



## REVIEW and COMMENT

# THE LONG ROAD TO PEACE

By ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

IF OUR human past seems to be a dreary record of stubbornly maintained hostility and wars it is partly because written history has dealt with little else. Only recently, and largely through indirect Marxist influence, has the interplay of social, economic and cultural change become a content of history, in which, as it is investigated, we discern ever more clearly a tireless drive toward human unity.

Associations of nations for peace, we find, are of great antiquity. The first of which there is historical record was formed over three thousand years ago when in the fourteenth century B.C. the Pharaoh, Ikhnaton, granted autonomy to the components of the Egyptian Empire. This political innovation, too little noticed by historians, was part of a great social transformation. It manifested itself most decisively in religion, for in ancient Egypt, even more than in Europe of the Reformation, social authority had religious forms. The new consciousness of universality was made concrete in the establishment of a monotheistic religion with the sun as the sole god. Literature was vivified and produced the first Egyptian hymns worthy of preservation among the world's sacred writings; and Egyptian painting and sculpture broke out of their mummifying conventions and became freer and more realistic.

In whatever other culture we look back we see similar drives. Chinese classical literature is full of assertions of human brotherhood and condemnation of war. Indeed its poetry has been called the poetry of pacifism, of which this passage from the poet Tsa Sung will give the flavor: "Do not let me hear talk of titles and promotions; each general's reputation is made out of 10,000 corpses."

Similarly in Hindu culture, Buddhism and the Jain religion are more deeply pacific even than Christianity. Only in St. Francis of Assisi, who included birds and beasts in the community of life, did Christianity approach the "ahimsa" doctrine which condemns violence to anything living.

In Western culture the drive for peace and human brotherhood appears in its two major strains in the Hebrew prophets culminating in Jesus, and in Greek rationalism. There it is to be seen not only in the philosophy but in the epics and history. It is significant that Greek literature, which deals so largely with war, was so distinctively tragic that the word "tragedy" has become organically associated with it. It is not straining the point to read in this a judgment upon war.

This mood of Greek classic literature is well expressed by Homer himself in the following passage from the *Odyssey* where, it should be observed, the theme of the vengeance of the gods is an early

perception of justice, foreshadowing its more developed ideals.

*The great gods are never pleased  
With violent deeds; they honor  
equity  
and justice. Even those who land  
as foes  
and spoilers upon foreign shores  
and bear  
away much plunder by the will of  
Jove,  
returning homeward with their  
laden barks  
Feel, brooding heavily upon their  
minds,  
The fear of vengeance.*

As treated in Greek literature the destruction of Troy became a tragedy for the conquerors. Many perished in the ten-year siege; numbers of the survivors met with shameful deaths on their return; and the loot of the ravaged city went to the bottom of the sea. No wonder that a literature founded on such a theme grew from implicit to explicit consciousness of human unity. It is that, in Euripides, for which contemporary critics remark on his "modernity."

In Greek history we find conscious recognition of the two choices that mankind faces: the peace of free peoples in association, or the peace of subjection to an empire. It was as an association of free states that the Greeks beat back the Persian Empire. It was their failure to achieve an equal unity against Macedon and Rome that caused their fall.

A tremendous anti-war agitation virtually forced a truce in the Peloponnesian war between Athens and Sparta. The chief literary relics of that agitation are Aristophanes' comedies, *Peace* and *Lysistrata*. Thucydides' great history of that war is suffused with the consciousness of its tragedy.

In the work of the later historians Plutarch and Polybius, particularly the latter, who review Greek history against the background of the vaster struggles of the empires of Alexander's successors and Carthage and Rome, there is the heavy-hearted recognition of the Greek failure to unite; and there is resigned

### Biographer of the GI's

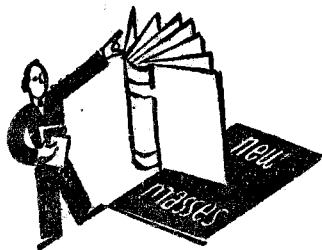
When the war opened, who could have foretold that a reporter on a roving assignment, known for dispatches that read like letters to the home folks, would become the great American writer of the war?

On April 18 came the last letter home. It was not written by Pyle. It was the dreaded official kind from the War Department. Specifically it came from the commanding officer on Ie Jima: "I regret to report that war correspondent Ernie Pyle, who made such a great contribution to the morale of our foot soldier, was killed in the battle of Ie Jima today." He had died in an advance battle position, by the bullet of a Japanese sniper.

