

A PACIFIST DEFENSE OF AMERICA'S WAR

BY JOSEPH JASTROW

THE cause of pacifism, and not it alone, suffers from the uncertain precedence of means or end. Like other movements, it offers at once an ideal and a platform. It follows the common psychology in that the enthusiasm it enlists is readily transferred from cause to programme; it shares the common experience in developing active dissensions within its ranks. Thus arise sects and factions and their divided and weakened energies. The quality of salvation is subordinated to the ritual for its attainment. Fanaticism is the extreme expression of the limitation.

The shift of energy from purposes to programmes is intelligible. Progress depends upon a choice of route as well as of goal. Men require the emotional satisfaction of the concrete devotion. Loyalties, abstract and unattached, prove as impotent as platonic affections. So long as reason remains the accredited control of sentiment, its task is the reconciliation of means and end, and the guidance of effort, patiently and consistently, if uncertainly to cherished purposes. In this course it is easy to mistake a change of route for the abandonment of a principle—a compromised or forsaken loyalty. For the enlisted, desertion is the supreme offense, apostasy the unpardonable sin. Yet progress depends upon altered allegiances, and the relinquishment of once cherished conversions for others richer in promise, more vital in appeal.

The mass outlines of a large project like pacifism may be clear; but under the practical stress of construction, they give way to a busy consideration of details. Like many a cause, pacifism is a contention, denying its extreme, non-

resistant, negative formulation by its every assertion. Pacifism is not passivism. By decree of history it is a protest, and protestants are legitimately, when considerably, clamorous. For a protest, obeying the same tendencies that require or favor a concrete programme, throws itself powerfully against a palpable wrong. If a class issue, the grievance rankles, inflames, keeps agitation and—in latter days—organization alive. If a social wrong, or more typically an established but to the protestants a false direction of the collective energies, it grows into a reform movement; if large enough in its bearings, into a world-wide reformation, a universal reconstruction of mind and heart.

Pacifism is unmistakably a world-wide issue, everywhere close to the focus of present thought. Its protesting and seemingly negative operations are forced upon it. The conspicuousness of pacifism as a narrow, anti-war agitation is not of its own choosing; at the moment it is to a regrettable extent a journalistic product. To the narrower vision—or more charitably expressed, to those swayed by a legitimate sentimental conviction—the wrongs of war, the horrors of war, the demoralizations of war are adequate and all absorbing denunciations of its murderous practices. Anything rather than this! Add the utter futility of war, the humiliation of rationality, the endless dehumanizing consequences that follow its train, the despoiling of fair lands and cities, the estrangement of peoples, the poisoning of generations with prejudices, the undoing of the slow, arduous, dearly bought work of centuries in the education of men—what defense can there be for such a colossal, monstrous, chaotic, diabolic evil?

The difficulty of presenting the cause of pacifism is due to the paradoxical state of opinion. This goes beyond the frequent and pardonable inconsistency of the democratic mind, seeking a satisfactory expression of its feelings; it is decidedly aggravated in times of war. It is needlessly aggravated by the tyranny of words. When the dogs of war are unloosed, the watch-dog of peace is given a bad name and promptly hanged. The paradox of the situation lies in this: that the instigators and the approving witnesses of the execution—that is, the great majority of them—are in a true sense pacifists. In a practical minded country words have least excuse for serving as bogies; and slogans should not be used as brands. To the pacifist war is an expression of the

temporary failure of the institutions of mankind. To the pacifist civilization is a system, is indeed the composite of all systems, whereby nations may live peaceably in a common world, despite their differences of race, custom, language, tradition, interests. The individual and collective energies of men are directed for lifetime pursuits—including the systematic preparation for them, which is education—contributory to this comprehensive end. The largest share of mankind is engaged in the work of providing for daily needs and establishing the conditions under which the work of civilization may proceed favorably and justly for the common good. All these men, laborers, artisans, traders, organizers, men of business and affairs, are expressing by their pursuits within the field of livelihood and beyond it, their pacifist loyalties. These mutually supporting occupations require a peaceful adjustment of the inevitable conflicts of men—of individuals, neighbors, rivals, organizations, interests, parties, cities, states, nations. Those who believe that the best way to settle such disputes, to advance civilization, and to preserve the qualities of men that are most worth preserving, is to settle them by compulsion and the verdict of arms, are militarists; those who believe in the inherent worth and rectitude of the actually operative system are pacifists.

