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PROMOTE THE WORLD'S PEACE

[From editorial of *New York American*, Aug. 11, 1915.]

THE people of this nation are either in favor of peace, or they are not. If they are in favor of peace, they should be against war and against the supplying of arms to the nations engaged in war, when they know that those arms are to be used to increase the murder and destruction of that war. If the people of this country are *not* in favor of peace, then they should continue to supply arms to the murdering nations and make all the money they can out of the murder. But in that event [R5763 : page 270] they should stop prating about peace. If we cannot be conscientious let us, at least, be consistent. We should cease assuming a virtue which we do not possess, and go coldly and boldly out to acquire any blood money which may be "coming our way."

We have that right under international law, but have we that right under moral law?

We have that right under the law of nations, but have we that right under the law of God?

The Lord God has said, "Thou shalt not kill." Does that mean also, "Thou shalt not *help* to kill?"

If it is criminal to be a murderer, is it not just as criminal to be an accessory before the fact? In the case of two accomplices in murder, is he who murders for hate any worse than he who murders for profit?

These people of ours are sincerely devoted to "principle," and they do not care whether the operation of that principle embarrasses Germany and benefits England, or whether it embarrasses England and benefits Germany, as long as it is a just

and righteous principle. We are not partisan in our "principle," President Wilson. We are not pro-German or pro-British, Mr. President. We stand for abstract principle and for its concrete application in a neutral, impartial and absolutely just and righteous manner.

We speak thus directly to you, Mr. President, because we have the grateful testimony of your own words that you yourself view this matter as this newspaper views it. We find these words in your message upon the subject of Mexico, which you delivered to the Congress in August, 1913:

"I deem it my duty to exercise the authority conferred upon me by the law of March 14, 1912, to see to it that neither side of the struggle now going on in Mexico receive any assistance from this side of the border. *I shall follow the best practise of nations in the matter of neutrality by forbidding the exportation of arms and munitions of war of any kind from the United States* – a policy suggested by several interesting precedents, and certainly dictated by many manifest considerations of practical expediency. We cannot in the circumstances be the partisans of either party to the contest that now distracts Mexico, or constitute ourselves the virtual umpire between them."

It seems to us, Mr. President, that you could not possibly have better stated then, and could not possibly better state *now*, the high and solemn obligation of this country to "follow the best practise of nations in the matter of neutrality by forbidding the exportation of arms and munitions of war of any kind from the United States," not only to the Republic of Mexico but to any and to all republics, kingdoms and empires which are engaged in this dreadful and frightfully destructive war across the Atlantic.

Sir, is there any "manifest consideration of practical expediency," or any consideration of duty and of humanity which applies to the Mexican conflict that does not apply far more

weightily to this other vastly greater and more deadly and destructive European conflict?

The miserable plea that some Americans are making money out of this traffic can have no more weight with you, Mr. President, than it has with the millions of your fellow citizens who abhor blood money. The suggestion that we should sell arms and munitions of war in order to make up for the gigantic losses inflicted upon our peaceful, legitimate commerce by Great Britain doubtless meets with the same disapproval from you, Mr. President, that it meets from all self-respecting American men and women. Nor do we think that you, Mr. President, attach any importance to the preposterous argument that it would be unnatural for us to discontinue the sale of arms to the warring nations, since one side could not perhaps carry on the war many more months without a steady supply of arms and munitions from this country.

NEUTRALITY, as you, of course, well know, Mr. President, DOES NOT ACTIVELY AID either belligerent to overcome the other, in any war.

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