[Limitation of Armament]

Conference Lecture

It has taken a considerable period of time to bring the so-called civilized people who were responsible for the Great War to even a dim realization of the light in which it puts them and their civilization. We find ourselves face to face with the fact that we, - boastful of our progress, confident of our future, nevertheless did not know enough, have control enough, a strong enough sense of the logic of things, to prevent what we all realize to be the greatest catastrophe that has ever overtaken men. We were not able to prevent it - to stop it when under way; and now that the active part of it is over, we have not yet begun to recover from it. We know very well that it will be many, many years before even the outward scars of the world are healed over. There will be ruins of the Great War that will stand for ages, like those of B monuments to civilized man's inefficiency.

The plain fact of the case is that the Great War demonstrated how intellectually weak man really is. The only consolation in it all is that he realizes, as he never has before, that the weapon upon which he has depended in the past for his security and his progress is in reality a boomerang. He has believed that to be secure and to progress he must be strong, that is, strong in war, able to kill more men, destroy more property than any one of his rivals on the earth's surface.

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War is what man has depended on. There has never been a war which, to the wise, did not demonstrate its costliness, its stupidity and its folly as a weapon, did not throw into high relief the fact that man did possess the possibility of developing other weapons by which any rightful object could be attained if he had the patience and intelligence to develop these weapons.

Even before the ending of the War, the whole world was crying aloud to its leaders, to develop a substitute for war. It was no new cry. Literally for centuries men and peoples have in times of revolt against their own wrong headedness, lack of control, attempted to develop schemes for handling those matters which have so largely been settled by war.

Briefly, there have been four classes of these schemes. There was the scheme of Dante, who believed that we should have one supreme power, a universal monarch, and that this superior being would decide between warring nations. What it amounted to was that there could be no enemies, only rebels. There have been those that believed that the pope might be made this universal arbiter. But those who have advocated such a handling of international difficulties have of course known only their own world - Dante the worldof the Roman Empire - advocates of the pope only Catholicism. There have been many schemes for a

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federation of states for internationl arbitration. The last 25 years particularly has seen the movement grow - in England, France, Russia, and here in the United States.

Thus, when we came in Paris in 1919 to make a peace, it was but answering the cry and the long experimentation of the world, to attempt to work out a covenant between all nations which would be a continuing agency for the settlement of their difficulties. But such a continuing agency as this demands a give and take between nations for which we, the United States, were not prepared. We had done our part in the War and been right proud of ourselves. But we were satisfied with that. We wanted to come home and mind our own business. And to justify ourselves in doing that we presented,in a more of less distorted form, Washington's warning against entangling alliances.

The United States after the War reminded me a good deal of situations that I have seen in towns which had been overtaken by great disasters. You know what it does, - the whole population is thrown out of gear, has to stand together against the common outbreak of nature. Everything must be pooled. The man from the avenue and the man from the alley alike must take his tin pail and wait in line to get a service of milk. Extraordinarily interesting and democratic! And the

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town is apt to think that never again can it divide into cliques, pass by on the other side, know nothing about how the other part lives. But, the disaster over, the man from the avenue goes back and the man from the alley goes back. They have no further interest in one another. This was what we wanted to happen after the War. And it was the basis of our declination to go into the League. It was going to be a responsibility. It might get us into things which we did not want to tackle. We were a peaceful people, and if the world would let us alone, we would let it alone.

Very well, if we could let it alone. But right away we were confronted with a situation that proved that it was out of the question, in the opinion of our leaders. There came a tremendous demand for armament. Our navy asked an appropriation of $700,000,000. The country was appalled. What was it for? Those of us who followed public affairs knew very well what it was for, - that this country had both policies and possessions outside of its own borders which it was in honor bound as well as in interest bound to protect; that, unless we were going to accept the new tool of international conference, there was no way of security but by arms.

The country revolted against this idea of arms, and we had that tremendous outburst - the demand that the government disarm. The people of this country literally drove the administra-

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tion into taking up the subject of disarmament.

The great majority of the people believed - honestly enough no doubt, that the only thing was to disarm, and that we need not take anybody else into consideration, that it was our business. But our Government knew better. We were confronted at once with the inter-dependence of nations, that we did not and could not play our game alone on the globe.

