

The Next Great War

(By T. Proctor Hall, M.D.)

The "War to end war" does not appear to have been a pronounced success. There is more unrest now than there was before the war began; and the governments of the civilized countries are more inclined toward Prussianism, more determined upon the suppression of liberty of speech, more anxious to crush the infant "Industrial Democracy," than ever before. It may be taken for granted then that there will be more wars, and that whatever their origin and pretext they will speedily become wars waged for the establishment of Imperialism and for the destruction of democracy.

But in the beginning the next war is likely to take on the usual national form. Some powerful nation may take up the gauntlet thrown down and lost by Germany, and may make a dash for the mastery of the world. And if that nation were to proceed with care, and were to profit by Germany's mistakes, it might reduce the rest of the world to a state of vassalage for a hundred years. We are proud of our victory, but it is humiliating to think how very close to disaster the Allies were more than once.

Suppose twenty men of the ruling class of such an aggressive nation were to plan for the conquest of the world in 1930. They would, of course, keep their own counsel. How would they begin their preparations?

Evidently their first aim would be to make themselves the trusted leaders of a strong and united nation, over whom they could exercise the most complete control. To this end they would take a firm stand in favor of industrial reorganization, yielding to democracy everywhere in form, but securing the reservation of absolute rule in any emergency. Industry would be rapidly organized into departments under federal direction. Capitalists who objected to the new and national order of things would receive no more consideration than is now given to an I.W.W. who is charged with intending to start a revolution. By exercising full control of the Press, in ways that are already in common use, the government could win universal approval at the polls for the new move. Involuntary idleness would be abolished. Shorter hours and a good living wage would be universal. The health and training of all the workers would be looked after by the state. No more babies would die for want of good food. Mothers would be well cared for, and recognized as serving the state. For, besides the good-will and contentment thereby induced, it is quite among the possibilities that a boy born in 1920 might take part in a world war begun in 1930. Training of a strictly military character would be kept within narrow limits, but a certain amount of it would be required of all foremen, superintendents and other leaders of industry; so that they could, when the time came, take their places at once as leaders in the army. The original twenty conspirators would continually add to their number kindred spirits whose sagacity and faithfulness had been fully tested, so that by 1930 the trusted circle controlled by the inner ring would number thousands.

Every factory would be required to produce some war material for the government, and this part of the work would be steadily increased as the set time approached, so that in 1930 it would be running on a full war basis, with a considerable supply from the previous years of production. During the last two or three years of preparation all modes of communication and publication would be rigidly censored in order to keep even their own people in ignorance of the extent of the work going on. Everything, it would be explained, was for industrial purposes only. Women would be encouraged to receive industrial training to such an extent that every able-bodied man could be removed from the industrial field without ser-

ious loss to the nation. Every form of scientific investigation would receive full support. The whole nation would become a busy industrial hive, apparently devoted to the peaceful arts.

The policy of "peaceful penetration" so successfully used by Germany among the industries of other nations, would be enlarged. But instead of gun foundations, factories where deadly germs, gases, and poisons could be concealed for instant use, (but all for industrial and commercial purposes), would be built in cities, along water courses, and at centres of intercommunication.

At the appointed time some peculiarly aggravating outrages involving deep insult to the aggressive nation would be faked or staged, heralded throughout the nation, and commented upon very temperately by the Press. This would be followed by a second and a third outrage of similar character, tuned to the rising tide of popular anger. Suddenly the fires of hell would be let loose against the offending nation, the Press meanwhile counselling moderation and firmness, and war would be declared after the attack had been well begun.

The nation first attacked would be one of the stronger and more advanced, probably either the United States or Great Britain. Can you picture the attack? Dante's Inferno were a paradise beside it. The water supply of every large city poisoned; deadly germs of typhoid, bubonic plague and cholera scattered where they would be most effective in infecting men and animals; huge quantities of prepared food poisoned, and still larger quantities destroyed by bomb and fire; deadly gases pouring out of the most unexpected places and deluging the crowded regions of the cities; fires and bombs filling the air with death. Overhead, are a hundred immense airships raining fire, explosives and choking burning gas; until you wonder whether a single human being will be found alive in the devastated region. The same thing goes on in twenty or thirty of the larger cities and manufacturing centres. At the same time small bands of assassins seek out the leaders of the nation, both industrial and political, with the aim of temporarily paralyzing the nation's power of organized resistance.

Night closes upon the scene of the first day's destruction, with a million dead and dying. Men, women and children are included in the indiscriminate slaughter. There are no non-combatants in this war, and no quarter is given. Kill, kill, kill, is the order given and carried out to the letter. Through the night there is a lull in the fighting. But fiery eyes in the sky search the regions round the aerodromes and the arsenals for any signs of the organization of active resistance. Meantime the attackers are renewing their supplies from concealed sources and from the booty already captured. Before morning the raiders are reinforced by aircraft of a different type, fully equipped for the contest for air supremacy which is now the decisive part of the fight. Long slender airships which cannot be set on fire and which may be blown into two or three pieces without bringing them to the ground, are shooting along at the rate of 200 miles an hour, armed with air torpedoes, and acting as convoys to the heavier airships which carry the poison gas and bombs. Still swifter armored planes and helicopters sweep the sky in thousands for both attack and defense.

Why describe the rest of the fight? Crippled on every hand, how is it possible for the defenders to win against the steady stream of reinforcements that appear day after day? Only if a league of nations takes up the fight is there the slightest hope for the defenders. There may be dreadnoughts on the ocean, unconquered; but they have no share in the