rotting carcasses are flung into our faces and over our heads as new shells burst and scatter them. It is like living in a charnel house where devils are at play flinging dead men's flesh at living men, with fiendish mockery. The smell of this corruption taints our food, and taints our very souls, so that we are spiritually and physically sick. That is war!

. . . . .

“In Lorraine the tide of war ebbed and flowed over the same tracts of ground, and neither side picked up its dead or its wounded. Men lay there alive for days and nights, bleeding slowly to death. The hot sun glared down upon them and made them mad with thirst. Some of them lay there for as long as three weeks, still alive, with gangrened limbs in which lice crawled.”

This is not rhetoric. There is no reason to suspect that these incidents have been exaggerated in the telling. Indeed, from the hospitals,



French, English, German, Russian, come reports of more gruesome sights, more piteous scenes. War is the acme of human agony. Now if men, knowing what they are about, voluntarily go into this thing, we do but admire their courage the more. Suffering and death will not, of course, deter brave and patriotic men. But how about the men who are tricked or forced into this hell by leaders who regard them as pawns in a game? What shall we say of diplomats who turn Europe into a huge shambles for motives of pride or profit? Men in positions of power have regarded the issue of war and peace with a criminal levity. War being what it is, true statesmen would bend every effort to avoid it, would forego an economic advantage or a gain to the capitalist class, would even submit to a stain on the "national honor" or the national egotism, before they invoked the law of the jungle. And blindness and callousness have been equally characteristic of the ruling classes of England and Germany, France and Austria and Russia. In a very fundamental sense the peoples of Europe have been betrayed by their rulers. For if the statement "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" has any sig-

nificance as the object of government, war is its direct negation.

War would be the finest game in the world were the pieces in truth insentient pawns. That is what we imagine it to be, dully, with the armies and navies the pieces and the nations the players. But behind the hazy metaphor stands the naked truth: that the pawns are human beings, and the movers are other human beings, usually known as the General Staff. The only persons to whom war really matters are the soldiers and sailors, their widows and orphans, and the people living in the actual war zones. Out of hearing of the guns the great noncombatant populations rage and write, chant hymns of hate—and enjoy the thrills of the spectator. It is the soldiers and officers who writhe and die; who endure hardship and pain and fatigue, and encounter death in its most hideous forms. For them the glamour and romance disappears. They see war as a prosaic, dirty, disgusting, and nerve-racking hell. Why cannot the rest of us see war as it is? Have we so little power of vision that we can never look at this collective homicide except through the mists of false sentiment and false heroics?

War can never be anything but inhuman and barbarous. The Germans did not invent frightfulness; it is the essence of the thing. War arouses the basest passions of men. It gives free rein to all the brutal, sadistic, and criminaloid elements in the population. The present war has surpassed a thousandfold all predictions of its horrors. Science and organization have increased the ravages of war, although they have not frightened men away from it. War becomes progressively more destructive and horrible, but not more conclusive. Each side is compelled to adopt, on the penalty of defeat, the same tactics and weapons. It is no use trying to make war lady-like, or to curse the enemy because he invents a new instrument of torture. Says Philip Gibbs:<sup>3</sup>

“If it is permissible to hurl millions of men against each other with machinery which makes a wholesale massacre of life, tearing up trenches, blowing great bodies of men to bits with the single shot of a great gun, strewing battlefields with death, and destroying undefended towns so that nothing may live in their ruins, then it is foolish to make distinctions be-

<sup>3</sup> “The Soul of War,” p. 369.

tween one way of death and another, or to analyze degrees of horror. Asphyxiating gas is no worse than a storm of shells, or if worse, then the more effective. The lives of noncombatants are not to be respected any more than the lives of men in uniform, for modern war is not a military game between small bodies of professional soldiers, as in the old days, but a struggle to the death between one people and another. The blockading of the enemy's ports, the slow starvation of a besieged city, which is allowed by military purists of the old and sentimental school, does not spare the noncombatant. The woman with a baby at her breast is drained of her mother's milk. There is a massacre of innocents by poisonous microbes. So why be illogical and pander to false sentiment? Why not sink the *Lusitania* and set the waves afloat with the little corpses of children and the beauty of dead women? It is but one more incident of horror in a war which is all horror. Its logic is unanswerable in the Euclid of Hell. . . . It is war, and when millions of men set out to kill each other, to strangle the enemy's industries, to ruin, starve, and annihilate him, so that the women may not breed more children, so that the

children shall perish of widespread epidemics, then a few laws of chivalry, a little pity here and there, the recognition of a Hague Treaty, are but foolishness, and the weak jugglings of men who try to soothe their conscience with a few drugged tabloids.”

There is in the world little genuine abhorrence of war. The aversion aroused is neither deep nor lasting. Men and women are soon swept into a belligerent mood. They are easily partizan, and think that nothing really matters except victory for their side. This war has dragged through two years of unspeakable agony. Millions have already been blinded and maimed and killed. But the mass of people in the belligerent countries—the noncombatants—would rather see the war prolonged for another two years than to see it end immediately in a draw.

This complacency in the face of war’s horrors is a bit hard to understand in a world so full as ours of generous sentiment and strenuous charity. There are probably several contributing causes. At the bottom of the indifference lies the ancestral blindness that envelops us all. Insight into what actually goes on in other souls

remains one of the rarest gifts vouchsafed to men. We are insensible to the remote. We find it difficult, on a summer's day, to imagine the sting of arctic cold. We cannot experience, even faintly and vicariously, the tortures of the trenches. We do shudder occasionally, it is true, but we end—with what? With indignation. Detestation of war is quickly transmuted into hatred of the enemy. English suffering does not teach the English to understand German suffering; it merely deepens their conviction of German wickedness. And so, on each side, antagonism crowds out pity, and the war spirit is reënforced. And, finally, we are afflicted by that peculiar anesthesia of the feelings and the imagination produced by language. In watching a drama so vast as a war the details get blotted out; we are compelled to talk and think in symbols. And the symbols all disguise the realities. We seldom realize, indeed, that when we use such a phrase as “smash our way to Berlin,” or “paralyze France,” or “clean up Mexico,” we are speaking in pure metaphor. Now and then we glimpse the truth. When we read of the nameless outrages that have been committed in East Prussia and on the fields of

Flanders, when we see a blinded soldier trying to grope his way, when we hear a mother sobbing, then we know, for the moment, that the war itself is the great tragedy, that none of the gains of victory can compensate for it; and we ask ourselves incredulously, How can they? How can they? But our insight soon flickers and dies. We slip back into our partizanship, and we forget the meaning of war in our noble determination not to sheathe the sword until we see the enemy "crushed."

## IX

### THE MILITARISTIC CIRCLE

**W**AR, obviously, is a problem of the human will. In July, 1914, ten millions of men in Europe were working before their benches, tilling their fields, or scribbling in offices. A few telegraphic messages passed between the capitols. At once these ten million men dropped their tools, shouldered arms, and marched to the frontiers, where they began to kill each other. What made them do this?

If we knew that all of these men willed a war and wanted to kill each other, the problem would be simpler. We could explain war as easily as we explain a cat-fight or a duel between stags. But we are not sure that these millions like killing and being killed. Indeed, we have the strongest assurance that the vast majority of them detest their bloody, dangerous work, and only undertake it through loyalty or patriotism or illusion. We do not know in what degree wars are brought about by those who actually do



the fighting as officers and privates, and in what degree by noncombatants. We are not certain exactly what motives, political or economic or personal, move the men who make wars. We find here a complex plait of interests and impulses. Precisely because war is a collective action of the whole nation, entered into by hundreds of thousands of men with differing temperaments, ambitions, ideals, its roots are hard to grasp.

In every great Power there are a few elements that can be properly called military minded. Younger men in the profession of arms want a war because it will give them an opportunity for distinction and promotion. A few of the older soldiers—mostly retired colonels and admirals—think or profess to think that war is a good thing in itself and that it promotes virtue. Munition makers and armor-plate manufacturers reap a sinister gain through promotion of strife. But these military minded elements are, relatively, few and feeble, and would get nowhere did they not have the partial support of responsible statesmen. The latter are not military minded; they are, rather, militaristic. And here we may well draw a distinction.

A militaristic person I take to be one who is not averse to a successful war. He does not love war for war's sake, but he is convinced that war may, through victory, achieve certain colonial or commercial ends which seem decidedly worth attaining. Moreover, a successful war can, he thinks, cripple a dangerous military rival and guarantee the future peace and security of his nation by shifting the balance of power definitively in its favor. And to him, therefore, a "preventative" war will seem justifiable—that is, a war fought to forestall an enemy or to prevent the weakening of an important ally.

Such is the proper definition of a militarist. In this sense of the word the controlling cliques, chancellories, cabinets, of nearly all great modern nations, are militaristic. This is not to assert that these men are base, immoral, unprincipled. On the contrary, they often imagine themselves moved by the highest and most patriotic motives. Their philosophy may be a dangerous one; but it is, in a degree, an honest philosophy.

It is important that we should see where the militaristic view invariably leads us. By the

weight of its own logic it brings recurrent war. Each nation undertakes to arm itself adequately for the possible conflict. The desire of each nation to be stronger than its adversary results in a feverish rivalry in armaments. The armaments become burdensome, and sooner or later the moment arrives when some Power feels that it might better fight now than on less advantageous terms later. And so latent war becomes actual war, and the cycle is complete.

So long as statesmen concern themselves chiefly with problems of power, this militaristic cycle, with its periodic dip into horror, is bound to recur again and again. It has been the history of Europe since the breaking up of the Holy Roman Empire. The present conflict has been called "a war of mutual fears." And there is good reason to believe that it would not have come unless both sides had felt that they might have to fight against more perilous odds at some later date. Germany thought the hour had struck for strategic reasons: for example, the opening of the Kiel Canal to big ships in July, 1914, and the threat of the new Russian strategic railroads in Poland, to be completed in 1917. Germany did not prefer, at all costs, war

to peace; the German Foreign Office strove for a pacific settlement up to the very last moment.<sup>1</sup> But the military chiefs of Germany, who gained the upper hand in the panic, were far from fearing a trial of strength. The abrupt ultimatums to Russia and France were challenges. They revealed the militaristic mind in Germany; they showed that she accredited to her neighbors an implacable hostility; and disclosed her readiness to encounter the brunt of that hostility at once rather than await its more complete preparations.

The *entente*, moreover, showed itself little loath to accept the German challenge. On this side there were three decisions instead of one to be made; and the compelling reasons were political rather than strategic. It became evident early in the crisis that if Russia, France, and Great Britain were to act, they would act in concert. That gave the three Governments assurance of success; and once their great coalition was set in motion they predicted a short, victorious war. England might have been content with a diplomatic victory. Russia was the only

<sup>1</sup> See "The European Anarchy," by G. Lowes Dickinson, pp. 124-127.

one of the European Powers that moved consistently and remorselessly for war, from first to last.<sup>2</sup> Russia was desirous for a throw of the dice, provided she could get strong enough backers.

In all the mass of "collected diplomatic documents" relating to the outbreak of the European War, none is more significant than a little communication of Sazanof to the Russian Ambassador at London, July 25. The despatch is No. 17 in the Russian Orange Book, and reads:

"In the event of any change for the worse in the situation which might lead to joint action by the Great Powers, we count upon it that England will at once side definitely with Russia and France, in order to maintain the European balance of power, for which she has constantly intervened in the past, and which would certainly be compromised in the event of the triumph of Austria."

The foregoing is a complete sample of militaristic thinking. It says in effect: We must curb the foe when he attempts to shift the balance of power in his favor. But what harm if he

<sup>2</sup> "How the War Came," pamphlet of the Independent Labor Party.

does so shift the balance of power? Why, then he would be stronger when the war does come! We make war lest war catch us at a disadvantage. Here the militaristic circle is complete. One thing alone makes war inevitable: the idea that it is inevitable.

Of course any analysis that traces the world war to mutual suspicion and fear and preoccupation with problems of power, will ruffle the adherents of both sides. It fits in with the illusions of neither. The pro-Germans have erected for themselves the myth of a Blameless Germany. The pro-Allies have created the myth of the Chivalrous Allies. These impassioned partizans seem unable to grasp the painfully patent truth that they live in a militaristic world.

War tends to breed more war. Territory is often sought or seized by the great Powers for military purposes. Whenever a nation fights, or stirs up ill will, for the sake of strengthening its frontiers, or securing a naval base, or commanding a strategic strait, it encourages war in order that it may be strong in war. The transfer of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany after 1870 was a contributing cause in the present conflict.