The attempt so to conjure with words as to make the worse seem the better cause, and convert the overwhelming majority into an insignificant and feebly protesting minority must be vigorously resisted. That is what pacifists are fighting for; and they propose to fight unceasingly, mobilizing in their cause the very resources—each and every one, according to its strength and fitness—all the combined agencies that have made civilization possible. If science and religion, if justice and law and morality, if decency and honesty and clean living, if democracy and Americanism are matters of supreme value and worth fighting for, then the American pacifist proposes to fight for these ends and with them as means. If the only way left to him by the force of circumstances to conduct that fight is to acknowledge the momentary defeat of the means upon which he has staked everything, he is ready to enlist in the very service which he abhors for its inhumanity, distrusts for its entanglements, resents for its irrationality. Peace and civilization are one. The pacifist accepts civilization at any price. He regrets the price; for it is nothing less than an inglorious retreat to

cruder methods of adjustment, an enforced, shameful reversion imposed by the sacredness of the allegiance that holds him to the cause—a pacifist in both ends and means so long as hope and reason and patience remain, a pacifist in ends when in despair the means must be deserted to save the ends.

Many who read this statement may receive it with serious and troubled reservations. For that attitude the paradoxical state of American opinion is largely responsible. One source of confusion may readily be removed. No one questions the necessity of force and invested authority to regulate a contentious and pugnacious humanity. The machinery of courts, and jails, and reformatories, and the influences of religion, manners, education and practical good will and fair play are quite insufficient to keep peace on earth on all occasions. Yet we distinguish between the police and the soldier, though both are prepared to use arms. We must insure against the failures of all our machinery to regulate aggressive and violent human contacts. That some such machinery is needed for the policing of international interests is the conviction that has emerged from a hope of a few advanced thinkers to the promise of prompt realization by the enlightened nations of the world. "The League to Enforce Peace" is obviously a pacifist proposal. Those who support it enroll themselves in the inner circle of pacifists. Pacifism not only accepts, it urges the necessity of policing nations; because unless adequately policed by deliberate and voluntary organization, nations are open to the dismal possibilities of war. Co-operative policing favorable to deliberation, and to the sanctity of treaties and arbitration, is a civilized form of adjustment, that builds upon toleration, understanding, sympathy; the system of ordeal by ruthless warfare is supported by prejudice, hate, intolerance, unreason, distrust. The psychological affiliations of the two policies are as opposed as the forms of expression which they congenially assume. The psychology of war is as important in consideration as the institution of war. Peace-mindedness and war-mindedness are decisive qualities.

The more immediate contention relates to the measure of insurance which a civilized nation deems it prudent to provide for the protection of its civilization from the destructive threat of war. The extreme militarist (within the definitely pacifist world of today) votes for the maximum insurance; that seems a possible position until confronted by the obvi-

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ous fact that the insurance of one nation is the threat of another. The average pacifist replies: the least possible. The extreme pacifist may reply: none at all; because he has no faith in an insurance that is a threat, and believes it possible by other means to reduce the threat to make insurance needless. The moderate pacifist surveys the horizon not for war-clouds, but with circumspect recognition that the integrity of peace depends upon a reciprocal confidence among the nations. He is anxious because the avowed pacific faith is loosely organized, and its warrant uncertain because institutionally weak. A single false note may break the concord. The avowed policy of every nation is pacifist. Not one of them assumes the responsibility of breaking the peace of nations, or justifies the actual war except as the repulse of an invasion or its threat. In the desire of every nation to be enrolled among the pacifists, the pacifist recognizes the sanction and authoritative confirmation of his cause. But the actual enrollment depends upon deed and attitude, not upon affirmation.