For Pyle the most affecting newspaper story of his life, and the one that had a decisive part in the making of his own career, was a report of the burial of the Unknown Soldier of the last war. It has been his achievement to speak for the Unknown Soldier of this war—and to make him known. In this he has left a heritage for literature, a human document of the greatest importance to historians, and the best of the monuments that will be raised to the ordinary GI—and a noble memorial to himself.

NM May 1, 1945

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awe before the irresistible growth of Rome which fed on such failures.

But it was not a blind failure, as Greek political life, as well as the other aspects of its culture, indicated. No less than eight leagues of Greek states attempted to give political form to what was so brilliantly perceived in its literature. None, however, outgrew the stature of a regional federation and their rivalries were adroitly used by both Macedon and Rome in the classic divide-and-rule strategy of empire.

With the expansion of Rome imperial power became so entrenched that the striving for human unity took nonpolitical directions. Religions of human brotherhood—at first Christianity was but one of several—spread over the Mediterranean world. From then on its expression was in the mystical "City of God." Later the Papacy, as it became a temporal power, took on political aims and came in conflict with attempts to reestablish empire in the feudal world. These attempts made use of the idealization of the Roman Empire as an actual unification of mankind that was a part of the Renaissance rediscovery—and overvaluation—of the past. Dante's *De Monarchia* put forth this view.

One of the effects of the Reformation and the emergence of the European national states was the secularization of the quest for human unity. With the appearance of the projects of Erasmus the problem is stripped of mysticism. From then on the plans for international cooperation, even for Utopias, and the satires in which world views were implied, use political terminology. Their authors include many of the greatest minds of Europe and later of America—philosophers, jurists, scientists, writers, religious leaders, statesmen.

Of the direct plans for international associations for peace the most influential were those of Grotius, whose proposal became a foundation of the Hague Tribunal and the Geneva Convention; of the Abbe St. Pierre, on whose plan might have been based an Eighteenth Century League of Nations but for the opposition of the Prussian King, Frederick; and de Bloch's proposal, published in Russia in 1898, which led the Czar to summon the first World Peace Conference at the Hague.

In the nineteenth century, the striving assumed a mass character. Peace societies, the first of which was established in 1815 in America, had a tremendous growth on this continent and in Europe. Even more powerful and decisive was

the orientation toward peace and internationalism of the expanding labor movement and its political parties. Their combined agitation prompted arbitration pacts and other international agreements and prodded governments to take the initiative in world peace conferences. Disraeli was impelled to propose one, which was again frustrated by Prussia, but a world peace conference with most governments represented was finally achieved in 1899.

With the dismal offset of two world wars in the last forty years we may be inclined to disparage the achievements of the century between the Napoleonic wars and the First World War. But these achievements were many and fundamental. They included the foundation of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent, the Geneva Convention, the Hague Tribunal, the Pan-American Union, numbers of arbitration pacts, and treaties covering trade, patents, copyrights, scientific observation, conservation, and interchange. Their volume and importance is so great that a new profession arose, that of international law, courses in which are now in the curricula of virtually all universities.

All wars previously have proved setbacks to internationalism, and the First World War the greatest setback of all. The postwar disillusion extended to suspicion of all governments and institutions. With an influence almost like that of the age of the enlightenment, literature became a force against the powers that be, with militarism and imperialism as its chief targets. This no doubt contributed to postwar cynicism, but it must always be borne in mind that the writers themselves were not cynical. Internationally, under the leadership of Barbusse, Rolland and Gorky and, here, in the League of American Writers, they were among the foremost in resuming the struggle in its critical anti-fascist stages.

Even more important, nothing could counterbalance the enormous gain of the establishment of the Soviet Union, itself the largest federation of nationalities in history and committed, in its foreign policy, to world peace. By a historical irony that policy had to wait for fulfillment in a war alliance; but it is by virtue of this very fact that we may confidently anticipate a substantial advance in the international accord now being completed at San Francisco. It is safe to predict that except for the defeated remnants of fascism, open and concealed, the diehard reactionaries, the



psychopaths and the pacifist zealots who would take the human future in one stride, we will not, this time, have a postwar disillusion.

## Across the Pacific

AMERICA'S FAR EASTERN POLICY, by T. A. Bisson. Institute of Pacific Relations; distributed by Macmillan. \$3.

IT is all to the good that the American market is now being amply provided with books on the Far East. For one of the serious handicaps with which we entered this global war was the absence of a large, informed public on the problems of war and peace across the Pacific. In specialized fields this was reflected in an extreme scarcity of language students and a relative paucity of experts in the economy, society and political organization of our Asiatic allies and of our enemy, Japan. More generally we suffered, and still do, from the same sort of strangeness with regard to the Chinese and other Asiatic peoples that a few years ago played such havoc in our relations with the Soviet Union.