And Bismarck took Alsace-Lorraine because he thought the fortress of Metz worth a hundred thousand soldiers. A great deal of blood has been shed and will be shed for the possession of Constantinople. The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles are open to all ships in times of peace; Constantinople is coveted chiefly for its strategic value in war. The British Foreign Office took large risks several times in its (successful) attempts to keep Germany from acquiring a coaling station in the Atlantic.<sup>3</sup> A nation needs coaling stations for its navy; and very soon it thinks it needs a navy to protect its coaling stations. No matter how large and formidable an empire, its imperial masters constantly seek to add, by force if necessary, choice bits here and there to make it still more secure.

Protective tariffs link themselves in the militaristic circle. Free trade is not an indispensable preliminary to universal peace. None of the belligerents in this war has raised a battle-cry against protection. On the other hand, high tariffs undoubtedly increase the frictions of international intercourse. Their avowed ob-

<sup>3</sup> Notably Libreville. See Morel, "Morocco in Diplomacy." p. 181, and Chapter XXII.

ject is to place the foreigner at an economic disadvantage. Not without reason does the Cobden Club combine in its motto "Free trade, peace, and good will among nations." Yet we may be certain that protective tariffs will not soon be leveled. Not only are they supported by economic fallacies widely believed, but the mere existence of war in the world bolsters them. One of the most telling arguments in favor of protection is based on international hostility. A country wants, for military reasons, to be independent of outside sources of supply; it needs to be able, if it should be isolated in a war, to feed, clothe, and munition itself. And thus an advantage in war blocks a reform that might help to eliminate war.

Something of militaristic thinking can be found in the vagaries and confusions that shroud that abused subject, "The freedom of the seas." When war is not raging the seas are free to all. The question of "freedom" at present centers in the right of belligerents to capture private property and merchantmen *in war time*. For a nation, therefore, to make war for the freedom of the seas, is in part a paradox; because by the act of war the nation would bring



about the condition wherein freedom is abrogated. No nation at present would attempt, outside of war, to interfere with the ships and commerce of her neighbors. And for a very good reason: interference in itself would mean war. If any maritime power, no matter how predominant, undertook in times of peace to destroy merchantmen, or levy tribute on them, or impress foreign seamen, it would array the other navies of the world against it. Those rights were established through four centuries of maritime struggle. At present, however, a great naval Power can, in time of war, cripple the merchant marine of its enemy and paralyze for the time being its commerce. That possibility is an additional temptation to make war, where other incentives exist. The war and peace aspects of "the freedom of the seas" are interlocked. Without question it would be a step in advance to abolish the right to capture private property at sea in wartime. It is not likely to be done, however, by substituting one naval supremacy for another. It is more likely to be accomplished, if at all, by international agreement. And once accomplished it will lessen the temptation to war, and at the same time

diminish the incentive to abuse sea power and invade neutral rights.

In times of peace the militarist mind is potent chiefly in the ruling classes. But in war time, it infects whole peoples. The English and French now declare, "German militarism must be crushed. It must never again be possible for the Germans to menace our security." The Germans proclaim, "We must break the ring around us. Germany must be safe from future attacks." These stern determinations are in one respect identical: they both avow militaristic ends. Neither side appears to have the slightest doubt that the enemy will attack again at the first favorable opportunity. Neither side appears to have the slightest faith in any guarantee of peace except its own invincible strength. This militaristic conviction is not incompatible with peace talk—of a kind. In each of the belligerent countries there has emerged the peace-with-victory pacifist. We, the Pledged Allies, he says, or we, the Teutonic Allies—we shall keep the peace of Europe, once we have smashed the foe. Futile delusion! This concern with a problematical future war is unquestionably prolonging the present war.

The military men are in control. It will in all probability be a military settlement. Fortresses, railroad centers, naval bases, strategic coast-lines—these will be the principal stakes asked and bargained for in the final negotiations. Each nation will play for position in the armed truce that is to follow. Europe after the war will be embittered, revengeful, plagued with new sores. "War," said Disraeli, "is never a solution, it is an aggravation." Only strife is born of strife. Peace can be prepared for only in times of peace.

## X

### PROFITS OF AGGRESSION

**I**F we wish to lay hold of war-making motives we must probe for them. The men in the ranks cannot enlighten us on the causes of wars. They think, in large part, that they are fighting for ideal ends: for morality, for religion, for race, for civilization. Since each side battles to advance the same noble purposes, there must be an element of delusion in each. Men are dying for different objects than their Governments can achieve.

Behind the armies and the peoples stand the Governments and the governing classes. Governments make wars; they either directly initiate them, or they bring negotiations to such a pass that public opinion sanctions a war rather than see the Government back down. These men in control of affairs are politically minded. They think in terms of States and combinations of States. They play the game of the balance of power.

Is it possible that these statesmen, rulers, diplomats, and military chiefs follow the lure of sheer, raw power? Strong men love to dictate, and by equal measure hate dictation. Impatience plays an important rôle among those who are able to back their words. Why, for instance, did the Germans put their fist down some ten or fifteen years ago and declare: When anything is to be settled in the world, we want our say? Was it simply their *amour propre*—for the joy of having their own way?

That is not all. Seldom avowed and also seldom forgotten is the hope of economic gain. However obscured by issues of pride or nationality, economic motives are the ultimate provocations of war. The statesmen of Europe, patriots albeit, expect material profits from successful war, not directly for themselves perhaps, but for the "nation." To say that this war is the result of mutual fears, is to speak negatively. On its positive side it is a clash of rival imperialisms. And imperialism, for all its fine phrases about "the destiny of the nation," and the "glory of the Empire," and "our place in the sun," signifies little without a core of economic purpose. Power tempered by a

continuing expense, the privilege of vainly interfering with other persons, offers feeble stimulus to imperial ambition. We cannot say to just what degree economic designs sway the Governments of Germany, England, France, Russia, Italy, and Japan—how far they have been influenced by hopes of new colonies, markets, concessions. But we know that practically every ruling class in the world sees a close connection between military power and national prosperity.

Riches through power—that is the stake of modern war. The militaristic circle never quite closes of itself. If there were no prizes in this bloody game the world would have revolted against it long ago. In that crescendo of competing armaments and national exasperations which marked the years 1904 to 1914, the successive impulses to irritation and chauvinism were imperialistic disputes—quarrels over Bosnia, Morocco, the Congo, the Persian Gulf. The relation between aggression for wealth and war for power has been analyzed by G. Lowes Dickinson in his able monograph on the present conflict.<sup>1</sup> He says:

<sup>1</sup> "The European Anarchy," pp. 130-133.

“Whatever be the diversities of opinion that prevail in the different countries concerned, nobody pretends that the war arose out of any need of civilization, out of any generous impulse or noble ambition. It arose, according to the popular view in England, solely and exclusively out of the ambition of Germany to seize territory and power. It arose, according to the popular German view, out of the ambition of England to attack and destroy the rising power and wealth of Germany. Thus to each set of belligerents the war appears as one forced upon them by sheer wickedness, and from neither point of view has it any kind of moral justification. These views, it is true, are both too simple for the facts. The war proceeded out of rivalry for empire between all the Great Powers in every part of the world. The contention between France and Germany for the control of Morocco, the contention between Russia and Austria for the control of the Balkans, the contention between Germany and the other Powers for the control of Turkey—these were the causes of the war. And this contention for control is prompted at once by the desire for power and the desire for wealth. In practice the two mo-

tives are found conjoined. But to different minds they appeal in different proportions. There is such a thing as love of power for its own sake. It is known in individuals, and it is known in States, and it is the most disastrous, if not the most evil, of the human passions. . . .

“But while power may be sought for its own sake, it is commonly sought by modern States as a means to wealth. It is the pursuit of markets and concession and outlets for capital that lies behind the colonial policy that leads to wars. States compete for the right to exploit the weak, and in this competition Governments are prompted or controlled by financial interests. The British went to Egypt for the sake of the bondholders, the French to Morocco for the sake of its minerals and wealth. In the Near East and the Far it is commerce, concessions, loans that have led to the rivalry of the Powers, to war after war, to ‘punitive expeditions’ and—irony of ironies!—to ‘indemnities’ exacted as a new and special form of robbery from peoples who rose in the endeavor to defend themselves against robbery. The Powers combine for a moment to suppress the common victim, and next they are at one another’s



throats over the spoil. That really is the simple fact about the quarrels of States over colonial and commercial policy. So long as the exploitation of undeveloped countries is directed by companies having no objects in view except dividends, so long as financiers prompt the policy of Governments, so long as military expeditions, leading up to annexations, are undertaken behind the back of the public for reasons that cannot be avowed, so long will the nations end with war, where they began with theft, and so long will thousands and millions of innocent and generous lives, the best of Europe, be thrown away to no purpose, because, in the dark, sinister interests have been risking the peace of the world for the sake of the money in their pockets."

The gains from aggression are by no means of one variety, and they tend to change from epoch to epoch. Spain exploited the mineral resources of Mexico and Peru by reducing the native populations to slavery, and we still have a survival of this method of exploitation in that anachronism of outrage and cruelty, the Belgian Congo. It was the fashion a century ago to tax colonies as heavily as possible and to monopolize

their trade. These methods too have been largely abandoned by advanced nations, although we find on the one hand Russia extorting taxes from its subject peoples, and on the other tariff preferences granted the mother country by the British colonies, and a high tariff wall erected around the French dependencies. Again, an agricultural people have a different kind of land hunger from an urbanized, industrialized people. A farming population, if it is growing, needs more soil; a manufacturing population needs wider markets. In the Balkans they have a practice called "extermination." It means the expulsion of all peoples of alien race from a conquered territory, and appropriation of their lands. A Balkan nationality declares open war and succeeds in extending its political frontier; it then continues a suppressed and social war to make the frontier racial as well as political. In the west of Europe "exterminations" are obsolete. If Alsace-Lorraine, or Belgium, for example, pass under new masters, farms and other property will remain in the same private hands as before. The absorption will be political and military, not economic.

In these days the profits of aggression come mainly from the backward, half-developed countries. They take the form of preëmptions, monopolies, and above all, concessions. The export of capital funds has created the new financial imperialism. Usually financial penetration precedes annexation. The banker and the concession hunter led England to Egypt, Italy to Tripoli, France to Morocco. After the weaker country has been reduced to a sphere of influence, or protectorate, or colony, the financiers of the country in control start to "develop" its natural and commercial resources. They secure concessions to open mines, establish trading posts, lay railroads, cut forests, work rubber plantations, build irrigation dams, erect power plants. These projects are likely to yield lucrative returns—to the capitalists who participate. And for two reasons. In the first place the natives are frequently cheated. When the British made loans to the Khedive of Egypt and the French to the Sultan of Morocco, these unfortunate rulers received but a minor portion of the millions nominally advanced. The rest was withheld as interest and insurance. In the second place these exploita-

tive investments secure not only generous interest but unearned increment. An annual return of 40 per cent. was expected from the Bagdad Railway. Should Japan take control—through military aggression or threat of it—of the mines and railroads and banks of China, Japanese capitalists and promoters would be in a position to capture a large slice of the wealth resulting from China's industrial development. It is estimated that the amount of overseas investment stood, on the outbreak of the war, at forty billions of dollars, and that most of this capital was owned or controlled by the wealthy classes in England, France, and Germany.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the gains of aggression, it should be noted, are class gains. They are not diffused through the mass of the nation, but go almost exclusively to a narrow group of capitalists.<sup>3</sup> The masses share little or not at all in exploitative enterprises. They have, on the contrary, the strongest interest in maintaining

<sup>2</sup> The rôle of high finance in stimulating lust for empire is now generally recognized, and need not be further emphasized here. See "Why War," by Frederick C. Howe, and "The Stakes of Diplomacy," by Walter Lippmann.

<sup>3</sup> How little the laboring classes may hope to profit by war is shown by Professor Alvin S. Johnson, in "War and the Interests of Labor," *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1914.

peaceful intercourse between nations. The governing classes take the fruits of empire. This is partly because the governing classes are in some measure identical with the investing classes, and partly because they naturally absorb the high-paid positions throughout the empire. Bertrand Russell pertinently remarks:<sup>4</sup> "The interests of the British democracy do not conflict at any point with the interests of mankind. The interests of the British governing classes conflict at many points with the interests of mankind. The conquest of a new colony does not raise the wages of British labor, but it affords posts for younger sons and attractive investments for capitalists. For this reason, a policy of adventure and national prestige appeals most forcibly to the rich, while the wage-earning class, if it understood its own interests and were not caught by the glamour of Jingo phrases, would insist on a policy of peace and international conciliation."