Now, what was the particular situation that made it impossible for us to act alone in disarmament? It was not Europe. It was the other sideof the globe, the last place that George Washington - or Abraham Lincoln, for that matter, could have believed that we would have troubles. We had possessions - the Philippines, Hawaii - and we believed, with good reason, that the strongest, the most energetic, if the smallest country in the Pacific, Japan, had an eye on those possessions.

We had policies - a policy that we called the "open door" in regard to China. We had seen with alarm how Russia, Germany, England, France, Japan were eyeing that tremendous, placid, disorganized nation; how they were carving off now and then a piece as it was possible, forcing from her one after another of her rich resources. We wanted a hand in those resources ourselves, but we wanted it an honest hand, - one not

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stained with herblood nor fouled with corrupt money. If we went into China we wanted it to do her as much good as it did us, and so we had established in regard to China, and persuaded the other nations to join us, in that policy known as the "open door."

We also had anotherpolicy in regard to disrupted Russia - a"moral trusteeship" - and we were asking the nations to subscribe to that.

Now, how were we to take care of these policies and these possessions with Japan edging in on them as she unquestionably was, and with England joined to her by a treaty,which had been an excellent thing for both nations? How were we to take care of those things, and disarm? There was but one way and that was to find a substitute for force.

But how were we to get that substitute? There was only one way, and that was through/though in an abbreviated form, an international conference, of which the League of Nations is so far the largest, most democratic and inclusive expression. At first thought it seemed as if two nations were all that were concerned - England and Japan. If they were stop in the revelry of ship building which had broken out - if they would agree on matters in the Pacific, what concern was it if anybody else? And then at once our inter-dependence began to unfold.

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"You are talking about us," China said. "How can you have a conference, and we not be present?"

"You are talking of the Pacific," France, Holland, Portugal, Italy, Belgium said, "and we have interests in the Pacific." Thus, it soon turned out that we not only could not disarm by ourselves, but we could not disarm with two nations. The least that we could take into account would be nine. And the result was that nine nations were directly concerned in the problems which forced us, in order to be secure, to provide a navy.

So it was that nine nations were called to Washington last fall to consider whether it was possible to find a substitute for the navies which they had all been building in order to protect themselves against one another in the Pacific ocean.

It was called a Conference on the Limitation of Armament, but every one of intelligence knew that that limitation of armament all depended upon whether we were to make satisfactory adjustments in the Pacific. I myself felt great irritation with Secretary Hughes for putting his limitation before his problems. Get at the problems and then limitation will follow as a natural effect, was my argument, which was logical enough, but it was not dramatic enough for the Secretary. And

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events have proved how right he was. For, if he had put his cart before his horse, he succeeded in making that cart at the start so desirable that everybody concerned was willing to pay a good round price in order to get the horse to draw it. That was done at one of the most important internation gatherings ever held in this or any other country, the opening day of the Conference on the Limitation of Armament. (then describe)

It was amzing what that bold proposal, so bluntly, almost brutally put, did. For the first time it gave an air of reality, of possibility to limitation of armament. It said "scrap." While we had talked about naval holidays, the proposition to absolutely destroy ships in existence, converting them to peaceful purposes, had never before been seriously broached; and here we had it. And it immediately became enormously desirable and practicable; and when the two nations of which we had most suspicion, our rivals, England and Japan, jumped to the suggestion and showed themselves as eager as we to try to work it out, there came enormous relief not only in this country but in Japan and in England. At last governments had seen something of the light - they were beginning to believe. No one can over-estimate the effect of that first session.

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What a pity that there should have been an oversight - quite unintentional, in my judgment, at that first session, destined to cause the most serious disturbance that the Conference suffered, - to compel it to cut out at the start a very important part of its agenda, and to breed bitterness which still lasts between at least three nations at the table.

Supposing you were giving a dinner party. You wanted A and B - England and Japan - to talk things over. But if A came then you must have C, D, E, F, G and H. You invite them. They come; but there at the table you give exclusive attention to A and B. It is not human that those other six guests are not going to feel somewhat injured, particularly if there is among them one who considers himself in every way the equal of the others, and who is in some respects the superior of all - one who recently has been through a terrible experience, who has shown himself valiant beyond words, and who, if all the rest of the guests have helped him, yet knows that he has stood between them and the destruction of civilization, and has won out That was the case of France at Mr. Hughes' dinner party on November 12.

