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## **VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER**

### **THE DELUSION OF MILITARISM**

THE NATIONS CALLED AGAINST THEIR WILL TO THE  
BATTLE OF THE GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY!

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"THE FUTURE historian of the first decade of the twentieth century will be puzzled. He will find that the world at the opening of the century was in an extraordinarily belligerent mood, and that the mood was well-nigh universal, dominating the New World as well as the Old, the Orient no less than the Occident. He will find that preparations for war, especially among nations which confessed allegiance to the Prince of Peace, were carried forward with tremendous energy and enthusiasm, and that the air was filled with prophetic voices, picturing national calamities and predicting bloody and world-embracing conflicts. *'We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed.'*

"Alongside of this fact he will find another fact no less conspicuous and universal, that everybody of importance [R4412 : page 179] in the early years of the twentieth century was an ardent champion of peace. He will find incontestable evidence that the King of England was one of the truest friends of peace who ever sat on the English throne, that the German Emperor proclaimed repeatedly that the cause of peace was ever dear to his heart, that the President of the United States was so effective as a peacemaker that he won a prize for ending a mighty war, that the Czar of Russia was so zealous in his devotion to peace that he called the nations to meet in solemn council to consider measures for ushering in an era of universal amity and good will, and that the President of France, the King

of Italy and the Mikado of Japan were not a whit behind their royal brethren in offering sacrifices on the altar of the Goddess of Peace. A crowd of royal peacemakers in a world surcharged with thoughts and threats of war, a band of lovers strolling down an avenue which they themselves had lined with lyddite shells and twelve-inch guns, this will cause our historian to rub his eyes. *The conflicting principles of the dawning Age of Peace and the declining Age of Warfare are illustrated in this striking contrast of Peace and War talk.*

"In his investigations he will find that the world's royal counselors and leading statesmen were also, without exception, wholeheartedly devoted to the cause of conciliation. He will read with admiration the speeches of Prince Bulow, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. H. H. Asquith, Mr. John Hay, and Mr. Elihu Root, and will be compelled to confess that the three leading nations of our Western world never in the entire course of their history had statesmen more pacific than these in temper, or more eloquent in their advocacy of the cause of international good will. A galaxy of peace-loving statesmen under a sky black with the thunder-clouds of war, this is certain to bewilder our historian.

"His perplexity will become no less when he considers the incontrovertible proofs that never since time began were the masses of men so peaceably inclined as in just this turbulent and war-rumor-tormented twentieth century. He will find that science and commerce and religion had cooperated in bringing the nations together; that the wage-earners in all the European countries had begun to speak of one another as brothers, and that the growing spirit of fraternity and cooperation had expressed itself in such organizations as the Interparliamentary Union, with a membership of twenty-five hundred legislators and statesmen, and various other societies and leagues of scholars and merchants and lawyers and jurists. He will find delegations

paying friendly visits to neighboring countries, and will read, dumbfounded, what the English and German papers were saying about invasions, and the need of increased armaments, at the very time that twenty thousand Germans in Berlin were applauding to the echo the friendly greetings of a company of English visitors. And he will be still more nonplussed when he reads that, while ten thousand boys and girls in Tokio were singing loving greetings to our naval officers, there were men in the United States rushing from city to city urging the people to prepare for an American-Japanese war. It will seem inexplicable to our historian that when peace and arbitration and conciliation societies were multiplying in every land, and when men seemed to hate war with an abhorrence never known in any preceding era, there should be a deluge of war-talk flowing like an infernal tide across the world.

"His bewilderment, however, will reach its climax when he discovers that it was after the establishment of an international court that all the nations voted to increase their armaments. Everybody conceded that it was better to settle international disputes by reason rather than by force, but as soon as the legal machinery was created, by means of which the swords could be dispensed with, there was a fresh fury to perfect at once all the instruments of destruction. After each new peace conference there was a fresh cry for more guns. Our historian will read with gladness the records of the Hague Conference and of the laying of the foundation of a periodic Congress of Nations, and of a permanent High Court. He will note the neutralization of Switzerland, Belgium and Norway; the compact entered into by the countries bordering on the North Sea, to respect one another's territorial rights forever; the agreement of the same sort solemnly ratified by all the countries bordering on the Baltic; the signing of more than sixty arbitration treaties twelve of these by the Senate of the United States; the creation of an International Bureau of American Republics, embracing twenty-one nations;

the establishment of a Central American High Court; the elaboration and perfection of legal instruments looking toward the parliament of man, the federation of the world.