It may seem a bit odd that nations should have entered so unreservedly on a career of colonial adventure. But the actual fact is that the policy of nearly every European Power has

<sup>4</sup> "Justice in War Time," p. 211.

been directed by a small group of rich men. The concession seeker works mostly in the dark. His connection with the Foreign Office shows itself only in results. The union of Government with high finance has been most clearly revealed in France. In the last generation France acquired the second largest empire in the world, and the Colonial Party, made up of wealthy men profiting by exploitation, came into control of French politics. The close coöperation between the German Government and the Deutsche Bank in schemes for seizing concessions in Turkey and Asia Minor is well known. Everywhere Governments have aided plutocracy. The trading company, the overseas corporation, the branch bank in foreign lands, have had the Foreign Office at their backs. And at the call of the Foreign Office is the army and the fleet.

When one reflects on the devastation that the machinations of rich men have wrought, on the death and unspeakable suffering of hundreds of thousands of men and women, and on the staggering burdens of taxation laid on the peoples, one cannot speak of these selfish, intriguing interests with patience. Yet it must be admitted

that on the subject of national economics there has been a disheartening confusion in the public mind. It has been widely believed, by all classes, that the prosperity of the nation could be advanced by military force. Mr. Norman Angell, in his "Great Illusion," rendered a great service by attacking the grosser delusions. I have already pointed out<sup>5</sup> that Mr. Angell is in the curious position of a man who has backed a sound contention with dubious arguments. His central position is that war can never be anything but a monstrously losing game. He sought, however, to lay down the dictum that aggression is always futile; and instead of striking a balance sheet for war, checking off the losses in one column against the gains in another, and showing at the end a huge deficit, he tried to wipe the credit side bare. But the credit side is not bare—for the *concessionaires* and the capitalists. A few powerful interests, through overseas finance and armament manufacture, profit from war, while the nation as a whole sustains crushing losses.

For many decades political economy has spoken in no uncertain voice on the interdepend-

<sup>5</sup> "Norman Angellism Under Fire," *Forum*, April, 1915.

ence of nations. It teaches that each country has a direct interest in the prosperity of its neighbors, just as a merchant has an interest in the prosperity of his customers. In destroying Germany, England would destroy one of her best markets. Germany's imports for home consumption from the British Empire in 1912 were valued at 99,895,000 pounds—nearly half a billion dollars. A wealthy German contributes, *ipso facto*, to make a wealthy England and a wealthy France. Industrial progress proceeds by geographical division of labor, and each nation serves its own best interests when it specializes in those things it can produce most efficiently. Before specialization between nations is attained, there may be painful readjustments; but these pains are no different from the pains that arise from competition within national boundaries. And the result emerges in a universal cheapening of goods. England, Germany, Austria, France, and Russia are not commercial antagonists, in any fundamental sense, any more than the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Kansas, and Texas are antagonists. It is the competition of capitalists for the backward lands that keeps alive the fallacious notion



that nations are industrial rivals. The vast bulk of the manufacturing and commercial interests of a nation profit when other nations wax rich, and suffer when they are impoverished.

Yet these fundamental truths of political economy have been generally ignored. Even disinterested statesmen have befuddled themselves. Militaristic issues have obscured economic issues. And class interests have obscured national interests. To the result that great nations have bent their energies to inferior and ignoble ends, have staked the peace of the world against their share of the spoil when a Morocco, a Turkey, a China should "disintegrate," and now, like thieves quarreling over loot, have undertaken to murder one another to determine who shall fall heir to the booty.

## XI

### THE THREE SUGGESTIONS

**T**HE present state of international relations is really a state of anarchy. Many proposals have been put forward to remedy this chronic lawlessness, and to substitute in its place order and organization—some form of international government. It would be a mistake to imagine that such proposals are mostly of recent date. The thinkers of the eighteenth century were fond of spinning schemes for the confederation of the world, and they broached their plans with a blithe assurance of their early adoption. No such scheme has even been tested. Even the sanguine Congress of Vienna rejected the proposal of Tsar Alexander I to create a Confederation of the Great Powers. But the sport of devising—on paper—plans for uniting the nations seems not to have lost its zest. The world is at short intervals treated to a complete program whereby it can master its troubles.

The concoction of such plans is not hard.

Taking the Constitution of the United States or the Swiss Confederation as a model, it is easy to demonstrate how the political entities of the world could coalesce and create for themselves a full-fledged government, with executives, legislature, courts, and police. But the very completeness of such plans has aroused skepticism. More recently, indeed, it has been the fashion of reformers to concentrate on some one phase of international government, rather than to insist on elaborate organization. These proposals have taken, invariably, one of three forms: a world court, where international disputes can be arbitrated; an international police force, carrying out the mandates of a League to Enforce Peace; or a Federal Council, where laws can be made and the grievances of nations removed by legislation. It will be convenient to consider any approach to international government under these three forms.

## I

One set of proposals centers around the idea of a world court. A Supreme Tribunal of Justice is to be set up at The Hague, or elsewhere, and all quarrels submitted to it for argument

and decision. This is merely an extension and consummation of the method of arbitration, whereby many dangerous disputes have been adjusted.

Every one knows that ameliorations have been introduced into the conduct of nations by international law. Especially in defining the rights and duties of belligerents and neutrals has it been valuable. Of course international law is frequently flouted by the strong; but it creates everywhere a presumption in its favor and often rallies powerful forces to its support. Likewise, the value of arbitration in removing friction between nations is generally recognized. A very long list can be compiled, showing instances where nations, even the most bellicose, have come to amicable agreement over boundaries, maritime rights, assaults on citizens, and similar contentious matters. Many a quarrel that might have festered into war has been nipped by arbitration.

But when you have said so much, you have said about all that can be said for the efficacy of judicial procedure in maintaining the world's peace. By necessity it confines itself to minor dissensions. It must slavishly sustain the de-

cisions of the past, as fixed in treaties and the *status quo*. To assume that the grievances nations hold against each other may be removed by legal decisions, before the principles of equity and justice that define those grievances have been embodied in the law, is to put the cart before the horse. Modern nations have shown an ever-increasing disposition to arbitrate questions that are "justiciable." But they are practically unanimous in refusing to consider arbitration of questions that involve national honor or vital interest. The United States, in its present mood, would not submit to arbitration the Monroe Doctrine, nor England the retention of Egypt, nor Germany the Kiel Canal, nor Russia the liberty of Finland. It is precisely this refusal of great nations to arbitrate their major disagreements which wrecks the idea of a predominant world court. The litigants who would be supposed to resort to it would not acknowledge its jurisdiction in the quarrels that endanger peace.

## II

An international police force, if it could be instituted, would presumably have two func-

tions. It could clean up areas of anarchy, like Mexico or China, and restore order to peoples too feebly organized to maintain it themselves. But this function would be subsidiary. Its main business would be to restrain any aggressive nation that undertook to attack its neighbors. It would put its military and naval foot down on the "aggressor." It would be a sort of sublimated fire extinguisher, going about the world and putting out the flames of war before they gained dangerous headway.

An international police, moreover, might be constituted in two ways: it might be a definite unit, made up of contributions from the navies and armies of the Powers, under international leadership; or it might take the form of an agreement between the Powers to use jointly their naval and military establishments. The latter organization would be properly termed a League to Enforce Peace. But organization is a matter of detail; the function counts. The advocates of this plan seem to expect much of it. They assert that no international sanction is worth more than a scrap of paper unless it has adequate force behind it. They say that the only thoroughgoing guarantee of peace is some

means to overawe those Powers that bend their energies to militarism and aggression. And they hope that an international police or a League to Enforce Peace would relieve the "pacific nations" in part of their need for preparation, and make possible a general reduction in armaments.

It is safe to hazard, however, that a mechanism to secure peace through compulsion would achieve neither peace nor justice. For by what rule would the "aggressor" be known? A formal declaration of war does not signify. The Boers declared war on England; yet it could hardly be maintained that the Boers provoked the struggle. Japan and Russia, two military-minded nations, found that their imperial ambitions clashed in the Far East. After mutual aggressions they began hostilities without a formal declaration. Against which side, in the Russo-Japanese War, would a League to Enforce Peace have intervened? It would have been nonsense to fight both sides simultaneously. And might it not be that a sensible world would have kept its hands off—just as it did? And are we to assume, further, that war is never justifiable, and that a nation is never right in fight-

ing to end a grievance? Should the world have prevented the Balkan nations from leaguings against the Turk? Should it have prevented the United States from expelling Spain from Cuba? Like arbitration, an enforced peace postulates a closed and unchangeable world.

Possibly the greatest danger of all in a League to Enforce Peace would be the temptation to internal manipulation. One great group of Powers could, to further its own interests, bully and coerce a weaker group. It could interpret territorial squabbles in its own favor. An abuse of power would be rendered more likely should the league at the start include only a part of the great nations. Unless organized on the broadest international basis, it would serve as a disguise for the repression of rivals. Intrigue and self-seeking would pervert its purpose. An international police might be a valuable instrument to a world composed of nations persistently bent on peace, and ready to relinquish conflicting ambitions. But it has little place in a world "under attempted partition by predatory empires," which is our world.

The criticisms urged above against a League to Enforce Peace apply only with limited valid-



ity to the plan of the American organization by that name, headed by Ex-President Taft. This League does not contemplate a thoroughgoing scheme to secure peace through compulsion. How moderate is its program may be seen from its three cardinal principles:

“First—All justiciable questions arising between the signatory powers, not settled by negotiations, shall be submitted to a judicial tribunal for hearing and judgment both upon the merits and upon any issue as to its jurisdiction of the question.

“Second—All nonjusticiable questions arising between the signatories and not settled by negotiations, shall be submitted to a Council of Conciliation for hearing, consideration, and recommendation.

“Third—The signatory powers shall jointly use their military forces to prevent any one of their number from going to war, or committing acts of hostility, against another of the signatories before any question arising shall be submitted as provided in the foregoing.”

Such a plan cannot be called, strictly, a League to Enforce Peace. It is a League to Enforce Pause. Its whole energy is thrown

against a too precipitate descent into war. It seeks to ensure, by the strongest possible guarantee, time for deliberation, a "cooling-off" period, wherein sober second judgment may assert itself. It is really aimed at secret diplomacy and the control of cliques. If it were carried into effect it would no longer be possible for a few men to rush great nations into war before the causes of conflict had been discussed or even disclosed.

Nonjusticiable questions are those that involve national honor or vital interest. What questions are nonjusticiable is left, of course, for the nations themselves to decide. It is by no means certain that after such questions had been submitted to a Council of Conciliation for hearing, consideration and recommendation, the nations would accept the solution proffered. One or the other might prefer to fight. But surely the chances would be tremendously lessened. There are in every advanced nation, strong pacific elements who would prefer any reasonable solution to international strife. But at present they are at an immense disadvantage when pitted against kings or cabinets determined on war. A crisis arises and war is de-

clared before they have time to marshal their forces or to influence public opinion. Fear plays into the hands of the militarists, and a swift mobilization is considered more vital than suggestions for compromise.

A nation threatened by powerful neighbors might be loath to curtail its freedom of action. It has been, and probably always will be, a strategic advantage in war to strike the first blow. Again, a nation thoroughly convinced of the righteousness of its cause might see the defeat of justice in delay. President Wilson in the disputes with Germany over submarines, and with Mexico over bandits, refused arbitration and mediation. Undoubtedly his refusals were approved by many of the members of the League to Enforce Peace. In order to work at all, such a league, involving as it does so drastic a measure as joint military action against a recalcitrant nation by all the signatories, would have to be entered into with entire good faith. It, too, would have to be recruited on the broadest possible basis, lest it resolve itself into an offensive and defensive alliance, like the Triple Entente, only a bit stronger. The core of the plan really is the Council of Conciliation. In

the end, success or failure would hinge upon the council's decisions. If this council, after the manner of arbitrators, based its judgments on out-worn treaties and musty maps, if it haggled and split and compromised, its solutions would be set aside, and an appeal made to the *ultima ratio*. But if it advanced boldly to a genuine settlement of international grievances, it might rally the support of a perplexed world. In other words, a Council of Conciliation would be most likely to succeed when it undertook the function of legislation.

### III

There has been a strong feeling among certain thinkers on world politics that the only workable substitute for war is some sort of international legislature. Here are two brief opinions from advocates of this idea—a German and an Englishman:

“Yet it cannot be denied, however noble the pacifistic ideals are, their promoters have not succeeded as yet in proposing a single plan by which war would be abolished and yet at the same time possibilities be given for the healthy growth of progressive peoples and for the his-

torically necessary reduction of decadent nations.”—*Hugo Münsterberg*.