The so-called militarist (excluding always the true though not extreme believer in militarism)* is by profession a pacifist, but one who believes that the present state of human advance cannot dispense with the ultimate appeal to arms in the defense of peace. Many go farther in expressing their militaristic leanings. They believe it is well to carry some insurance of civilization in the old-time militaristic companies, while carrying most of it in the new pacific ones. Some admit the inconsistency of the practice. Others are confident that they can draw a safe line between threat and protection. What determines such attitudes is the measure

*The out and out militarist who believes that men are best occupied when fighting, that the military virtues are the sterling and chosen ones, that war is the chief business of nations, that the arts of peace are devices to keep the race occupied between periods of war, is in this consideration ignored. His consistency is unassailed. The contention of the reluctant militarist that war is not desirable but for the present so seriously imminent as eventually to be inevitable, is not ignored, but opposed by the combined arguments of pacifism. It is well to add that the position is here stated with reference to the present war alone. The present-day changed attitude toward war is as complete as the revolutionary change in warfare. The presence in the historical perspective, of wars of aggression, conquest, extension of influence, balance of power, defense of national integrity, establishes precedents, but cannot outweigh the overwhelming contrasts of condition, public opinion, and international relations, which make the world war so distinctive in its issues. The possession of an historical outlook broadens, but it may also distract attention from the critical differences of present condition. Whether an historical equipment and the citation of precedent serve as aids to keener vision or as blinders, depends upon the acumen and the spirit in which they are used.

of distrust that accompanies the confidence in another's intentions—a composite faith in peace or Providence, and in dry powder. The convinced pacifist urges that the disarmament of force makes confidence indispensable, and reasonable adjustment the authoritative arbiter. The pacifist with militaristic reservations regards the risk in holding other nations to be as well intentioned as his own, too great to be committed to any other tribunal than a coercion under his own control. In an entangled world ruled by biased and frail reason, such differences of opinion should be compatible with mutual respect without suspicion of loyalty or sincerity or competence.

So much analysis is needed to present the pacifist defense of America's war in its actual relations. Beyond this the internal contentions within the pacifist camps are for the moment irrelevant. Once the peace which is their common hope is realized, they must be prepared to find themselves at variance. The confident pacifist will remain unalterably opposed to military ideals and extensive military preparedness as a political policy. Far from seeing in the world war a justification of preparedness, he will see in it the removal of the menace that gave it partial support. While the war is on, the two orders of pacifists will agree that the most vigorous prosecution is the most humane because the quickest means to the common end.

The pacifist viewing his position, finds his conviction that the war was needless and unjustified, as strong in 1917 as in 1914. The American pacifist accepted neutrality as long as that seemed the attitude most conducive to the cause of peace, fairest to determine where aggression lay. The enemy from the first was and remains not this nation or that, but militarism everywhere. If convinced before 1914 as to the source of the menace, the pacifist might in prudence have awaited confirmation, but quite as legitimately might have expressed himself promptly and forcibly. The invasion of Belgium and its sequel dispelled all lingering doubt. American pacifism was then enlisted.

The pacifist's neutrality is a sincere attempt to regard objectively the rôle of the transgressor, which is hard. That this war should be directed against Germany is a source of equally sincere regret. Deeply appreciative of German contributions to civilization and of the inherent qualities of the German people, the sympathetic American pacifist reaches

the tragic conviction that if militarism can undo so sterling a race, what havoc can it not accomplish, and what qualities of men can it not destroy! Or he may be driven to a doubt of her former appreciations, and ask whether such comprehensive dehumanization of an entire people does not proceed upon an overlooked and serious disqualification—a dishonorable inclination toward despotism and insane ambition. He considers whether German *Kultur* is and has long been hollow and vain and perverse. Resisting such unwelcome considerations, he falls back upon the only charitable and adequate explanation: that Germany has lost mental and moral balance. It is no less true of nations than of individuals: Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad.

