

U.S. IN POSITION TO LEAD OTHERS

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causes of international mistrust and fear.

Sir Arthur based his plea for a real peace mentality on the following premises:

First—The maintenance of large and excessive national armaments creates a heavy overhead charge against the national exchequer contributed by the taxpayers of the community and therefore makes the payments of all international debts, both public and private, very difficult and, perhaps, sometimes impossible. Armaments should be purely protective and precautionary.

Second—No nation can be trusted to preserve peace which has at its disposal unlimited force, because the possession of arms is always a human temptation to use them. Further armaments in the long run really do not create national security. The overarmed or super-armed nation only succeeds in arousing the bitterness and hate of its enemies and the suspicions of its friends.

Third—A measure of disarmament is the only thing we can now do quickly to give direct proof of that feeling of friendship for each other which is and alone can be the basis of real peace, and let us not forget that the profitable investment of large sums of private capital in the production and sale of armaments creates a powerful economic interest in the community interested in war. War profiteering is by no means limited to war times.

"I appreciate very highly the honor of being asked to preside at this meeting, and I am delighted to have the opportunity and privilege of being with you and of speaking to you on the vitally important subject of disarmament.

"I am not going to use time to repeat the usual platitudes about the common interests, the common language, the common traditions, and all those other natural and sentimental ties that bind your country and mine. It is no longer necessary: While we do not forget these things we cease to speak of them. I believe the time has come when our mutual friendliness, our neighborliness, our unselfish interest in each other's welfare, can be taken for granted. Yet in those peaceful relations of many generations standing, there is a lesson to be learned an all-important, a fundamental lesson in international relationships. Some may say that in our case the maintenance of peace is so obviously good business that such materially-minded people as ourselves would not act otherwise, I admit that. But peace is always good business. I think you will agree with me, however, that our peaceful relations have prevailed not because we have made treaties to abstain from war, or to abstain from making war an instrument of national policy—treaties have played very little part in our international diplomacy—the real reason for this happy history is that the peace between your country and mine has not been merely a negative peace, but a positive peace, founded on beliefs and sentiments of mutual friendship and mutual self-interest.

"When your President invited me to be chairman of this gathering he said he supposed my views would be those of the average public man outside of the military services. The full implication of his words I do not know, but I take it he feels that in the United States, as in all countries, there is usually a difference of opinion between those who have some technical knowledge of these matters and those who have not. I am on both sides of that fence—once in the military service, I am now an average public man.

MILITARY VIEWPOINT

"In giving consideration to the views on disarmament advanced by our soldiers and sailors, let us always remember that when war comes it is their lives which are first sacrificed, that they usually are not politicians and that it is their custom to speak in the most direct and outspoken manner, and that they cannot forget—they must not forget their sacred responsibility to advise what they consider best for the safety of their country under all circumstances. They are not responsible for political relationships; they take these as they find them and they advise accordingly. It would be most unfair and unjust to say that our sailors and soldiers are all anti-disarmament, for I am sure that honest mutual universal disarmament would find among them many champions.

"I know that one of the dearest hopes of the men who actually fought in the Great War—the one which most sustained them in those tragic days—was that their efforts if victorious would put an end to all war. In every mess on the Western front through four long years one heard this hope expressed; it sustained us through every ordeal. I do not know how many of the men who then controlled the destinies of Europe entertained such hopes, but I do know that thousands, yes hundreds of thousands of citizens sacrificed their happiness, their health, their fortune and their hopes of fortune, and their lives in the hope of winning permanent peace for their children and for generations yet unborn. Let me add that I was one of that number—alas now sadly disillusioned. And while I am now unalterably opposed to excessive armaments and support to the best of my ability, honest, fair and universal disarmament, I am not a pacifist. If unfortunately my country were forced into another war I would offer my services willingly but not gladly, and I would carry out every duty faithfully and zealously, although I know that war is not a game of "bumble-puppy"—that its business is killing.