“Diplomacy was always busied with a pathetic conservatism in bolstering up the *status quo*, or in arranging those little readjustments which might just avail to stave off war. The big issues, both intellectual and economic, accumulated their explosive violence. . . . We shall not banish war from Europe until we are civilized enough to create an organization that can make and impose fundamental changes without war.”—*H. N. Brailsford*.

From the theoretical standpoint at least the advocates of legislation can make out a better case than the adherents of any other international plan. They can point out that all other proposals mean restriction, not construction. To the charge that war is the failure of human reason, they can reply that human reason has never been much exercised on international adjustments. They can maintain that pacifists urge a false analogy when they say private wars and family feuds have disappeared with the growth of courts and police. Private war disappeared when men learned to legislate for their common rights. International difficulties can-

not be adjusted by laying down a few neat rules once for all. They call for the continuous exercise of the highest statesmanship. Problems of population and welfare must be solved, one after another, as they arise. The world is a vast slow flux. The needs and ambitions of States change, as the number of their inhabitants, the extent of their wealth, and the stage of their industrial development change. These problems, ever changing, ever pressing, can only be handled, it is asserted, through a Federal Council. And it would matter little whether the council were a regular chamber of deputies elected from the nations, or only a dozen representative men meeting periodically around a green table.

Undeniably there is much strength in these contentions. Yet we would do well to note precisely what sort of problems a world legislature would have to grapple. To say we must create some means "to effect fundamental changes without war" does not hit the center of the truth. Fundamental changes occur at present. A world wherein a Finland, a Morocco, and a Persia can be subverted and annexed in "times of peace" is not an unchangeable world. The

present war is going to bring about alterations of the same sort—alterations that ought not to be made. It is a struggle to see who shall have a free hand in predatory practices. We have already seen that this war resulted, in the main, from two intertwining motives: the militaristic desire to secure strategic territories that strengthen an empire; and the capitalistic desire to seize backward lands for exclusive exploitation. Neither motive is a high one, nor relevant to the best interests of the belligerent peoples. The alterations in the world's structure that justice dictates will not be made, in all probability, at the end of the war. Among desirable alterations might be cited the rehabilitation of Poland, the restoration of independence to Finland and Persia, a decent supervision of the Congo, a plebiscite in Alsace-Lorraine and in northern Schleswig. Changes such as these are scarcely incidental to the purposes of European statesmen.

The operation of a little genuine good-will between the nations of Europe would have smoothed out the causes of the present conflict without any resort to international legislation. The friction over the Bagdad Railway is an ex-

ample. Why did the Powers quarrel over that project? It would be an advantage to British and French manufacturers as well as to German manufacturers to have a land route to the Persian Gulf and the East in competition with the water routes. Then why did the nations seek to thwart each other and arouse ill-will? The two sinister motives again: first because German, French, and British capitalists wanted exclusive concessions in Asia Minor; and second because Russian and British statesmen feared that Germany would dump into Mesopotamia not only German engineers and farmers, but soldiers in spiked helmets. The rivalry of capitalists can easily be controlled. Either foreign offices can refuse to back *concessionaires* and bondholders with offers of military support, as the American State Department refused to back American investors in Mexico, or international syndicates can be formed to apportion concessions. The outflow of capital need not be stopped, nor lucrative profits foregone. And militaristic projects would become idle once the nations ceased to regard each other with insane suspicion and dislike.

What vital interests of a nation do colonies



serve? The usual answer is that colonies are necessary as outlets for population and as sources of raw materials. The latter is largely an illusion of phrase. If Germany, for example, owns a colony containing iron and copper mines, German manufacturers still have to pay the mine-owners for ore. Furthermore, raw materials may be obtained anywhere in the world, from any country or anybody's colonies. No duties are imposed on exports of raw material. What Germany chiefly needs are wide markets, not colonies. It is to her advantage, as it is indeed to the advantage of all great manufacturing and trading countries, to keep the international domain so far as possible intact, and to preserve the Open Door. The Monroe Doctrine is a bulwark to Germany, since it insures that one vast market at least cannot be closed against her. German economists have generally recognized these facts; and they have maintained with truth that Germany must export either men or goods. Yet it cannot be said that Germany expansion has been sought solely along these enlightened lines. There is little to distinguish it from any other policy of colonial adventure. The seizure of Kiao-chou was not an attempt to

widen German markets; it was an announcement that when China was partitioned Germany expected her slice. Imperialism and industrial expansion may be two quite distinct things.

The question of surplus population is a knottier one. At first blush it seems unjust that France, with a dwindling population, should be given a vast tract like Morocco, fit in some respects for white settlement, while Germany, with a high birth rate and with sixty-five million people pressed into a territory about the size of Texas, should be denied a white men's colony. And yet the truth is that the problem of surplus population lies in the future. Not only has German emigration ceased, but Germany was importing each year a million transient laborers—mostly Russians and Italians—to till her fields and work her mines. At this minute no single great country is overcrowded. Russia does not need another inch of ground; she ought in fact to have some of her vassal territories taken away from her. England has illimitable room in her colonies. The United States could support five hundred millions on her soil. Japan has a field for colonization in Korea and Manchuria. It is true that some day the problem of surplus popu-

lation may become pressing, and the nations elbow each other. Germany will be one of the first to feel the pinch. Possibly German statesmen have had this future contingency in mind. Without question an international legislature, in fairness, would cede Mesopotamia to Germany. There are few tracts remaining in the world where white men can live and thrive that are still unoccupied or sparsely settled. One of these, in any equitable allotment, would go to the Teutonic race.

We can see that the task of a Federal Council would be complex. It would have to put an end to certain "fundamental changes" that now go on. The problems of nationality, sovereignty, and population it would have to handle with the nicest discrimination. Yet its task would not be superhuman. The deeper drifts make for harmony. The genuine interests of the nations are furthered by coöperation, not by rivalry. Even to-day the chief commercial countries find their largest returns in trading among themselves, and they would all profit by keeping the international domain as wide and free as possible. And what is true of economic interests is even truer of cultural interests. The best development of

Europe calls for the fostering and intensifying of a number of contrasted civilizations.

The fact that stands out most sharply is this: no international legislation can be carried through unless the nations undertake it in good will. A legislature is not simply a counter on which to bargain and trade. A Council that meets to carve up the world like a pie—only with due regard to the appetites of the powerful—will stultify itself. When the Powers come to pass on the fate of China they must have as much regard for the welfare of the Chinese people as for the greed of Japan and of the empires of Europe. We already have a classic example in the Conference of Algeciras in 1906 of how bad faith can shatter international rule. The conference solemnly guaranteed the independence and integrity of Morocco. All of the Powers pledged themselves to abide by the decision. But the agreement was rendered a farce by the duplicity of three nations. France, England, and Spain sat in that conference holding hands under the table. They had already agreed, in the secret clauses of the 1904 declarations, that Morocco should be partitioned between France and Spain, England supporting

France in return for a free hand in Egypt. In 1911 the steal was carried through. Justice and principle must sit in the councils of the Powers as well as selfishness and ambition.

## XII

### THE POLITICS OF PEACE

SINCE the outbreak of the European War a number of books have appeared that confine their attention exclusively to the documents of the crisis. Their method is to collate and analyze the dispatches that passed between the Governments, and then, on that evidence, gravely to hand down a verdict of "Guilty" to one contestant or the other. Such books are amusing. Their authors do not realize they are the naïve victims of a hoax; they do not see that these diplomatic avowals and disavowals are mainly an elaborate make-believe. Had there not been a desire for war there would have been no war. The crisis would suddenly have ceased to be "grave" and "momentous." There was nothing in the Austro-Serbian dispute that could not have been compromised. A formula could have been found. The ostensible occasion for Armageddon was almost trivial. War resulted

because, at the background of it all, there was a mutual willingness to have a trial of strength.

Wars will not cease until the desire for war grows feeble. Peace is a problem of internal politics. A new international order cannot maintain itself if the individual nations play their part in bad faith. The machinery is not essential. Wars could be avoided through the action of the present machinery of diplomacy and negotiation, did the nations work these instruments with humanity and good will. The peace of the world rests to-day in the hands of eight great Powers, six European and two non-European. They alone can wage great wars; they alone can prevent minor wars. The eight are: Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States. What goes on inside of these nations determines the issue. Who rules in them and in what spirit?—that is the sum of world politics.

In the last chapter three proposals for the organization of the world were discussed: a Court of the Nations, an International Police League, and a Federal Council for Legislation. Criticisms of each plan were urged; but the conclusion was not that no such plan is worth trying.

On the contrary, could the nations be persuaded to institute a League of Peace or a Federal Council—some scheme at first simple and tentative so that it would not collapse under too ambitious endeavors—it would be worthy of enthusiastic support. It would form a center about which pacific effort and opinion could crystallize, a rallying point for constructive endeavor. Can the nations create an effective pact of peace?

There are hopeful men of international mind who answer the question in the affirmative. They maintain that at the end of this struggle or in the years immediately following, the peoples, in revulsion against the horrors and burdens of war, will turn irresistibly towards a better order of things, and put an end to the anarchy that has ruined them. Such a dénouement is within the range of possibility. I myself do not think that world peace is going to be achieved in so simple a fashion. I believe international government must be regarded as an ultimate goal, not the next step. Nevertheless the contentions of those who predict a speedy break with the past are rather formidable. They run as follows:

The majority of citizens in every country is pacific in hope and desire. This war was not an



explosion of hate between peoples, and what ill feeling existed was largely manufactured by armament firms and a jingo press. Diplomacy and statecraft lagged behind public intelligence. There is at present enough good will and wisdom in Europe to create and manage a Concert, were only that wisdom organized and given voice. The intrigues of emperors and diplomatists, the petty deceits, the perilous bargains—why should they go on? After this war has burned itself out, the peoples will take a reckoning. They will see to what ultimate horrors and sufferings their leaders have led them. They will feel a loathing and aversion to war greater than was experienced after the wars for empire a century ago. When Napoleon returned from Elba, French women shot at him from behind the hedges. They hated him for having dragged their sons and husbands away to strew their bones across Europe. The hatred of war among the mass of the people will again be passionate, and it will have more political effect than in 1815. The plan for the Confederation of Europe was not adopted, but the plan for a League of Peace will be carried through. The Europe of to-day is more democratic than the Europe of

the Napoleonic Era, the masses more conscious of their power. In the parliamentary countries, like England and France, we shall see a reform of the foreign offices, and a democratic control of national policy. In the more autocratic countries, like Germany, Austria, and Russia, we may witness revolutions, possibly by violence, overthrowing the old order. Democratic and revolutionary tendencies will be quickened by the huge financial burdens the war has entailed. Excessive taxes, widespread poverty, unemployment, and industrial disturbances—these will be the lot of all, victors and vanquished. No one will be permitted to forget the costs of war. If this struggle is a draw, relatively, the forces of pacifism in every country will be strengthened. That is why many observers in neutral countries wish to see a draw, a wish the belligerents cannot understand. In any event the peoples will be compelled to make their choice: either a continuance of the old anarchy, with the certain recurrence of wars, each more devastating than the last, or an international government, with its promise of peace. And the peoples will choose the way of peace.

The persons who hold to the views expressed above seem to me to be too sanguine, fatuously so. They allow their hopes to befog their vision. The war in itself will not smooth out the road of the pacifist; it will render it steeper. It has aroused on all sides revengeful tempers. The peoples in their fury do not repent of their past misdeeds, nor prepare to treat their adversaries with magnanimity. The fundamental problems of nationality, population, and markets are not going to be nearer their solution at the conclusion of a war for empire, but probably much further from it. The expectation of revolutions, peaceful or bloody, is largely chimerical. The countries of western Europe, particularly Germany and England, are profoundly conservative. Revolution is possible only in Russia, and, as an immediate eventuality, improbable there. What chance is there that the men who made this war will be turned out? If they win they will be heroes; if they lose, martyrs. The mass of people in no nation entertains the slightest doubt of the righteousness of its cause. A League of Peace or a European Alliance could have been instituted more easily in 1914 than after the conflict. "The

war will leave," says Graham Wallas,<sup>1</sup> "the condition of international relations as dangerous as a mined trench, and we shall all be forced to treat the prevention of a new explosion as the main purpose of our political lives."