"He will note also that while these splendid achievements of the peace spirit were finding a habitation and a name, the nations were thrilled as never before by [R4412 : page 180] dismal forebodings, and the world was darkened by whispers of death and destruction. While the Palace of Peace at The Hague was building, nations hailed the advent of the airship as a glorious invention, because of the service it could render to the cause of war. This unprecedented growth of peace sentiment, accompanied by a constant increase of jealousy and suspicion, of fear and panic, among the nations of the earth, will set our historian to work to ascertain the meaning of this strange phenomenon, the most singular perhaps to be met with in the entire history of the world. *The winding up of the age and the destruction of Satan's kingdom, to make way for the Prince of Peace.*

"It will not take him long to discover that the fountains from which there flowed these dark and swollen streams of war rumor were all located within the military and naval encampments. It was the experts of the army and navy who were always shivering at some new peril, and painting sombre pictures of what would happen in case new regiments were not added to the army and additional battleships were not voted for the fleet. It was Lord Roberts, for instance, who discovered how easily England could be overrun by a German army; and it was General Kuropatkin who had discernment to see that the Russo-Japanese war was certain to break out again. The historian will note that the magazine essays on "Perils" were written for the most part by military experts, and that the newspaper scare-articles were the productions of young men who believed what the military experts had told them. Many naval officers, active and retired,

could not make an after-dinner speech without casting over their hearers the shadow of some impending conflict.

### **A HEATHEN PRINCIPLE SATAN'S DELUSION AS AN ANGEL OF LIGHT**

"It was in this way that legislative bodies came to think that possibly the country was really in danger; and looking round for a ground on which to justify new expenditures for war material, they seized upon an *ancient pagan maxim – furnished by the military experts – 'If you wish peace, prepare for war.'* The old adage, once enthroned, worked with the energy of a god. The love of war had largely passed away. The illusion which for ages it had created in the minds of millions had lost its spell. Men had come to see that war is butchery, savagery, murder, hell. They believed in reason. Peace was seen to be the one supreme blessing for the world, but to preserve the peace it was necessary to prepare for war. This lay at the centre of the policy of the twentieth century. No guns were asked for to kill men with – guns were mounted as safeguards of the peace. No battleships were launched to fight with – they were preservers of the peace. Colossal armies and gigantic navies were exhibited as a nation's ornaments – beautiful tokens of its love of peace. And following thus the Angel of Peace, the nations increased their armaments until they spent upon them over two billions of dollars every year, and had amassed national debts aggregating thirty-five billions. The expenditure crushed the poorest of the nations and crippled the richest of them, but the burden was gladly borne because it was a sacrifice for the cause of peace. It was a pathetic and thrilling testimony of the human heart's hatred of war and longing for peace, when the nations became willing to bankrupt themselves in the effort to keep from fighting.

## THE NATION'S BLINDLY SEEKING PEACE BY THE ADVERSARY'S METHODS AND ADVICE

"But at this point our historian will begin to ask whether there might have been any relation between the multiplication of the instruments of slaughter and the constant rise of the tide of war talk and war feeling. He will probably suspect that the mere presence of the shining apparatus of death may have kindled in men's hearts feelings of jealousy and distrust, and created panics which even Hague Conferences and peaceful-minded rulers and counselors could not possibly allay. When he finds that it was only men who lived all their life with guns who were haunted by horrible visions and kept dreaming hideous dreams, and that the larger the armament the more was a nation harassed by fears of invasion and possible annihilation, he will propound to himself these questions: Was it all *a great delusion in the last day*, the notion that vast military and naval establishments are a safeguard of the peace?

"Was it a form of national lunacy, this frenzied out-pouring of national treasure for the engines of destruction? Was it an hallucination, this feverish conviction that only by guns can a nation's dignity be symbolized, and her place in the world's life and action be honorably maintained?

"These are questions which our descendants are certain to ponder, and why should not we face them now? If this preparing for war in order to keep the peace is indeed a delusion, the sooner we find it out the better, **[R4413 : page 180]** for it is the costliest of all obsessions by which humanity has ever been swayed and mastered. There are multiplying developments which are leading thoughtful observers to suspect that this pre-Christian maxim is a piece of antiquated wisdom, and that the desire to establish peace in our modern world by multiplying and brandishing the instruments of war is a product of mental aberration. Certainly

there are indications pointing in this direction. The world's brain may possibly have become unbalanced by a bacillus carried in the folds of a heathen adage. The most virulent and devastating disease now raging on the earth is militarism.