"This National Republican Club is, I take it, a political and national organization. Its members are drawn from but one of the political parties in this country. Let me say at once that the subject we are discussing today cannot be discussed in terms of partisan politics, nor can it be discussed from the point of view of one country alone. That has been the weakness of every conference on disarmament. There has been far too much partisan politics, far too much national politics and far too little world policy. Disarmament, I repeat, is not a question for any one party or for any one country; it is a question for the world. We must get outside the bounds of party and of country if we are to give it the consideration it deserves and requires. Unless we are prepared to recognize that the nations of the world are more than ever dependent on one another and that the social economic and cultural welfare of one is vitally influenced by the social economic and cultural welfare of the others, unless we will approach the consideration of this question in that spirit we cannot be hopeful of a successful or satisfactory issue of any disarmament conference. As long as each nation seeks only to make herself secure against any possible combination of attack, as long as the present wasteful competition in armament continues unabated, as long as only a selfish nationalistic mentality sways the minds of nations, just so long will it be futile to talk of national disarmament.

"I do not think it is my function, indeed it would be an unforgivable

presumption to suggest what action your country should take on this question. But I am bold enough to say that I think the United States is in the best position to lead the way, to set the example. Providence has blessed you: you are the richest of nations in a material sense; you are safest in your geographical position; you are not suspect; you are not involved as the nations of Europe are involved; your position is unique and your influence unlimited. But what you ought to do and how you ought to do it is your own affair. It is for the other speakers to make proposals, not for me.

"I am here as chairman to introduce the subject, to emphasize its importance, to tell you what war is like, and to plead for a real peace mentality. I base the plea on several things.

"First, the maintenance of large and excessive national armaments creates a heavy overhead charge against the national exchequer contributed by the tax-payers of the community, and therefore makes the payment of all international debts, both public and private, very difficult and perhaps sometimes impossible. Armaments should be purely protective and precautionary.

"Second, no nation can be trusted to preserve peace which has at its disposal unlimited force, because the possession of arms is always a human temptation to use them. Arms are not meant primarily to promote peace, but to be used when the blood runs high, and are, therefore, dangerous to all parties interested, armed and unarmed. Further, armaments in the long run really do not create national security. The over-armed or super-armed nation only succeeds in arousing the bitterness and hate of its enemies and the suspicions of its friends.

"Third, as I see it, a measure of disarmament is the only thing we can now do quickly to give direct proof of that feeling of friendship for each other which is, and alone can be the basis of real peace. And let us not forget that the profitable investment of large sums of private capital in the production and sale of armaments creates a powerful economic interest in the community interested in war. War profiteering is by no means limited to war times.

TEMPORARY SUSPENSE.

"The world at the present time regards war as a normal condition, as something which is inevitable and only in temporary suspense. How, for instance, would any of us define peace? How does anyone define peace? Nine people out of 10 will say 'Peace is when there is no war.' That definition is wrong; it misleads, but it is how we do look at it.

"War, I repeat, is just as definite a fact for most of humanity as the lava in an active volcano to the people who live on its flanks. The volcano may be silent for a year, for 10 years, for a century, but the frightful cauldron is boiling all the time and on the appointed day comes the bursting of the crater, the crash and roar and flame, the river of molten rock flowing over the land, overwhelming all in its path, leaving terror, death and destruction in its wake.

"Such is war, and if all of us had seen at close quarters, as I have seen, the misery that war brings with it, we would not be surprised that those who took part in the last great struggle pray that they may never take part in war again. In the next war if we cannot do something now to prevent war—the nations will kill, maim, wound, destroy, ruthlessly—and it will not make any difference whether the victims are soldiers or civilians. It is folly to suppose that 'rules' for the conduct of war will be observed, as in an athletic contest, or that there can ever be 'humane warfare'. The end of war is slaughter, and from that slaughter civilians are not immune. Let me say this, that if your country were at war, every one of you, men and women, would be conscripted for war and your wealth also. Whether you actively fought or didn't fight, you would be just as responsible for all its horrors as would your soldiers and leaders. You cannot escape, you cannot shelter yourselves by being civilians, for in modern warfare no weapon will be ignored that can weaken the morale of the other side. The weakening of the morale of enemy civilians will be just as important as the destroying of armies.