It is admitted, of course, that some nations will be readier to renounce imperialism than others. But the conversion of a few nations to a higher international morality does not give a sufficient basis for a League of Peace. To be specific, both of the armed camps into which the world is divided must unite to form the league. Otherwise it is a failure from the start. There should be no mistake on this point. John A. Hobson has written a book outlining an international government. He advocates its early adoption. Nevertheless he argues:<sup>2</sup>

"Some internationalists look to a little group of advanced liberal nations to take the lead. If Great Britain, France, and the United States, perhaps with Italy, the Scandinavian countries, and Holland and Switzerland, formed the nucleus of the International League, the strength of its position would be such as grad-

<sup>1</sup> *New Republic*, June 24, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> "Towards International Government," pp. 154-155.

ually to bring other nations to seek membership. But though it would doubtless be easier to set on foot such a league of liberal States, the project would be attended by heavy risks and disadvantages. The most obvious of these risks would be that so limited an alliance, instead of bringing in the other nations one by one, might lead them to combine in another group, so restoring all the dangers of a Balance of Power. In any case, so long as such powerful States as Russia, Germany, Japan, were not included, the aggressive policy they would be capable of wielding, singly or in combination, would compel the Western Alliance to maintain so powerful a defensive force that the benefits of a League of Peace would be most inadequately realized. Moreover, most of the gravest problems of international politics would remain outside the area of pacific settlement. Closer regard for 'real' politics makes it evident that, unless the great military empires of Germany and Russia are members of the confederation at the outset, the security for peace and for the reduction of armaments will be but slight. The case of Germany is, of course, the more critical. . . . The presence of Russia in an alliance in

which the other two principal European members were her recent war allies would give a sinister meaning to a professing peace alliance if Germany remained outside. It would have the appearance of a continuance of the war alliance against Germany and Austria, and the course of events would tend to convert that appearance into the substance of the arrangement, blasting all the higher hopes and aspirations, as was the case with the confederation of a century ago, formed to secure the peace of Europe after the Napoleonic war. The admission of Germany to membership of the league is the prime condition of its success."

Well, there is the concrete problem. What chance is there that at the end of the war Germany and her Allies can be included in a League of Peace? None, apparently. Her enemies seem determined to do all they can to aggravate her restiveness. They intend to chop away her colonies, to shear down her frontiers, take Alsace-Lorraine, and bar her from the Balkans and Turkey; they even talk, in case of an absolute victory, of destroying her military power and of dismemberment. Of course these vindictive measures would be an ideal way to make

Central Europe a breeding ground for future wars. You cannot humiliate and despoil a proud nation, and then say to her: "Let us be friends now, and create a League of Peace." Yet that is what some European statesmen propose. There is reason to suspect that militaristic groups are beginning to manipulate the new idealism of pacifism, just as they have used for evil ends the older idealism of nationalism. If Germany and Austria are "crushed" they will seek retribution. Did the Allies really plot the peace of the world they would give Germany back her colonies and hand her Mesopotamia as well. But they will do nothing of the sort. They will stab Europe with new wounds. They will do what they can to make inevitable an alliance between Germany, Russia, and Japan during the next decade or quarter century.

Under present leadership the eight Powers cannot hope to coalesce in a binding alliance or league. The first step must be the creation of confidence and good will between the leading nations. That is the indispensable substratum of a warless world. No powerful nation has yet won for itself a pacific reputation or made others believe that it has definitely abandoned

imperialistic ambitions. Any nation may accredit good intentions to itself, but no nation has yet convinced other nations of its disinterestedness. Good will cannot be secured through professions of self-righteousness; it must be established by concrete acts of justice. When Germany is given a good white men's colony, and Russia a warm-water port on the Persian Gulf, when Germany liberates her Poles and her Danes, and Russia restores independence to Swedish Finland, when England and France cease to expand their inflated empires at anybody's and everybody's expense, when the yellow, brown, and black races are treated with their own best futures in view and not the white man's dividends, immediate or remote; when, in a word, the colossal selfishness that has moved nations is replaced by a policy of liberality and humanity, then and only then will the roots of war be plucked out. Aversion to war will not end war. The horror of it does not survive from one generation to another. To the dread of war must be added a sense of justice. And by a sense of justice I mean at once a preference for fair play and a sympathy with the weak and oppressed.



If men of noble impulse controlled Governments, perhaps nations could act toward each other as gentlemen act, with honesty and high-mindedness. Every nation that practises justice becomes a core of good will in the world. The conversion of a nation to high international morality means the removal of another danger spot, and brings universal peace a step nearer. There are, at this hour and at all times, justice-loving men and peace-preferring men in the leading nations. It is possible that these better elements can capture and dictate the policy of their countries. No European Power has so far been captured by the best men within it. All of the nations, as I have been at pains to show, have pursued a course largely militaristic and inordinately selfish. The need for a more enlightened statesmanship was apparent before the war. Morel wrote in 1912:<sup>3</sup>

“(There are) certain sections in Britain, France, and Germany, who, whether they be actuated by motives of honest conviction or inspired by class or personal interests or merely governed by fixed and narrow ideas, are the enemies of peace, which is and must be the

<sup>3</sup> “Morocco in Diplomacy,” E. D. Morel, p. 171.

paramount interest both of the creative elements and of the working masses in each country. There is such a section in Germany, which, seeing, or affecting to see, in Great Britain the implacable foe of Germany's national and inevitable expansion in commerce, industry, and power, urges war. There is a section in Great Britain which, seeing, or affecting to see, in the growth of Germany a rival animated by aggressive and sinister designs, works for war and would use the entente with France to that end. There is a section in France which, adhering to the cult of '*La revanche*' and dismayed at a stationary if not falling birth-rate which twenty years hence will place the French in a position of conspicuous and incontestable military inferiority *par rapport* with their Eastern neighbors, dreams of replenishing the dwindling fighting strength of the nation by regiments of brown and black Africans, and, agitated and restless, loses no opportunity of envenoming Anglo-German relations with the intent of using the *entente* as a lever to precipitate a struggle before France has fallen altogether behind Germany in point of military numbers.

“The task of the peoples concerned is to find

statesmen who will shake themselves free from these influences.”

Every nation is a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Two natures struggle within it: the militarist and the pacifist, the reactionary and the constructive. At the extreme of the peace-preferring wing stand the pacifists, the organized laborers and Social Democrats, and a considerable section of the intellectual classes. At the extreme of the war-preferring wing are the armament interests, the Junkers and Tories, the officers of the army, and the newspaper chauvinists. Between the two stand large classes, farmers, business men, clerks, professional men, many laborers—in short, the mass of the nation. We do not know precisely the relative strength of these divisions. At present the peace-preferring groups appear to be in the majority, the militaristic groups in control. The practical problem of the pacifist is so to strengthen, in each country, the peace-preferring groups that they may carry the mass of the nation, thinking and unthinking, with them.

The first reform that the pacific elements will insist on is a democratic control of foreign policy. It may be true that no modern Govern-

ment would dare to make war unless it felt that it could enlist the support of the people; but on the other hand it is easy to stir popular enthusiasm once an issue of national "honor" has been raised. At present tiny cliques can commit whole nations to the most momentous obligations. A very few men hold in leash or release at will the enormous forces of destruction generated in the modern world. Great Britain and France have been no more democratic in their foreign policies than have Germany and Russia. That is one reason we see liberal democracies and tyrannous autocracies fighting shoulder to shoulder. In the present conflict the antithesis between democracy and autocracy has no meaning. It surely is dangerous to grant a handful of diplomatists, out of touch with reality and contemptuous of democratic tendencies, the power to hatch in secret plans that will heap the battle fields of Europe. Great Britain, for example,<sup>4</sup> might wisely advance to that measure of democratic control assured to the United States by its Constitution. In the United States, although the Executive

<sup>4</sup> See "Parliament and Foreign Policy," Arthur Ponsonby, M. P., pamphlet No. 5 of The Union of Democratic Control.

may take the initiative in foreign policy, the treaty-making power is vested in the Senate; and the power to declare war is given to the whole Congress. Of course it is possible that a headstrong President might override Congress and get the country in a mess; and on the other hand it is possible that the populace, inflamed by passion, might force Congress into war. Yet the check exists; and no secret alliances can be formed. The peace-preferring elements have an opportunity to make themselves heard.

We have seen that the complex problems of world politics, the innumerable frictions between nations and races, can reach a pacific settlement only by the continuous exercise of the highest political intelligence and virtue; that any international confederation or league of peace is predicated on a good will that has not yet been created; that the Powers cannot feel confidence in each other until Governments allow their foreign policies to be guided by the principles of humanity and justice; that the cliques and classes now dominant in the great Powers, although not consistently unscrupulous, are on the whole militaristic, or, if one prefers

the word, imperialistic; that a beginning of better international relations will be made when these cliques are replaced by justice-loving and peace-preferring men; that, in short, peace is a problem of internal politics. Within the eight great Powers of to-day eight significant struggles will take place. And the battle for a national conscience may be won in this nation or that much sooner than in others.

Which of the present Powers are most likely to lead the way toward international morality? Here we enter the field of conjecture. In order to answer the question competently one would need to know exhaustively the tempers and politics of all the nations. I can venture only to give, in all frankness, my own guesses. I should say that the Powers align themselves as follows:

In the United States the battle for a national conscience is nearly won. I consider the attitude of America to be something novel in the world. As the nation has grown in strength, it has increased in kindness and magnanimity. After a century of territorial expansion, of jingoistic bluster, and one brief experiment in imperialism, it is ready definitely to renounce all

aggressive designs. It covets nothing to the north of it or south of it, or beyond the seas. It is capable of great generousities, great friendships. Of course baser national motives are not dead in it; but Mr. Hyde is already dwarfed in the shadow of Dr. Jekyll. I believe, however, that America in general misunderstands the world about it, and is distrusted and misunderstood by the world.<sup>5</sup>

In Great Britain the forces are nearly balanced. There exists in the British governing classes a degree of class selfishness and insular arrogance that is appalling. Liberalism in Great Britain has for a hundred years represented one of the best hopes of humanity; but it has always had to fight its way against a brutal and reactionary strain in British character. English Liberalism, as typified by Cobden and Bright, is at present under an eclipse: an eclipse that began with the bombardment of Alexandria. The England whose diplomacy over two decades stimulated ill will and intensified the military temper of Europe, that abetted and now fights to advance the designs of the

<sup>5</sup> A fuller discussion of America's position in world politics is given in Chapter XIV, "Yankee Ethics."

soulless Russian bureaucracy, that prosecutes so ardently a fratricidal war with Germany—this is not the best England. The claim that the Britain of present-day Imperialism battles to vindicate the sanctity of treaties and the rights of small nations, is a sham and an imposture. British politicians are abusing a great moral tradition. The only center of English Liberalism now articulate is the Union of Democratic Control. If Liberalism regains, in the years following the war, ascendancy in England, that great nation will become a bulwark for peace; but if Imperialism continues to rule, Great Britain will be the center of the most disastrous disturbances.<sup>6</sup>

In Germany, also, the forces are nearly equal in strength. During the years immediately preceding the war the vast majority of the German people, rich and poor, wanted peace and dreaded war. A small but powerful minority—Pan-germans, Junkers, financiers, professors, and army officers—regarded war as desirable or inevitable, and actively prepared for it.<sup>7</sup> There

<sup>6</sup> A further discussion of Great Britain's attitude toward peace is given in Chapter XIII, "The Best England."

<sup>7</sup> There is little diversity of opinion among competent observers on the state of feeling in Germany before the war.



can be no question but that the German people are, naturally, a peace-loving race. On the other hand, there can be no question but that the Prussian Junker has a harsh, domineering streak that makes him fit readily into a military régime. The assertion that Germany, as a whole, consciously committed herself to a career of world domination is an unjust exaggeration; it breaks itself against the fact that Germany, despite provocations, kept the peace for forty-four years. Germany took no advantage of admirable opportunities to attack Russia, France, and England when they were in distress. Nevertheless it will, in the future, be difficult to convert responsible leadership in Germany to pacific ideals. For her international position is precarious. She has no natural frontiers, she faces hostile neighbors, and she understands the menace of Russia, a semi-barbarous nation of 170,000,000 people which grows at the rate of 3,000,000 a year. Her normal expansion overseas has been hampered, and is likely to be still further hampered after the war, when the Allies propose to hedge her in with tariffs and boy-

See "L'Engime Allemande," M. Georges Bourdon, 1914; "L'Allemagne avant la guerre," Baron Beyens, 1915; "The European Anarchy," G. Lowes Dickinson, 1916, pp. 57-67.

cotts. All liberal-minded men long to see the political control of Germany captured by her idealists. Germany, like England, is a bridge-head position in the fight for the world's peace. But the other nations of Europe, in their greed and vindictiveness, seem determined to make any peace movement in Germany abortive.