The pacifist is compelled to look for the proof of a belligerent's profession of loyalty to the values of civilization in the respect shown for these in the conduct of war. The same order of judgment obtains in war and in peace. The standards applied to a low order of civilization are in neither enterprise to be applied to a higher one. The proof of what men are fighting for is reflected in the restrictions which they place upon the passions aroused by their belligerency. The respect for the sanctity of treaties as of the rules of warfare, the humane regard for the defenseless, the forbearance of cruelty and wanton revenge and malicious destruction, a deference to the opinions and protests of neutral nations and the established moral standards of all peoples, these considerations may go far even in times of war—which at its best is hell—to prove the underlying loyalty of a goaded or misguided people to their professed cause. Merely to recall Louvain and the *Lusitania* is to remove the last vestige of sympathy of the most charitable pacifist and to turn it to hot indignation and unrelenting hostility. Whatever in the Teutonic view may be the injustice of the wrongs which the war was embraced to redress, the manner of the redress is infinitely more base than any wrong threatened or endured. To the intellectual pacifist the apologies for the war and for the conduct of the war by Germany sound the most despairing note. For if the leaders of German thought, the high priests of learning, can so completely lose the qualities of their calling, what hope of redemption remains? The pacifist must be a man of courage, for the war has shown that there is much fighting to be done. He must have the

courage to face the facts. He may in wisdom decline to judge a nation by its crimes. He may accept Germany as a terrible proof that no nation is secure enough in its entrenched civilization to risk the demoralization of a worship of might in a militaristic ritual. He may recognize in the national policy an invitation though not a cause of the Teutonic treacherous betrayal of the world's trust. But in the end, however desperately he holds to the conviction that Germany and Germans cannot be different from other nations and peoples associated for so long in the common cause of enlightenment, he dare not flinch when confronted by the astounding and awful proof that they are.

Comment may aid little to comprehension. Just before the outbreak of the war one of the greatest of German scholars added to a long and honorable career a monumental work on the evolution of civilization—the volumes on Folk-Psychology, by Professor Wilhelm Wundt. In it he reviews the faltering attempts of man in prehistoric times to gain a control of nature and to regulate life. He portrays the levels of culture from the most primitive, through the crude beliefs and superstitions, the gradual appearance of more elevated systems of ideas in myth and achievement, and makes the culminating level that marks the beginning of history and of wider, productive human contacts, the age of *humanity*, an age heralded and in part entered into thousands of years ago. Participating in that evolution is the attitude toward war and the conduct of warfare. To obtain a parallel for the type of warfare practised and approved by Germany of the twentieth century, one must go back in evolution centuries in time to a meaner age, and aeons in conscience to a duller one, to a time when humanity was an unknown conception, and savage domination ruled exultingly. And yet this philosopher, justly honored in all lands, signed the manifesto of academic Germany in approval of principles as incompatible with his profession as with the conclusions of his life work. In the light of this example "*Veritas vos liberabit*" becomes a Mephistophelian mockery.

Germany—that is, so much of Germany as is responsible for the present catastrophe—has made herself, and that deliberately, instead of the aid to the world's civilization which she might be, the direct menace of modern times, the menace of militarism unashamed. The momentous proclamation of President Wilson in none of its momentous utterances is

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more significant than in the emphasis that America has no hostility to the German people, that America insists upon the clear distinction between a fatal policy and those who are urged by a sense of patriotism to espouse it. No sentence in this culminating document has aroused more resentment in the German press; with the restoration of reason no sentiment will be more effective in justifying the action of the United States.

So much of statement is necessary to give the pacifist attitude its proper setting. The issues of the war, the aggravations and irritations, the diplomatic blunders and political crimes are as little overlooked by the pacifist as by anyone with practical comprehension and historical sense.* Their bearing upon the recourse to war (or instigation of war) as the mode of their settlement, and upon the conduct of that war, is to the pacifist of wholly secondary consideration in the central issue. The development of the political and social machinery to minimize the sources of irritation and misunderstanding is the statesman's task. To excuse the inexcusable by ground of necessity is to abandon the fundamental position of humanity; while the enforcement in the twentieth century, of a national will by a régime of *Schrecklichkeit*, that is as futile as it is brutal, exposes the horrible sham of the sophistry. That is why the pacifist believes in America's war, believes in it with an intensity of conviction that may not so promptly come to others who have thought less deeply, cared less consciously for the ideals of peace. This is not a war of nations, nor a war of interests, though the details of its adjustment may be expressed in such terms. It began as the European war, and by reason of the solidarity of civilization became the World War. When the issues stand clear in proper retrospect, it will be seen to be—as in the histories of the future it may well come to be called—