She felt hurt, and nourished her sorrow; and when, ten days after, her Premier was allowed to speak, to present reasons

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why, in his judgment, his country was unable to accept drastic land disarmament, although as he pointed out but as the public failed to catch, she was cutting down that armament fully 50% - as much as Mr. Hughes proposed to cut down the naval armament - she could do no more unless indeed she had that guarantee against unprovoked aggression which had been promised her in 1919 by England and the United States - a promise which had never been kept.

It was the first big mistake of the Conference on the Limitation of Armament, not to have considered France at the start. For France, it should be noted, as well as Italy, were expected to be sharers in the naval program. It was this failure to take them in as partners at the start which is mainly responsible for the only serious change in Mr. Hughes' program as he laid it out at the start - restriction on the building of submarines and capital ships.

But, after all, the Washington Conference was not primarily concerned with Europe. It was concerned with the Pacific, and while it worked on the details of the naval program, it was sweating over the Pacific problems. What could be done to wipe out our suspicion of Japan and of Japan's suspicion

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of us - to mutually convince ourselves that we need not fear one another. We suspected Japan had an eye on our possessions; Japan suspected that we were building naval bases in the Pacific, and building ships in order to prevent what she might consider her legitimate expansion. We must not forget that her problem is an acute one. It was the nations gathered in Washington 50 or 60 years ago that forced Japan out of an isolation that she loved, had never cared to break, and had set her at becoming one of us. Once resolved that her freedom and safety in the world could only be secured by making herself strong from a military point of view, she set out to learn the military game. She took the best model we had as a teacher - Germany. She took it, theory and all, - the will to power, forcible penetration. She devised a national ambition like that of the Prussian - pan-Asia in the same way that the Prussian talked pan-Germany. It was this that was frightening us - this that made us feel that when the day came that Japan felt as Germany did in 1914, that for the sake of her great ambition - religion you might well call it - she should use her force, that we would have to take action.

Japan naturally supposed that we, being a military nation, had the same ideals as Germany. She could hardly see us giving up the Philippines. She saw us edging toward her -

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Guam, Yap. Did it mean anything else? She saw herself shut out of this country. She must expand to get food. Did it mean anything else than just what England had meant? Russia had meant? Germany had meant? - expansion, power - through force? Was not that the Occidental theory?

In Paris in 1919 Japan began to get her first realization that there was something else working in the Occident - that much of it was honestly trying to find a substitute for force.

Four weeks after the Conference opened there was an open session at which that substitute was announced. What it amounted to was that the United States, England, France and Japan guaranteed not to interfere with one another's possessions in the Pacific. They also similarly agreed that in the case of the attack of any one of them from an outside aggressor, that they would met and consider what might be done. Itwas a moral guarantee. Whether such a moral guarantee might in the future eventuate in the necessity of their protecting one another by arms was not considered in the treaty presented. That an attack on the possessions of France, England, Japan or ourselves in the Pacific might be so unprovoked and flagrant as to arouse the indignation of the four that were making the alliance, was of course true, but it was highly improbable. The guarantee that was given Japan was in principle the same that our representa-

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tives gave to France along with Great Britain in 1919, and which we refused and which as one of the causes of bitterness in a French mind at the Conference that we were entering into a pact with Japan similar to the one we had refused France.

It was extraordinary how that pact changed the atmosphere, how much more feasible it made the naval program, how the suspicion of Japan and England that filled the air like a fog began to dissipate! They were our allies now - allies in a covenant signed in the presence of all the allied nations of the world. The war with Japan which for years now a good part of this country has been cultivating was wiped out of our minds with the signing of this four-Power pact and of the arrangements in regard to Japan and the islands which Japan had inherited from Germany.

This took care of our possessions and made them safe; but it did not take care of our policies; and the really serious trouble that the Conference had to face was that policy of the 'open door,' - serious because particularly in the past seven years Japan has been quietly invading it. The great work of the Conference was to persuade Japan that it was to her advantage to learn to paly the game of nations according to the new code - the code laid down in Paris in 1919, adopted by the nations