France is not yet a pacific nation.<sup>8</sup> The "New France" that arose in the years before 1914 was chauvinistic and war willing. The old craving for military glory had been revived. France has not achieved a national conscience; if she had, she would not have resisted as she did the abolition of slavery, would not have nursed for over a generation a bitter hope for revenge, would not have loaned herself to Russian intrigue. France came into this war automatically as Russia's ally. She would not have been "attacked" had it not been plain that nothing on earth or in heaven could dissuade her from fighting by the side of Russia. The thing that chiefly counts with the French is their material interests; and the recent Governments of

<sup>8</sup> A great deal of sentimental gush about France has found vent in America. For a sane estimate of her character and policy see Chapter II, of "Common Sense in Foreign Policy," Sir Harry Johnson, 1913.

the Republic have been controlled by a cabal of financiers. France is one of the greatest of modern nations. Her genius, however, is intellectual and artistic, rather than moral. Undoubtedly the mass of the French people, like masses everywhere, preferred peace to war; but they thought war stupid, not wrong. Some day France, notwithstanding her materialism and her passion, may declare for peace. The best of France is capable of enthusiasm for abstract ideals, and the spirit of aspiration will never die within her. French Socialists find their aims identical with those of German Social Democrats and English Liberals. Jaurès, leader of the French Socialists, was the one great man in the public life of Europe. But Jaurès was assassinated by a Frenchman; and it may be a long time before his spirit triumphs among his countrymen.

The huge empire of Russia remains the disturber of two continents. Russia is the permanent plague ground in international affairs. Politically and socially she is medieval. Her millions of conscript peasants are superstitious, illiterate, and through a barbarous system of land tenure, little freer than serfs. The aris-

toocracy of Russia is tyrannous, oppressive, cruel to a degree scarcely credible in this twentieth century. Her intellectuals are hounded to death and exile by the Secret Police. And yet, despite her iniquities, Russia shows a vigor and astuteness that, coupled with her strength in men and resources, make her one of the most formidable factors in world politics. Her only foreign policy is territorial aggrandizement. She has known two centuries of ceaseless expansion. Her frontiers have rolled on in every direction; when checked in one place, she presses forward in another. Her diplomacy is logically militaristic. She forms what alliances seem to serve her purposes at the moment; she allows no sentimental ties to hamper her action; she is friend or foe as expediency dictates. In this war she has managed to secure the coöperation of two of the great advanced nations of the West, France and England, against a third great cultural nation, Germany—an alignment which is in itself a crime against civilization. Russia will change, can change, only very, very slowly. Russian institutions are deeply rooted in Russian character. The nobles will know how to use for their own ends any concessions

to constitutionalism, just as they turned to their own profit the "emancipation" of the serfs. After this war the Russian Empire may become the center of a combination, including Japan, to dominate Asia. Its purpose will be, primarily, to oust Great Britain from the East. To this combination, in all probability—if the militaristic game is played to a finish—Germany will attach herself. The superwar, the real Armageddon, will then be upon us. Is such a ghastly sequel unavoidable? Of course a unified West, pivoted on England and Germany, could counterbalance Russia and her Asiatic allies. But the unity of the West seems a blasted hope.

Not much in the way of leadership is to be expected from either Austria-Hungary or Italy. They will follow, not initiate. They are both semi-liberal; yet they are both imbued with the philosophy of force. The Austria-Hungary that looks on the Balkans as a field for conquest, that tears up a treaty to annex Bosnia, that risks the peace of all Europe to punish an intriguing Serbia, will not lead the world to a new international ethics. An Italy that seizes Tripoli and the Greek Islands, that is enamoured

of Irridentism and dreams of a new Mediterranean Empire, that sells her honor and attacks her former allies in their hour of supreme peril, is not equipped to show the world the meaning of a national conscience. Neither Austria nor Italy is likely to be a serious menace in a world already pacified; they may, however, need restraining.

Japan, I suspect, entertains designs of the most aggressive nature.<sup>9</sup> She hopes completely to dominate, in a military way, the Far East. Her ruling caste is feudal, chivalrous, military; her commercial classes are ambitious and unscrupulous; and the mass of her people is industrious and virile. The Japanese make excellent soldiers because, for one thing, they identify patriotism with religion. Japan sees no reason why the white race should dominate the yellow and brown. Anti-American and anti-British feeling runs high in Japan. She has announced a "Monroe Doctrine" for Asia. Of course a doctrine that contemplates the subjugation of China by a hostile Power bears little resemblance to the doctrine that guarantees inde-

<sup>9</sup> See "Japanese Intentions," Gerald Morgan, in *The New Republic*, Feb. 5, 1916.

pendence and self-government to the American republics. Japan will try to build an Asiatic Empire. But Japan is poor and Japan is shrewd. She will strike only when and where she knows her chances for victory favorable.

The foregoing estimates of national tempers may seem unduly harsh or pessimistic. I am myself convinced that they are more accurate than the sugary assurances of brotherly love we often hear in pacifist circles. I pass no judgment on the cultural attainments or the racial traits of the peoples. No man of any sympathies could live, let us say, among the Russians, the Austrians, or the Japanese, seeing them in their mellow and more genial phases, and sensing their inner ideals, without in the end coming to love them. The Peoples have no reason to hate or to quarrel. But the rivalry of Powers, engineered by ambitious statesmen, is on another plane. The nations in their dealings with one another have considered themselves bound by no moral code. It is idle to hope for peace in a world where good faith is the exception not the rule, where treaties are broken without compunction and as a matter of course, where diplomatic lying is conceived

as legitimate, and where national perfidy and theft elicit no surprise. The first steps away from international anarchy will be taken when there appears in the world a powerful group of faith-keeping and justice-loving nations. Toward that end scarcely more than a beginning has been made.



### XIII

#### THE BEST ENGLAND

**T**HERE are two Englands. They are both very old, and they live side by side in the same island, sometimes consciously in opposition, sometimes curiously blended.

One is the England the world has learned to admire. It is the land of parliamentary self-government and personal freedom, the home of liberty wedded to order, the safe refuge of the exiles from despotism and of the defeated from all State revolutions. It is the country of manners and traditions, of dignified and ample living; the soil of ideas and ideals, the breeder of men. This is the England that abolished slavery in her possessions at the cost of forty million pounds, that instituted and maintained free trade, that supported Liberal revolt in Italy and Greece, that gave home rule to her English-speaking colonies. This is the England that has produced a rich literature, that has created a civilization which vies in tone and interest

with any that has ever existed, that has embodied its strength and virtue in concrete deeds of statecraft.

But there is another England, of baser metal and purpose, an England selfish, greedy, callous, and above all hypocritical. This England too has expressed itself in concrete deeds. It drove its American colonies into revolt, it fought two wars to suppress their spirit of self-government, it did all it dared to break the back of the Union during the War of the Rebellion, and it still cherishes an ill-concealed dislike for things American. For centuries it has held Ireland under the heel of land monopoly, and has stamped out with bloody inhumanity every Irish aspiration for economic and political liberty. It followed the British South Africa Company into the Boer War, and won that struggle by herding Boer women and children into concentration camps where they died like flies. It forced opium on China, and it shipped whisky (and Bibles!) to its wards, the adolescent races. It betrayed Persia. Worst of all, by its mischievous interference with Continental concerns, it has helped to bring Europe to this last and unparalleled calamity.

British diplomacy during the last ten years has been a manifestation of the baser England, not the better. I am certain that such is the verdict history will pass upon it. The English governing classes must bear, in the final reckoning, a considerable responsibility for the world war. The year 1904 was a turning point for the worse in European politics; it was the year England formed the *entente* with France. The imperialist party in England, very little hampered by other parties, helped to fan the flames of *Revanche* in France. England supported, with the threat of military and naval intervention, France in her Moroccan aggression, where her case was legally unsound and morally bad. England emboldened the Russian autocracy, opened to it the purse of the British investor, and thereby abetted it in crushing Russian constitutionalism. She cultivated among her neighbors ill will and hostility. And why? Was any British interest endangered? Was British growth being retarded? Quite the contrary. This England has not stood for the *status quo*: she has stood for one thing only: unceasing British expansion. In recent years she has taken Egypt, the Soudan, the South

African Republics, Burmah, Zululand, Rhodesia, Nigeria, Uganda. She was rapidly piecing out the "all red" route. She has been acquiring colonies at a rate Germany would have been happy to emulate. The British Empire before the war covered 12,832,484 square miles (of which 7,226,000 square miles are controlled by the five daughter-nations, and 5,606,484 square miles, composed largely of the richest tropical land on the globe, are governed directly from London). The entire German Empire was 1,236,000 square miles. And yet Great Britain has everywhere and by every means hindered German expansion. She even stooped to that limit of pettiness where she withheld from Germany Walfisch Bay, the only good harbor in German Southwest Africa.

There is a turn of mind peculiar to many Englishmen that makes it impossible for them to see Britain as other than all-just and all-righteous. This has passed among unfriendly observers as hypocrisy and cant, and gave rise to the designation "perfidious Albion," a term first applied in France, and now heard throughout Germany. The trait has its origin, I believe, not so much in a native mendacity as in a per-

sistent self-esteem and a disinclination to self-criticism. The average Englishman is honest. Finding in his own soul no dishonest or aggressive designs, he finds it hard to believe that the British Foreign Office has been dishonest and aggressive. He knows that Germans became indignant at England over the Moroccan affair, but he cannot seem to realize that England then played the double rôle of bully and liar. He applies one logic to Britain and another to her rivals. He wants to free the Serbs and the Czechs; but he considers it nobody's business but his own what happens to the Irish or the Indians. He is vastly indignant over German atrocities, but he defends the Baralong and the King Stephen. He considers the German fleet a luxury and a menace. His own fleet is necessary for defense because England imports her food. He appears to forget that in two Hague Conferences Great Britain refused to relinquish the right to capture private property at sea. An open sea would be of incalculable value to Britain in any war of defense. But British statesmen have looked upon their predominant navy as a weapon of offense; real freedom of the seas is objectionable to them.

In this war Englishmen have been so busy counting up the sins of the Germans that they have had no eye for their own shortcomings. An honest critic of Germany must also be a critic of Great Britain. Germany practised *Realpolitik*. Her policy was selfish, narrowly nationalistic. It sought profit for Germans. It did not champion the weak or the struggling. It was not idealistic. Germany played the game. She played it straight—the game of power, of alliances, of economic aggression. England played the same game, just as selfishly, just as aggressively; but she did not avow her course frankly. She hid imperialism behind fine talk about “the white man’s burden.” The very last act of Britain before entering the war was a ghastly betrayal of Belgium. Britain posed as having her hands free. But when asked by Germany if she would remain neutral were Belgian neutrality respected she refused. She had already committed herself to France in secret agreements. She could not throw her weight into the scale to protect Belgium as she did in 1870. Belgium was cynically used as a first line of defense. And yet British states-

men have had the audacity to make moral capital out of their championship of Belgium.

This English hypocrisy is more akin to indirection and self-deception than to fraud. Yet it is a very real thing. In July, 1911, at the height of the *Agadir* crisis, Mr. Lloyd George made his Mansion House speech. He threatened Germany, but in what bland language! He said:

“I would make great sacrifices to preserve peace. I conceive that nothing would justify a disturbance of national good will except questions of the gravest national moment. But if a situation were to be forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain has won by centuries of heroism and achievement, by allowing Britain to be treated where her interests were vitally affected as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of Nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure.”

That speech raised a false issue. No British interest was threatened. England was acting

dishonorably. But how different is this mealy-mouthed talk from the merciless candor of the Germans: "Hack our way through." "We are committing a wrong." "Scrap of paper."

Mr. H. G. Wells has joined that new tribe of canters, the peace-with-victory pacifists. He has recently delivered his opinion<sup>1</sup> on German colonial ambitions:

"I cannot understand those Pacifists who talk about the German right to expansion, and babble about a return of her justly lost colonies. . . . This talk of legitimate expansion is indeed only an exploiter's cant. The age of expansion—the age of European empires—is near its end. . . . No sane man, German or anti-German, who has weighed the prospects of the new age will be desirous of a restoration of the now vanished German colonial empire—vindictive, intriguing, and unscrupulous; a mere series of centers of attack on adjacent territory, to complicate the immense disentanglements and readjustments that lie already before the French and British and Italians."