* Equal recognition is given to the worthy and heroic qualities expressed in warfare and by those professionally concerned with its conduct. The military profession in a civilized community has obviously shared in and been moulded by the standards of civilization. It presents them no less than any other profession. The civilization that has made the triumphs of constructive engineering possible has equally determined modern warfare. These considerations are for the moment irrelevant, though it may not be wholly irrelevant to express appreciation for the qualities historically associated and now exercised in the soldier's calling. It is this appreciation and an unwillingness to lose from the composite of human qualities those stimulated by martial defense that led William James to formulate a plan for retaining in modern life, the moral equivalents of war. For warfare is far too high a cost for their retention; they must be cultivated in less disastrous ways.

the *Pacifist War*. For such it is in motive and purpose, the war against militarism, the war to end war.

In the expressions of loyalty which the declaration of America's war has called forth, the pacifist has noted (with surprise or composure according to his temper) that to some of his demonstrative fellow citizens, his place in the procession has seemed questionable if not anomalous. His unbelief in the military policy and his horror of war seem to a hasty judgment, to exclude him from a participation in the enrollment of his country for the defense of a principle which is peculiarly his. His deep distrust of the means as a policy makes his action a sacrifice when to others it is a confirmation; but this is no reason for lessening in any measure his thrill of communal enthusiasm in this great national uprising. For America's war is an acceptance by the nation, of militarism as its great enemy. The pacifist loves his country for the enemy she has made. In no other cause is he as ready to enlist as in this world-wide crusade against the great menace which to him also is the great illusion. His reflections have made him realize that until all the nations are fused in a pacific determination, the defection of any one is formidable according to its strength when added to the confederation of all. He realizes that no such acceptance is real or potent until transformed into personal conviction. There is no other psychology for nations than for individuals. The menace of German militarism will not be removed until it is replaced by the pacifism of the German people. The hope that it may be so replaced expresses a faith not in prophecy but in psychology. To promote such a consummation in all lands it is important to appeal definitely to the ideal of pacifism, which is the alliance of nations, and is now expressed in a nation of allies. Nothing greater or more uplifting has come to the modern world than the spectacle of so many great peoples—all conscious of their several historic struggles for liberty, which is the ally of peace—arrayed in council and effort and ready for the supreme sacrifice to defend a common cause, to achieve a triumphant pacifism. At this juncture it is important that the pacifist make himself understood. It is important that he be understood; for in the settlement of peace the first and foremost consideration must be and shall be the prevention of war. The *Pacifist War* will be concluded in a *Pacifist Peace*.

JOSEPH JASTROW.

RUSSIA THREE MONTHS AFTER THE REVOLUTION

BY A RUSSIAN OFFICER

THE recent offensive undertaken by General Brusiloff at the instigation of Mr. Kerensky, has once more brought before the public in a prominent manner, the valour and the stubbornness of the Russian army, and done away with the rumours which were spread about by German agents, that Russia was no longer to be reckoned with as an important factor in the great war. In America especially, the recent Russian successes in Galicia, have come somewhat in the nature of a surprise to a good many people, who had the fixed idea that the Revolution had broken all discipline in the armies of the former Tzar, and destroyed its habit of implicit obedience to its chiefs. It seems to me that the time has come when one must try to do away with these misapprehensions, justified perhaps in one way, if one considers the ignorance which prevails in so many quarters in the United States in regard to the real condition of things in Russia.

When one wants to pass judgment on my country, one ought before everything else, to consider and think about the immense task which was thrust upon her by the suddenness, as well as by the unexpected success of the Revolution, which, whilst it put an end to the most detestable government the world has ever known, found itself on the other hand confronted by the necessity to build anew, not only a whole administration, but also to raise the moral standard of a nation that had been for centuries trampled upon, and ruled by men who were tyrants more than anything else, and who had systematically applied themselves to crush every expression of individual opinion in those over whom they found themselves placed. Liberty is perhaps the