"Nations now are using all the arts they ever knew and all the science they have mastered, to destroy, wholesale, and they will continue to do so as long as we will have war. In future it will be no use whatever to say that we must not use poison gas, we must not spread disease germs, we must not kill civilians, we must not have submarine warfare, we must not destroy hospital ships, we must not bomb hospitals, we must not drop bombs on undefended towns. All these things will be done, and the people who live in the remote parts of countries will be killed just as horribly and cruelly as those in the war zone,—and, more frightfully, because they will have no protection.

RECALLS PICTURE.

"Let me give you one picture of war, a memory I carry from the battle of Amiens. That battle was a great victory. It was perhaps the greatest triumph we had. Our troops went into it fit and healthy, high-spirited and well-trained. We had plenty of artillery, we had plenty of tanks. The Germans were completely surprised and thoroughly beaten. At the end of the day I was asked to go back to a casualty clearing station. I was told that something was wrong. I went back. And there I saw the aftermath of victory. Something was indeed wrong. The extraordinary secrecy of the movement had somehow hampered the army medical services,

and there I saw ambulance after ambulance full of wounded men some shrieking, some groaning, some dying, some dead, some just suffering in patience, waiting to get to the hospital gate. Inside the doors of the building used as a hospital, its windows boarded up tight so that no light would reveal its position to enemy aircraft, the fumes of acetylene gas from the lamps, the terrible smell of gangrene from some of the wounds, the sickening odor of ether, the white faces of the worn-out nurses, the blood-stained hands of the doctors, who had to work as fast as butchers—only to save and not to kill—made a scene of horror that I can never forget. And the next time war comes that is what we will see in our now peaceful cities, and the doctors and the wooden operating tables will be our doctors and our office tables, and the blood will be the blood of our wives and our children.

"You say that is impossible—that it could not happen. It may be impossible today, but it will happen tomorrow, unless the viewpoint of humanity is changed. I do not need to remind you of our nearness to scientific developments which will make our very inmost cities as vulnerable as was the city of Rheims when it came under the fire of German guns.

"Let me give you another picture, a picture of actual results of the war that ended in 1918, the war 'that was to end war.' Eleven million dead! If they were buried side by side the graveyard would extend from New York to San Francisco, from Gibraltar to Moscow; 9,000,000 war orphans, 5,000,000 war widows, 20,000,000 helpless wounded broken men, and 50,000,000 starving unemployed. In the background of this picture are the ruins of churches and buildings and human institutions which had been constructed by the toil and sacrifice of centuries.

"A Canadian writer suggests that the statesmen and politicians of the world, particularly those selected for the Disarmament Conference, should conjure up that ghastly spectacle.

"Excessive armaments, I repeat, are the outward and visible sign of minds which regard war as normal. Every one of the great powers, except Germany, is spending far more on armaments today than was spent before the war; one writer puts it at 70 per cent more than in 1913. Despite all high-sounding phrases and international pacts, the land, sea and air forces of 1931 are far more formidable than those of 1914. Let us turn to history for a lesson. We saw how constant war preparation, reacting on and reacted upon by a false philosophy, transformed a peaceful people into a warlike one. We saw the steady, quiet German become a cold, ruthless fighter. Armaments have always been created to be used. History has shown us over and over again that nations brought up to the use of arms will use arms. The world expenditure on armaments today is officially estimated by the League of Nations at forty-five hundred million dollars each year. We are reminded of the words of Viscount Grey, Foreign Minister in England in the years before the war, when he told the world:

"The enormous growth of armaments in Europe, the sense of insecurity and fear caused by them—it is these that make war inevitable."

FOR EVER AT WAR

"Gentlemen, it is useless and futile to talk about 'the war being over,' for the whole thought of humanity is