Here you have British hypocrisy in full bloom. That we should add the German colo-

<sup>1</sup> In "What is Coming," 1916.



nies to the 12,000,000 square miles we already hold—that is quite all right. But for the Germans to retain their 1,000,000 square miles, that is absurd. German expansion?—mere exploiter's cant! One would have to search a long way in Pangerman literature to find a match in arrogant conceit for Mr. Wells' statement.

But the Best England is not dead. Liberalism in England, as in all the belligerent countries, has been hard pressed since the war began. Even democracy in Britain has been temporarily suspended, and the governing classes, precisely the classes that helped to bring on the war, are in autocratic control. Nevertheless Liberalism has rallied its diminished forces, is undaunted and alert. It has disregarded for the moment its older program of domestic reforms, and concentrated on the problems raised by the war. It is bending its chief efforts toward securing a settlement that will promise a lasting peace. To further its propaganda it created, early in the conflict, the Union of Democratic Control. The four cardinal principles of this Union are:

1. "No Province shall be transferred from one Government to another without the consent,

by plebiscite or otherwise, of the population of such Province.

2. "No Treaty, Arrangement, or Undertaking shall be entered upon in the name of Great Britain without the sanction of Parliament. Adequate machinery for ensuring democratic control of foreign policy shall be created.

3. "The Foreign Policy of Great Britain shall not be aimed at creating Alliances for the purpose of maintaining the Balance of Power; but shall be directed to concerted action between the Powers, and the setting up of an International Council, whose deliberations and decisions shall be public, with such machinery for securing international agreement as shall be the guarantee of an abiding peace.

4. "Great Britain shall propose as part of the Peace settlement a plan for drastic reduction, by consent, of the armaments of all the belligerent Powers, and to facilitate that policy shall attempt to secure the general nationalization of the manufacture of armaments, and the control of the export of armaments by one country to another."

It is not probable that the Union of Democratic control will have much effect on the actual

settlement. It is not making headway against the rising tides of war passion, nor against the fixed determination of the British aristocracy to "crush" Germany. The treaty of peace will be drawn up by diplomatists and soldiers. The Union, however, has more strength than appears on the surface, especially among the laboring men—a strength that will be revealed only after the war. It has branches throughout England and Scotland; it sends out speakers and pamphlets. But whether successful or not, the members of this Union of Democratic Control deserve the sympathy of forward-looking men and women everywhere. They are the core of English Liberalism. They alone have not succumbed to a fanatic hatred of Germany. They alone possess the international mind. They single-handed are carrying on the fight for the better England that was begun by Burke in his attacks on Lord North and the Government of George III.

This group is well endowed with ability and character. From it have come some of the best discussions of international relations that have appeared since the war started. Indeed the only British contributions to those constructive

ideals of peace for which American opinion stands are the product of these Liberals. Lest any one doubt this assertion, let me give specific titles: "Toward International Government," J. A. Hobson; "The War and the Way Out," and "The European Anarchy," G. Lowes Dickinson; "The Great Settlement," C. Ernest Fayle; "The World's Highway," Norman Angell; "Justice in War Time," Bertrand Russell. Besides these should be mentioned numerous newspaper and magazine articles by H. N. Brailsford, E. D. Morel, Ramsay MacDonald, and Israel Zangwill. What else of illumination has come out of England? What have we had from Wells, Chesterton, Belloc, Bennett, Kipling? Nothing but thin whitewash for Great Britain. Bernard Shaw is the only one of the professional writers who has dared to blurt out the truth.

One thing should be entirely clear: that the Union of Democratic Control is essentially a body of revolt. It is not the same thing as the England of Grey and Cecil, of Asquith, Bonar-Law, Churchill and Lloyd George. It knows itself to be in opposition to the factions that are dominant in Britain. And the dominant fac-

tions know it too; they keenly resent the hostility of these "pacifists," and they have already subjected them to persecution and personal indignities. The Liberals are dissenters; but they are none the less patriots. They want to see England win; but they do not want the *entente* to abuse its victory. They do not want this war to be a certain prelude to future wars. The official England raised early in the struggle the cry that this was "the war that will end war." Evidently this slogan was insincere; it was cant to catch recruits. The official England has misrepresented the issues of the war; it has ridden roughshod over the rights of neutrals; it has abandoned free trade. The official England has announced that it intends to smash Germany, to render her impotent in both a military and economic way, to see that she does not get her head up after the war. It proposes to extend the war of guns into a war of boycotts. In other words, it intends to make sure, if it can, that Europe remains an armed camp and a perpetual area of rancor and intrigue.

Unless the Liberal element triumphs, England will range herself among the foes of international peace and justice. It is not, of course,

the prerogative of Americans to give Englishmen advice on how to govern themselves. But at this moment Britain is overtly seeking our favor. It is amazing that Americans should have remained blind to the real divisions of purpose in England, and should have given their sympathy to a caste that is as reactionary and militaristic as the Prussian Junkers. Between this disingenuous, overweening, grasping England and the United States there can never be any genuine friendship or coöperation. But the Best England we shall take into our hearts and plans whenever she shall become mistress in her own household.

## XIV

### YANKEE ETHICS

**E**UROPEANS, South Americans, Orientals, foreigners in general, do not admire the United States. It would be too strong to say we are hated and despised. The attitude of outsiders, on the whole, has been one of good-natured contempt, although since the World War began the accent has been rather on the contempt than the good nature. Americans are thought to be uncultured, bourgeois, provincial, a nation of villagers, a race of dollar chasers. For this universal disdain there are undoubtedly a few valid reasons. But curiously enough Americans likewise do not admire America. Our educated classes find something naïve and unsophisticated in the Fourth of July orator who boasts of the "land of the free and the home of the brave." They regard America chiefly as a promise that has not been fulfilled. And this criticism and distrust of ourselves has

been revealed in startling fashion, it seems to me, by the division of opinion in America over the issues of the war. We have divided—in so far as we are not merely indifferent—into two camps of hostile and bitter opinion. The pro-Allies abase themselves before the “civilization” of England and France. The pro-Germans see in Germany the perfect and model State. There appears to be little conviction that America is entitled to a pride of her own, or can claim any superiority for her ideals and conduct.

But the truth is that the United States is the only high-minded Power left in the world. It is the only strong nation that has not entered on a career of imperial conquest, and does not want to enter on it. If the nations of Europe had entertained purposes as disinterested as those of the United States they would not now be engaged in this butchery. There is in America little of that spirit of selfish aggression which lies at the heart of militarism. Here alone exists a broad basis for “a new passionate sense of brotherhood, and a new scale of human values.” We have a deep abhorrence of war for war’s sake; we are not enamored of



glamour or glory. We have a strong faith in the principle of self-government. We do not care to dominate alien peoples, white or colored; we do not aspire to be the Romans of to-morrow or the "masters of the world." The idealism of Americans centers in the future of America, wherein we hope to work out those principles of liberty and democracy to which we are committed. And that future we can build only on our own soil.

This political idealism, this strain of pacifism, this abstinence from aggression and desire to be left alone to work out our own destiny, has been manifest from the birth of the republic. We have not always followed our light, but we have never been utterly faithless to it. Washington expressed it in his farewell address:

"Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct, and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt but,

in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it?"

The President now in office has voiced this American attitude on numerous occasions:

"There is nothing that the United States wants for itself that any other nation has."—*Speech before League to Enforce Peace.*

"The United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest."—*Speech at Mobile.*

"We would use this force, not to carry out any policy that even smacked of aggression of any kind, because this nation loves peace more than it loves anything else except honor. . . . We are not going to invade any nation's territory. We are not going to covet any nation's possessions. We are not going to invade any nation's rights. . . . The spirit of America would hold any Executive back, would hold any Congress back, from any action that had the least taint of aggression in it."—*Speech at Topeka.*

This is the tradition of America. There is no question but that the tradition will be carried on

by our future Presidents—by Mr. Hughes, or whoever else is elected to succeed President Wilson either this year or four years from now, and by his successors. For the overwhelming majority of the American people insist on a policy that puts peace above prestige or power, and justice above gains to American capitalists. Nor has this policy been merely one of words. The United States has given numerous evidences of national high-mindedness. Recent examples are the retirement from Cuba and the establishment of the Cuban Republic, the return of the Boxer indemnity to China, and withdrawal from the six-Power loan, and the refusal of our State Department to support concessionist interests in Mexico and elsewhere with armed intervention.

At the present moment there is scarcely any sentiment in the United States in favor of annexing either Canada or Mexico. We should be willing to annex Canada, which is rich and fertile, if she wanted to come into the Union of her own accord, but on no other terms. At present Canadians are intensely loyal to Great Britain, and somewhat disdainful toward Yankees. So long as they are in this mood, we

shall never seek any influence over them. Furthermore, Canada in British hands is a guarantee of the proper behavior of the British Empire toward us, for in a war with England we should take Canada; and it might prove difficult to dislodge us. Mexico, in minerals, oil, forests, and agricultural lands, is one of the wealthiest countries in the world. It is safe to say that had either England or Germany been in our position she would before now have extended her sway from the Rio Grande to the Isthmus. But Mexico with her fifteen million natives of mixed Spanish and Indian blood we do not want and shall never seize. We intend to remain a white man's country. It may be that we shall be obliged, sooner or later, to do a bit of police work in Mexico. But when our disagreeable job is finished we shall withdraw, just as we withdrew from Cuba, and shall ultimately withdraw from the Philippines.

But although we know ourselves to be free from aggressive designs, we must not imagine that any such generous opinion of us is held abroad. At the outbreak of the European War it was stanchly believed in Germany that we would immediately overrun Canada—simply be-

cause we had the chance. Most Europeans—and many South Americans—think that we intend to absorb Mexico. It appears impossible for most Old World statesmen to conceive of any national policy that is not at all times and in all places selfish, and that does not hide about it somewhere aggressive intentions. And even when we do plainly abstain from war we are given no credit for idealism; we are suspected of being too cowardly to fight, or too intent on money-making to run the risks of martial endeavor. In what low esteem our national honesty is held may be judged from the following remark of Sir Harry Johnson:<sup>1</sup> “Treaties, in fact, only bind the polity of the United States as long as they are convenient. They are not, really, worth the labor their negotiation entails or the paper they are written on. . . . Nor will it ever be possible to force the United States to do anything it does not wish to do, even to the keeping of its pledged word.” Sir Harry, it is true, was feeling irritated, when he wrote that passage, at the perfidy of the United States Senate in exempting American shipping from the Panama Canal tolls, in open disregard of our

<sup>1</sup> “Common Sense in Foreign Policy,” p. 89.

treaty with England. That act of bad faith, happily, was later rescinded. But how different is this unscrupulous and tricky America, as she figures in foreign eyes, from Washington's ideal of "a magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence"! Evidently the United States must give proof of its honor, by many more concrete deeds of justice, before it can establish a good reputation abroad.

To any laudatory estimate of American polity, indeed, several serious qualifications must be made. We have often broken our faith, and we have been persistently discourteous in our foreign relations. We have known a century of continuous expansion. Most of the territory acquired, it is true, was contiguous, was thinly settled and fit for white occupation; and much of it, moreover—Louisiana, Florida, and Alaska—was acquired by purchase. Still, we have never stopped growing. Our occupation and retention of the Philippines was imperialism, and our method of acquiring the Canal Zone was not above reproach. A nation must be judged by its deeds, not its pretensions. And, further, the motives that lead to imperialism and aggression

are by no means dead within us. We have our jingo elements; and we have a capitalist class quite as ready, if it gets the chance, to advance its interests over the dead bodies of soldiers, as any in the world.

Finally, and this is the most important qualification of all, American pacifism is as yet largely sentimental. It springs from the same vague human warmth that makes us the most free-handed and philanthropic people of history. It is not stiffened by hard thinking on international problems. The intellectual life of America, we ought sadly to admit, shows considerable flabbiness. Sound ideas, in economics, politics, and international policy, do not readily acquire cutting force in the United States. Where pacifism is strongest, in the Middle West, the ignorance of world politics appears to be abysmal. This ignorance found a focus in the Ford peace ship. The *Oscar II* was a cargo of good will, thoughtlessness, and platitude. It was rosy with tenderness; it carried to Europe "a kiss and a tear"; and it hoped to lift "the boys out of the trenches" with the lever of sentimental talk. The Ford expedition, well-intentioned as it was, won the derision of the world, simply because

the collective intellectual processes of the delegates inspired a well-deserved contempt.

