

Mr. NEILL: I am coming to that. I was so careful to get it precise that I have written it down. War is caused by the conflict of different national, economic and racial policies, by the never-ending economic competition, by the strife for trade, by the demand for an outlet for surplus population, by the demand for a place in the sun. These are the causes of war, and not the fact that one nation is armed more than another. We had war in the world long before there was armament. Men fought with scythes and pitchforks for lack of more effective weapons, and they would do so again if they could not get the ordinary armament of to-day. But that is not what would happen. If we had disarmament, this is what would happen. It would mean nations ostensibly adhering to the pact and at the same time secretly preparing for war. It would mean nations secretly equipping factories, ostensibly for industrial purposes, but so prepared that by the tearing down of a partition and the coupling up of a pulley, they could be used for the manufacture of munitions of war. The nation that was most unscrupulous, the most careful to carry on these secret preparations, would be the one ahead in the game. This would put a handicap on the nation that sought honourably to adhere to the disarmament treaty and would be a great stimulus to dishonesty in the matter.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: If the causes of war are so largely economic, might it not be wise to devote our attention to removing the economic systems that perpetuate war?

Mr. NEILL: Yes. I quite agree with that, and when the millennium comes, we shall all be in heaven. Both are equally remote at the present time. I am talking about the present day, present conditions and the present generation. I do not expect to live in the next century, I am interested only in this one. There will also be the situation of a nation keeping outside of a disarmament conference, and, not by her government but by private manufacturers, building cannon and guns ostensibly belonging to themselves, which armament they would be ready to deliver when war broke out to any country which, perhaps, had already paid for them. The disarmament conference applied only to capital ships and heavy cruisers. It had nothing to do with light cruisers, destroyers, aeroplanes or gas.

We have only to remember, to go back for a moment to the "secret preparations" idea, what is going on in Germany to-day. Under the treaty of Versailles they have a

rigid inspection by an Allied Military Commission as to whether they are carrying out this compact, and the commission has discovered and reported that they cannot enforce this. They have discovered large quantities of gas masks, gas manufacturing machinery and the smaller class of munitions, rifles and so on. Although they have this military inspection which would not occur under ordinary conditions, to control these things, they have not been able to control them. It has also been discovered that they have the skeleton of the headquarters staff of an army as big as they had before the war. These things cannot be controlled.

Mr. SHAW: Does the hon. gentleman place much faith and credit in the report of that military commission that has made the report to which he refers?

Mr. NEILL: I think I am entitled to accept to a large extent, the report of a commission presided over by General Foch and accepted by Britain.

Mr. SHAW: I should think not.

Mr. NEILL: I was going to touch for a moment more on the Washington conference, which did something of very vital importance to Britain. Britain there agreed to depart from the three to one naval power arrangement and to come down to a one to one. Where before she had maintained a navy equal to any two of the next two naval powers, she agreed at that conference, unfortunately, I think, for our interests, to come down to a basis of the next highest, so that any two nations would have a bigger fleet than Great Britain. That is one of the outstanding features of the disarmament conference.

As regards the prospects of war, nations do not advertise their intention of getting ready for war or of going to war. You can judge only by small matters. If you read the report of what is going on in the United States to-day, are they not strengthening, day by day, their defences? They are strengthening their air fleet, their navy, and they are even recruiting corps of nurses to be ready for any eventuality. If you look at the last Japanese budget, you will find that over fifty per cent of it is devoted to preparations for war. They have strengthened, increased and developed their compulsory military system. All these things have their significance, and surely it is a much more significant factor, which I do not think can be gainsaid, that there has lately occurred a thing which has been dreaded by every military student for the last one hundred years—an