This situation has immeasurably improved during the course of the war. I dare say that four or five years ago a Lin Yutang would have succeeded in putting across most of his rotten propaganda on a gullible American public. Today he has in large part failed because we are better fortified with knowledge. In the more academic category of books the Institute of Pacific Relations must be given a good share of credit for making available penetrating studies pertinent to the war and the postwar era in the Far East. Such volumes as *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State*, by E. Herbert Norman, *The Chinese Army*, by Major (now Colonel) Evans Fordyce Carlson, *Industrialization of the Western Pacific*, by Kate L. Mitchell and *The Soviet Far East and Central Asia*, by William Mandel, all sponsored by this organization, are indispensable sources to the specialist and the layman.

The newest volume in the Institute of Pacific Relations series is *America's Far Eastern Policy*, by T. A. Bisson, who is one of the most astute Western students of the Far Eastern scene. His text is brief, 163 pages, and to it he has added sixty-five pages of essential diplomatic documents, thus bringing together in a moderate sized book both an analysis of a crucial aspect of the Far Eastern problem and many of the sources upon which that analysis is based.

It is evident that not only the efficient and complete winning of the war against

## What to Read on San Francisco

SEVERAL people have asked us for a listing of material which would be of use in discussions about the San Francisco meeting of the United Nations. The following are a few suggestions:

*Teheran*, by Earl Browder (International Publishers). A must book for an understanding of the fundamentals of the peace.

*America's Decisive Battle*, by Earl Browder (New Century). To be read with *Teheran*.

*The Super-Powers*, by William T. R. Fox (Harcourt, Brace). Read critically, this small volume makes many good observations on the special responsibility for the peace of Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union.

*The Great Decision*, by James T. Shotwell (Macmillan). An informative study with a valuable appendix on the place of this country in a world organization.

*World Economic Development*, by Eugene Staley (International Labor Office, Montreal). An excellent document on the economic aspects of lasting peace.

*World Cooperation and Postwar Prosperity*, by James S. Allen (New Century). A splendid pamphlet popularly written on the future economic stakes of world organization.

*US Foreign Policy*, by Walter Lippmann (Little, Brown). Lippmann's defense of the nuclear alliance.

*Angels Could Do It Better: The Story of Dumbarton Oaks*, by Joseph

Gaer (American Labor Party, 8 W. 40, N. Y. 18). An excellent pamphlet.

*After Victory*, by Vera Micheles Dean (Foreign Policy Association). Questions and answers on world organization.

*The Time for Decision*, by Sumner Welles (Harper). A valuable study, to be read critically, of the factors that lead to war and those that make for peace.

*An Intelligent American's Guide to the Peace*, edited by Sumner Welles (Dryden Press). A useful reference study of the stakes in the peace of every country in the world.

The following are useful official publications and are available by writing to the Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. or, if free, from the agency named:

*The United Nations: Dumbarton Oaks Proposals for a General International Organization* (text with pictorial chart). State Department Publication 2297. Free.

*Wall Chart* in two colors, with illustrations, showing proposed structure and functions of United Nations Organization. State Department Pub. 2280. Free.

*The Bretton Woods Proposals*. Treasury Department. Free.

*UNRRA: Organization, Aims, Progress*. United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Free.

*Toward the Peace—Documents*. State Department Publication 2298. 15c.

Japan but also future security in the Far East require a far more realistic and constructive policy on the part of the United States than that which it haphazardly pursued during the previous century. Yet a new policy, or a revamped one, will not emerge out of a vacuum. It must come from the particular situation with which it has to deal and that situation will be a derivative of the past. The value of Mr. Bisson's book is that it scrutinizes the history of our Far Eastern policy in the light of the new problems which are emerging as a result of the war. He writes about the history of our policy with a view to illuminating the problems we face today and will face tomorrow.

If one takes the liberty of picking a central theme out of a book which is not, however, written around a specific thesis it would, in the case of Mr. Bis-

son's volume, be this: "The current determination of the American people to play their full part in establishing a firm world security organization is grounded on the realization that war came essentially because the collective action needed to prevent it on the part of Britain, France, the United States and the Soviet Union was not achieved." The body of the volume is concerned with a penetrating account of United States policy, first during the two critical war periods of 1895-1905 and 1914-1922 and then with the decade of appeasement, 1931-1941.

The most interesting part of Mr. Bisson's study is to be found in the final chapter on "Aspects of Postwar Policy" because here he is dealing with new material on which there has so far been very little public discussion. In his introductory chapter the author has suggested