"The militarist of our day betrays certain symptoms with which the student of pathology is not altogether unfamiliar. There are *demon suggestions* which obtain so firm a grip upon the mind that it is difficult to banish them. For example, a man who has the impression that he is being tracked by a vindictive and relentless foe is not going to sit down and quietly listen to an argument the aim of which is to prove that no such enemy exists and that *the sounds which have caused the panic are the footfalls of an approaching friend*.

## **THE APPROACH OF JESUS AND HIS KINGDOM**

"The militarist will listen to no man who attempts to prove that his 'perils' are creations of the brain. Indeed, he is exceedingly impatient under contradiction; and, here again, he is like all victims of hallucinations. To deny his assumptions or to question his conclusions, is to him both blasphemy and treason, a sort of profanity and imbecility worthy of contempt and scorn. He alone stands on foundations which cannot be shaken, and other men, not possessing his inside information, or technical training for dealing with such questions, are living in a fool's paradise. The ferocity with which he attacks all who dare oppose him is the fury of a man whose brain is abnormally excited.

## **THE NATIONS DRUNKEN**

"Recklessness of consequences is a trait which physicians usually look for in certain types of mental disorder, and here again the militarist presents the symptoms of a man who is sick. What cares he for consequences? The naval experts of Germany are dragging the German Empire ever deeper into debt,

unabashed by the ominous mutterings of a coming storm. The naval experts of England go right on launching Dreadnoughts, while the number of British paupers grows larger with the years, and all British problems become increasingly baffling and alarming. The naval experts of Russia plan for a new billion-dollar navy, notwithstanding Russia's national debt is four and one-quarter billion dollars, and to pay her current expenses she is compelled to borrow seventy-five million dollars every year. With millions of her people on the verge of starvation, and beggars swarming through the streets of her cities and round the stations of her railways, the naval experts go on asking new appropriations for guns.

"The terror of a patient who is suffering from mental derangement is often pathetic. Surround him with granite **[R4413 : page 181]** walls, ten in number, and every wall ten feet thick, and he will still insist that he is unprotected. So it is with the militarist. No nation has ever yet voted appropriations sufficient to quiet his uneasy heart. England's formula of naval strength has for some time been: The British navy in capital ships must equal the next two strongest navies, plus ten per cent. But notwithstanding the British navy is today in battleships and cruisers and torpedo boats almost equal to the next three strongest navies, never has England's security been so precarious, according to her greatest military experts, as today. It has been discovered at the eleventh hour that her mighty navy is no safeguard at all, unless backed up by a citizen army of at least a million men.

"It was once the aim to protect England against probably combinations against her. The ambition now is to protect her against all possible combinations. In the words of a high authority in the British army, she must protect herself not only against the dangers she has any reason to expect, but also against those which nobody expects.



## TIME OF REVOLUTION AND TROUBLE

"Like many another fever, militarism grows by what it feeds on, and unless checked by heroic measures is *certain to burn the patient up*. Men in a delirium seldom have a sense of humor. The world is fearfully grim to them, and life a solemn and tragic thing. They express absurdities with a sober face, and make ridiculous assertions without a smile. It may be that *the militarists are in a sort of delirium*. At any rate, they publish articles entitled, "Armies the Real Promoters of Peace," without laughing aloud at the grotesqueness of what they are doing. *Bereft of reason are the nations by Satan's ingenious and terrible final beclouding of the minds of men.*

"The militarist is comic in his seriousness. He says that if you want to keep the peace you must prepare for war, and yet he knows that where men prepare for war by carrying bowie knives, peace is a thing unheard of, and that where every man is armed with a revolver, the list of homicides is longest. He declares his belief in kindly feelings and gentle manners, and proceeds at once to prove that a nation ought to make itself look as ferocious as possible. In order to induce nations to be gentlemen, he would have them all imitate the habits of rowdies. To many persons this seems ludicrous, to a militarist it is no joke. He is a champion of peace, but he wants to carry a gun. The man who paces up and down my front pavement with a gun on his shoulder may have peaceful sentiments, but he does not infuse peace into me. It does not help matters for him to shout out every few minutes, "I will not hurt you if you behave yourself," for I do not know his standard of good behavior, and the very sight of the gun keeps me in a state of chronic alarm. But the militarist says that, for promoting harmonious sentiments and peaceful emotions, there is nothing equal to an abundance of well-constructed guns.