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there gathered, but at some points badly distorted in the working out and its meaning temporarily obscured by the awful outbreak of ugly human passions which attended the treaty making. Japan had had to bow in one very important particular at the Paris Conference to this new code. That was in regard to the islands north of the equator, which she expected to acquire by the treaty. England and France, Italy and Russia had agreed - some of them in writing - that what are known as the Caroline Islands should become the possession of Japan. Then came the Peace Conference, and it was decided at that Conference that none of the German possessions taken from her should be assigned as possessions to any nation. If these possessions were not able to govern themselves, that is, if they belonged in the backward classes, mandatories or protectors were to be appointed over them. The mandatory was not to exploit the territory, it was to manage it, protect it, and every year it was to give a careful report of its trust to the League of Nations. The Caroline Islands under this scheme could not become Japan's property. On the contrary, she must become their protector. It was a grave disappointment, but she had to swallow it. Then came the matter of Shantung. Germany had rights there. At least they were called rights. They were the result of forcible seizure. England

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and France, Italy and Russia had agreed that those rights should be transferred to Japan because of her services in the War. But China when she finally - nearly three years after the beginning of the War - went in at our advice, protested that because of that going in with the Allies, Shantung should revert to her. They had not seen it that way at the treaty of Versailles, although it is true, that President Wilson did his best to persuade Japan to generous renunciation. The best that he could do was that she finally, some day, would withdraw. China came to Washington with many demands, but the one above all others was the getting Japan entirely out of Shantung, the Shantung railroad back and the Kiaochow port. Peaceful nation as China is, she was relying largely in this case upon the United States forcing Japan, if necessary, to give up Shantung. One of the great victories of the Conference, in my judgment, is the fact that Japan did give up Shantung, the port and the railroad, without force. The most difficult piece of negotiations carried on in Washington by all odds was that which, through the wise judgment of Mr. Hughes and Mr. Balfour, was literally forced on the Japanese and Chinese delegations. (expand)

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I cannot but feel that the result of the Shantung affair is a conclusive proof of the extent to which the trend of conciliation and the trend of settlement by conference and agreement instead of by force has taken possession of the Japanese. It is an enormous triumph of the liberal party of Japan. This party has been slowly growing for some time. It has been strong enough, openly through its press and public speakers to condemn the violence of the Japanese military party in handling Corea, the injustice of the 21 demands that she made on China in 1915. These demands deserve all that has been said of them. They forced a corrupt and feeble government in Pekin to consent to a practical dividion with Japan of military, political and industrial supervision in China. That is, they made her a partner with the Chinese in running and developing the country. In Manchuria and in Mongolia they had used the rights they wrested from Pekin in open violation of our policy of the 'open door.' Remember, this was military Japan, the old Japan that had learned its lesson of getting on in the world through force from the Occident. But a new Japan has arisen. Its leader was at the Peace Conference - Prince Tokowaga. And it is this young liberal party upon which the hope of the Washington arrangement in regard to the East very largely depends. This

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party showed itself in Washington not only able to coöperate, willing to yield, but extraordinarily cautions and wise in regard to the Tokio government. It yielded nothing that it did not believe it could secure the consent of Tokio to. It knew very well that all that was attempted at Washington might be prevented if the military party in Japan was angered, made obstinate. From the start it worked with it rather than against it, with the result that China comes out of the Conference with Shantung, with the 21 demands either withdrawn or made impotent, with all the vexatious interferences and supervisions of various foreign governments so readjusted and in such process of withdrawal that it depends solely upon her now whether she is to be free henceforth of exploitation. China has an enormous problem of her own which she alone can solve, the problem of centralizing herself, stabilizing herself and carrying on her own development. What Washington has done is to put around her what you might call a ring of protection. Eight nations join hands in that ring, mutually pledging one another that they will not at any point take advantage of her. Others beside Japan in that ring have taken advantage in the past, have been ready at a signal to grab anything of hers that they could get their hands on. They are solemnly united now in the nine-Power pact signed in Washington,

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to give China her great chance. But I cannot help feeling that the great victory is Japan's. For hers is a great moral victory. By seeing that the course she was following was not the course of true progress for her people, she has made it possible to have peace in the Pacific. But we must not forget that it leaves here with a serious economic situation. If we had never forced her into the modern world she might have lived on in her way, but we wanted her to come into the world in order that we might sell the things we made to her, increase our market. But to buy she must earn, and to earn she must go out into other nations and secure raw materials, use her talents, find markets for what she makes; but on all sides she finds her progress stopped by racial prejudice, - one of the chief causes of the world's troubles and wars. Washington, however, has done much to soften that prejudice. Nothing but the growth of human feeling and of human good will can complete the work.

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