The rest of America, however, could ill afford to sneer at the peace ship. In the East, for example, we have had chiefly an exhibition of that little knowledge which is a dangerous thing. Instead of giving us a sound interpretation of the European War our leading educators, editors, and politicians have been caught by phrases, and have repeated cheap clap-trap about "militarism" and "democracy" and "rights of small nations." There has been a conspicuous group of educated men who have tried to rush the country into the war on the side of the Allies. It ought to have been apparent from the start to men familiar with European affairs that the one duty of America, both in its own interest and in the interest of mankind, was to strain every nerve to keep out of this clash between rival predatory empires. But our intellectual elite in this crisis of opinion have practically betrayed us. They have formed in America a mental Foreign Legion. They have organized that sadly misnamed organization, "The American Rights Committee," which seeks to force the Government to break



off all relations with the Central Powers, reason or no reason. These traitors to the American tradition are trying to involve us in the most frightful war of all time simply because of their silly misinterpretations of its causes and significance.

And yet after all qualifications are made, Americans have reason to be proud of their national attitude. We are not impeccable. Our hands may not be altogether clean, nor our minds clear. But we have no false pride in this country; we can acknowledge our faults, and make reparation for our errors. The mass of Americans works slowly toward sound conclusions. Of what we have done, of what we have refrained from doing, and of what we intend to do, we need not be greatly ashamed. The thing that counts in the end is the ideals for which nations stand; and the ideals of the United States are the most respectable in the world.

## XV

### DOUBLE-BARRELED PREPAREDNESS

**T**HE creation and maintenance of large armaments cannot be discussed apart from a nation's foreign policy. There is in the United States at present a deep rift in opinion over preparedness. Both sides to the controversy are obviously sincere. On the one hand anxious patriots harangue us on the need of a larger navy and army, on our criminal neglect of defenses, and on the dangers of an ignorant complacency. On the other hand earnest citizens warn us that preparedness leads to militarism, that to prepare for war is to bring on war, and that we shall be ruled by army officers and munition makers. The advocates of greater preparedness appear to be winning converts more rapidly just now, but the opposition is likely to regain the upper hand once the alarms raised by the European War have died down.

The disputants do not stand so far away from each other as they appear to think. They both

have an excellent case to urge. They are arguing in favor of different things, but things not incompatible. For one side wants an armed force adequate to protect American interests; and the other side wants a clear and unmistakable definition of what those interests are.

The champions of preparedness have posed us two questions:

First, are our military and naval forces sufficient in the event of a war with a first-class Power?

Second, is there any danger of war with a first-class Power?

The answer to the first question must be an emphatic No. It is obvious to intelligent men that a regular army of 70,000, an ill-disciplined militia of 125,000, and a moderate sized navy slightly antiquated, is an insufficient first line of defense for a country of 100,000,000. We have about outgrown the myth of the minute man. We can place no reliance on the million patriots who will spring to arms between sunset and dawn. We are no longer a race of frontiersmen, and the nature of war has changed. Embattled farmers would be worthless against trained troops and modern artillery.

The answer to the second question is Yes, but not an emphatic Yes. The danger of war does not arise from any specific quarrel now brewing. It arises from the general international situation. As I have insisted again and again, we are living in a militaristic world. And when you live among wolves you do well to keep your teeth sharp, no matter how lamb-like your intentions. Just a century ago John Adams wrote: "Our beloved country, sir, is surrounded by enemies of the most dangerous, because of the most powerful and most unprincipled kind." That statement is as true to-day as when written. The size, wealth, and principles of the United States can be less easily ignored than in earlier decades. In Europe before this war there was much talk about the "American invasion" and the "American menace," meaning of course American economic competition. And European nations are devotees of the idea that economic rivalry can be crushed by force. Further, the imperialistic struggle is likely to shift from the Mediterranean to the Far East. Then our position will be more critical, because of the Philippines, the Panama Canal, and our interest in the trade of China.

Every dictate of good sense, it seems to me, and every sane analysis of the international situation, prompts America to prepare herself for a possible war. We do not believe in non-resistance; we shall have in any event some sort of an army and navy. Why not have adequate ones? We shall be just as assertive in demanding our "rights" whether we are prepared or half-prepared. At this minute none of the clouds on our international horizon look large or threatening. But any cloud may blow into a storm. We deceive ourselves if we imagine we can always "bluff" our way through. This seems to be Mr. Roosevelt's theory of national policy: whenever any nation collides with an American interest, threaten him with immediate war, and he will back down. Of course he will back down—if he does n't care to fight. But he will not back down if he happens to be in a similar bullying mood himself. No nation ever avoided war by rattling the saber and drawing a self-righteous face.

What the United States needs, at the minimum, is a regular army of 400,000, with short-term enlistments and a growing body of reserves, and a navy second only to Great Brit-

ain's. England has announced the two-Power standard. We should announce the 80 per cent. standard. That is, we should declare flatly that we are going to build a navy 80 per cent. as large as the biggest navy in the world; and then live up to the program for at least two decades. We could trust to superior invention and efficiency to overcome the 20 per cent. handicap in case of war; and we could not be accused of precipitating a new race in armaments. Let some one else have the biggest navy; we can strive to have the best. We need, further, government-owned plants for ammunition and armor-plate, coast defenses, and a powerful aërial fleet. Of course all this is expensive, but the burden is trivial when contrasted with the cost of a disastrous defeat. The Federal Government, moreover, should directly perform the work of creating national defenses. Preparedness cannot be secured by amateurish drill in universities and summer camps, and in the armories of State militia.

The purpose of an army and navy, it should be freely acknowledged, is not to "preserve peace." Its purpose is to win in war. The preservation of peace is the task of statesman-

ship. There is something to be said, though not much, for the firecracker theory of armaments: namely, that when we have guns we want to shoot them, like a boy on the Fourth. There are sinister private interests, especially investors in foreign securities, who are ever ready to manipulate national force for their own profit. The public is easily duped with talk about "honor." Again, a large body of officers, such as is created by conscription, forms practically a lobby for war. They exert a constant pressure for a militaristic policy; and this is one good reason why America should eschew universal military service. Conscription would endanger our ideals. America must adhere to the principle that the civil power stands definitely above the military power.

Large armaments would undoubtedly deepen our responsibilities. No nation has ever been asked a more pertinent question than the pacifists have put to America: We are going to prepare for—What? What do we intend to do with our armaments, and what do we *not* intend to do with them? We dare no longer drift, or trust to obscure influences. We need to declare a clear policy. We need a political preparedness to ac-

company and govern our physical preparedness. To say we are preparing for defense is to dodge the issue. Every nation prepares for defense, despite the fact that in these days all wars arise from clashes of policy. No nation is going to descend on America, like the vandals on Rome, for the sake of placing an indemnity on our cities or looting our homes. If we are drawn into a war it will be over some policy of ours: Asiatic exclusion, or the Monroe Doctrine, or intervention in Mexico, or our insistence on maritime rights. And if we may have to pour out our blood and treasure to defend a national policy, let us, in Heaven's name, know what that policy is.

It seems to me that the greatest contribution the United States could make to the cause of universal peace would be a straightforward and unambiguous statement of its foreign policy. Such a statement should be drafted and approved by Congress, and signed by the President. No modern nation has ever made such a statement. Even a nation's own citizens are left to guess at its policy, not knowing exactly whether it be honest or dishonest, disinterested or aggressive, pacific or bellicose. But the



United States, because of its favored position and its generous temper, might well essay to cut through the mists of Machiavelianism.

I am willing to hazard a few tentative suggestions as to what the official statement of American foreign policy should contain. I think we should declare:

That the United States intends in the future as in the past to keep itself free from entangling alliances. We realize we are not isolated from world affairs, but we are in no panic to secure partners for a hypothetical war. We have no interest in the rivalries for empire, and no concern in the balance of power.

That America is ready at any time to enter enthusiastically a League of Peace or any other organization that plans to diminish war between the nations; but *only* provided that such a league is recruited on the broadest international basis. We do not propose to become the tool of the Pledged Allies, or the Central Powers, or any other combination, in helping to coerce another group.

That we propose to maintain unflinchingly the Monroe Doctrine. The doctrine is not a part of international law, and draws validity only from

the moral and physical power of the United States. It means only what it has always meant: that no outside nations shall seek territorial aggrandizement on the two American continents and that the American Republics shall be guaranteed independence. We for our part agree to seek no territorial or political control in these Republics.

That we reserve to ourselves the right to regulate our immigration in any way we think best, and the right to make tariffs that do not discriminate arbitrarily; and we accord the same rights to others. That we stand for the principle of the Open Door everywhere, and the principle of the freedom of the seas, and intend to advance these principles by all means short of armed conflict. That we shall fight only when the unmistakable rights of American citizens are invaded.

That, most emphatically, we do not propose to acquire one foot of territory anywhere in the world by conquest or coercion.

Such, I take it, should be the general outline of an imperial peace policy for the United States. Can we summon the courage to make such an avowal? It is somewhat doubtful. But

I am certain that it is the deep-seated purpose of the American people to make their foreign conduct worthy of the respect of the world, and to build up an unassailable reputation for pacific intentions and fair play. No nation to-day enjoys such a reputation. The United States has a unique opportunity to be the first to attain that glory.

THE END



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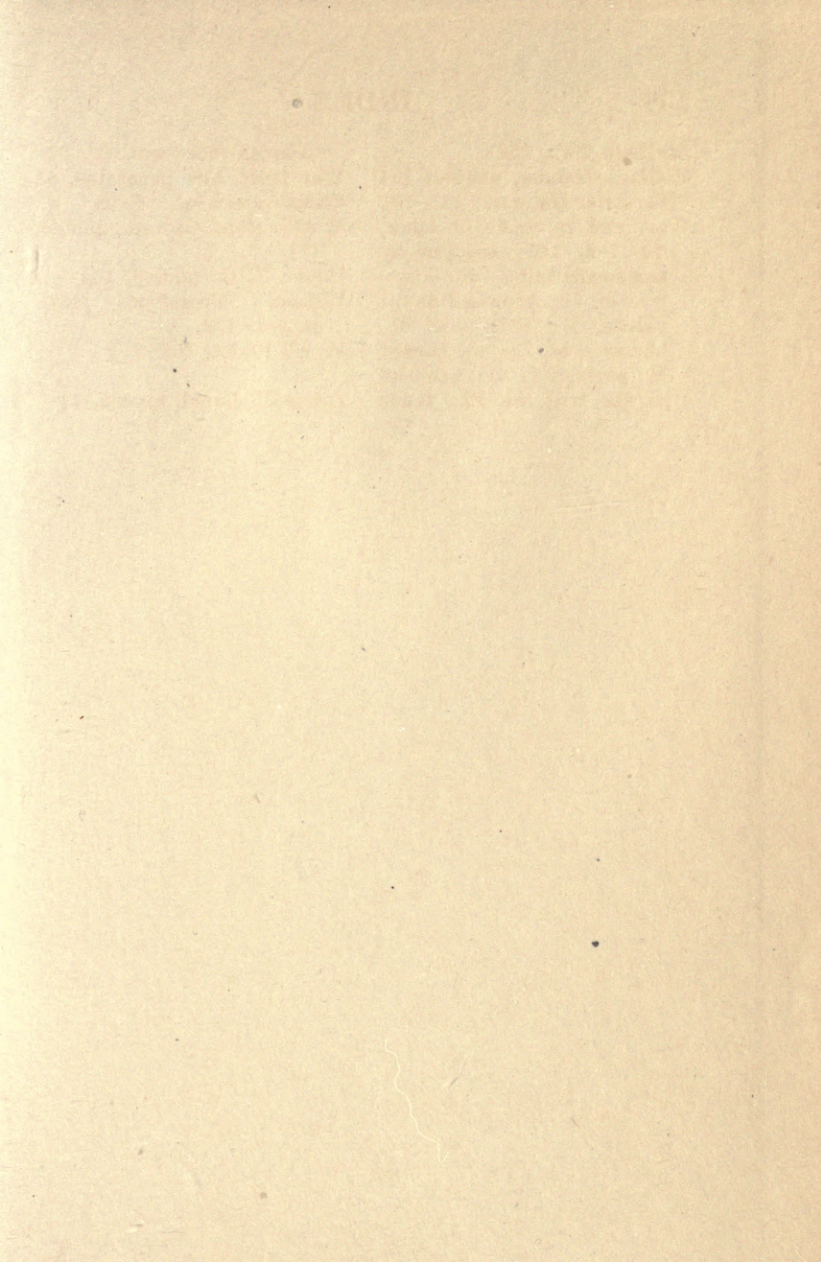


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