"A droll man indeed is the militarist. What matters it what honeyed words the King of England and the German Kaiser interchange, so long as each nation hears constantly the launching by the other of a larger battleship? And even though Prince Bulow may say to Mr. Asquith a hundred times a week, "We mean no harm," and Mr. Asquith may shout back, "We are your friends," so long as London and Berlin are never beyond earshot of soldiers, who are practicing how to shoot to kill, just so long will England and Germany be flooded with the gossip of hatred, and thrown into hysteria by rumors of invasion and carnage.

### **THE WORLD GOING CRAZY**

"Like many other diseases, militarism is contagious. One nation can be infected by another until there is *an epidemic round the world*. A parade of battleships can kindle fires in the blood of even peaceful peoples, and increase naval appropriations in a dozen lands. *Is it possible, some one asks, for a world to become insane?* That a community can become crazy was proved by Salem, in the days of the witchcraft delusion; that a city can lose its head was demonstrated by London, at the time of the Gunpowder Plot; that a continent can become the victim of an hallucination was shown when Europe lost its desire to live, and waited for the end of the world in the year 1000. Why should it be counted incredible that many nations, bound together by steam and electricity, should fall under the spell of a delusion, and should act for a season like a man who has gone mad? But is it not true that the world has gone mad? The masses of men are sensible; but at present the nations are in the clutches of the militarists, and no way of escape has yet been discovered. The deliverance will come as soon as men begin to think and examine the sophistries with which militarism has flooded the world.

"Certain facts will surely, some day, burn themselves into the consciousness of all thinking men. The expensiveness of the armed peace is just beginning to catch the eye of legislators. The extravagance of the militarists will bring about their ruin. They cry for battleships at ten million dollars each, and Parliament or Congress votes them. But later on it is explained that battleships are worthless without cruisers, cruisers are worthless without torpedo boats, torpedo boats are worthless without torpedo-boat destroyers, all these are worthless without colliers, ammunition boats, hospital boats, repair boats; and these altogether are worthless without deeper harbors, longer docks, more spacious navy yards. And what are all these worth without officers and men, upon whose education millions of dollars have been lavished? When at last the navy has been fairly launched, the officials of the army come forward and demonstrate that a navy, after all, is worthless unless it is supported by a colossal land force. Thus are the *governments* led on, step by step, into a treacherous morass, in which they are at first entangled, *and finally overwhelmed*.

"All the great nations are today facing deficits, caused in every case by the military and naval experts. Into what a tangle the finances of Russia and Japan have been brought by militarists is known to everybody. Germany has, in a single generation, increased her national debt from eighteen million dollars to more than one billion dollars. The German Minister of Finance looks wildly round in search of new sources of national income. Financial experts confess that France is approaching the limit of her sources of revenue. Her deficit is created by her [R4414 : page 181] army and navy. The British government is always seeking for new devices by means of which to fill a depleted treasury. Her Dreadnoughts keep her poor. Italy has for years staggered on the verge of bankruptcy because she carries an overgrown army on her back. Even our own rich republic faces this year a deficit of over a hundred million dollars, largely due

to the one hundred and thirty millions we are spending on our navy. Mr. Cortelyou has called our attention to the fact that while in thirty years we have increased our population by 85 per cent., and our wealth by 185 per cent., we have increased our national expenses by 400 per cent.

#### U. S. DEBT

|            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| Largest in | 1865 –             |
|            | \$2,680,647,869.74 |
| Smallest   | 1891 –             |
| since, in  | \$1,546,961,695.61 |
| Now        | 1909 –             |
|            | \$2,637,913,747.04 |

This year will probably exceed 1865, due to military expenses. The nation's wealth is \$116,000,000,000.

"It is within those thirty years that we have spent one billion dollars on our navy. And the end is not yet. The Secretary of the Navy has recently asked for twenty-seven additional vessels for the coming year, four of which are battleships at ten million dollars each, and he is frank to say that these twenty-seven are only a fraction of the vessels to be asked for later on. We have already, built or building, thirty-one first-class battleships, our navy ranking next to Great Britain, Germany standing third, France fourth, and Japan fifth: but never has the naval lobby at Washington been so voracious and so frantic for additional safeguards of the peace as today.

"The militarists are peace-at-any-price men. They are determined to have peace even at the risk of national **[R4414 : page 182]** bankruptcy. Everything good in Germany, Italy, Austria, England and Russia is held back by the confiscation of the proceeds of industry carried on for the support of the army and navy. In the United States the development of our resources

is checked by this same fatal policy. We have millions of acres of desert land to be irrigated, millions of acres of swamp land to be drained, thousands of miles of inland waterways to be improved, harbors to be deepened, canals to be dug, and forests to be safeguarded, and yet for all these works of cardinal importance we can afford only a pittance. We have not sufficient money to pay decent salaries to our United States judges, or to the men who represent us abroad. We have pests, implacable and terrible, like the gypsy moth, and plagues like tuberculosis, for whose extermination millions of money are needed at once.

"On every hand we are hampered and handicapped, because we are spending two-thirds of our enormous revenues on pensions for past wars, and on equipment for wars yet to come. The militarists begrudge every dollar that does not go into army or navy. They believe that all works of internal improvement ought to be paid for by the selling of bonds, even the purchase of sites for new post-offices being made possible by mortgaging the future. They never weary of talking of our enormous national wealth, and laugh at the niggardly mortals who do not believe in investing it in guns. Why should we not spend as great a proportion of our wealth on military equipment as the other nations of the world? This is their question, and the merchants and farmers will answer it some day.

"This delusion threatens to become as mischievous as it is expensive. Every increase in the American navy strengthens the militarists in London, Berlin, and Tokio. The difficulty of finding a reason for an American navy increases the mischief. Why should the United States have a colossal navy? No one outside the militarists can answer. Because there is no ascertainable reason for this un-American policy, the other American countries are becoming frightened. Brazil has just laid down an extravagant naval programme, for the proud Republic of the South cannot consent to lie at the mercy of the haughty

Republic of the North. The new departure of Brazil has bewitched Argentina from the vision which came to her before the statue of Christ, which she erected high up amid the Andes, and has fired her with a desire to rival in her battleships her ambitious military neighbor. We first of all have established militarism in the Western world, and are by our example dragging weaker nations into foolish and suicidal courses, checking indefinitely the development of two continents.

"Our influence goes still further. It sets Australia blazing, and shoves Japan into policies which she cannot afford. But we cannot harm foreign nations without working lasting injury on ourselves. The very battleships which recently kindled the enthusiasm of children in South America, Australia, and Japan, also stirred the hearts of American boys and girls along our Atlantic and Pacific seaboard, strengthening in them impulses and ideals of an Old World which struggled and suffered before Jesus came. It is children who receive the deepest impressions from pageants and celebrations, and who can measure the damage wrought upon the world by the parade of American battleships? Children cannot look upon symbols of brute force, extolled and exalted by their elders, without getting the impression that a nation's power is measured by the calibre of its guns, and that its influence is determined by the explosive force of its shells. A fleet of battleships gives a wrong impression of what America is, and conceals the secret which has made America great. Children do not know that we became a great world-power without the assistance of either army or navy, building ourselves up on everlasting principles by means of our schools and our churches. The down-pulling force of our naval pageant was not needed in a world already dragged down to low levels by the example of ancient nations, entangled by degrading traditions from which they are struggling to escape. The notion that this exhibition of battleships has added to our prestige among men whose opinion is worthy of consideration, or has

made the world love us better, is only another feature of the militarist delusion."

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[The foregoing was written by C. E. Jefferson and published by the American Association for International Conciliation. It is issued with the endorsement of the forty-eight Directors of said Association who are amongst the most prominent American citizens. The interspersed comments in bold-faced type are ours. – Editor].

## **CHURCH FEDERATION PROGRESSING**

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The national organization for church federation, which met in Philadelphia last December, and whose 450 delegates in a general way represented seventeen millions of Protestants, is slowly but surely moving.

The resolution of the national organization was that branches of the work should be established at Chicago, Atlanta and Denver, while the national headquarters should continue in New York. It was in harmony with these decisions that the Chicago branch was organized on May 6th. It appointed a district superintendent for its territory, with local advisory committees on Temperance, The Church and Modern Industry, Family Life, Sunday Observance, The Immigrant Problem, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, International Relations – to carry out locally just what the national committees propose shall be generally carried out. One of the committees will be expected to keep in close touch with labor, not merely along spiritual lines, but also in temporal matters. The proposition is that by thorough organization of the religious work in every large city of the United States, all denominational rivalry shall be eliminated, and everything adverse to Christianity or to the Federated Churches

shall be opposed. It will not be an organic union of the denominations, in which they would lose their individuality, but it will be a combination for advice and co-operation.

Thus we have the not unreasonable proposition. Who can tell the ultimate results of this federating? Its power will be felt in politics, and all the little denominations will be practically frozen out, and their people ostracized, if not persecuted. The result will be the loss of individuality in religious matters, and undoubtedly a great loss in spirituality.

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