

REVIEW

The Problem of War:

We have read recently in the daily press of the New National Defence Bill which was passed with such an overwhelming majority in the French Chamber, and which is built on a method and scale such as never were contemplated before by any nation in history. We need not speak of other countries large and small. Enough if we state the familiar truth that, including Russia, Japan and the United States, not only are there more soldiers in Europe and Asia than before the Great War, not only is their death dealing ability enhanced in a still higher proportion by machine guns and other devices, but air fleets are added to armies and navies. There must be twice or thrice the killing power that existed in the world at the peace time of 1914, and in case of conflict that comparison would soon be surpassed by the fully organized national systems for mutual destruction.

There is a universal aspiration to peace except on the part of some determined professional minorities and of world revolutionaries, who imagine that the New Atlantis of Communism can only arise from a sea of blood. But nowhere is there a real sense of security. Nowhere dare any people run the risk of final destruction through lack of adequate defense against the new horrors of a new kind of war. The lessons of the last invasion, when a large part of her soil was held and ravaged by a foreign army for more than four years, have burned themselves into the soul of France. Her people feel that, as the world stands, and as the future promises, they can take no chances. Accordingly, France is face to face with the full logic of the argument. The New Bill for National Defence provides for the preparation and mobilisation of the whole country. Every man and woman and every youth of either sex capable of any kind of war work is to be embodied in case of another life and death struggle.

This is not done in the spirit of Chauvinism. The mind of her people is fixed on defence. She is determined to have security one way or another, and to provide as methodically for her frontier, including Alsace-Lorraine, as she did after 1871. This is a solemn and salutary warning. It compels the world to face squarely the alter-

natives before it. These are, to our mind, the disarmament of mind and heart or the inevitable mass massacre of the civil population.

All the world nations are trying to safeguard themselves against future wars. What wars? What for? There are the dangers in Asia due in a large part to European complications there. There is Moscow and Communist propaganda. Then there is, perhaps at the root of things, the cause of the world's greatest anxiety. We mean Britain and France and their relations with Germany. The moral problem is precisely what it was in 1914. We have not the space nor the time to work out our argument. We can only place a few salient points to the fore. But we believe that, with courage, patience and good will, a durable compromise is possible, nay, far more probable than the only real alternative—a struggle of mutual extermination.

The Poison Gas of Peace:

To-day we may ask ourselves the question:—

What are the effects of Bolshevism on world peace and world stability?

It is a question that no civilized country can afford to ignore or shirk or minimize. It is a movement felt literally "from China to Peru" and beyond. Communist incitement not only works to spread its anarchy throughout Asia, but it is felt as well in Latin America and in Australia no less than in the British Labor Party. Moscow seems obsessed and oppressed by visions and nightmares of war. They want neither peace nor liberty on what they call a bourgeois basis. Then, incendiary extremists dream of social wars and national wars in the interests of world revolution.

Communism, as doctrine expressed by the world revolutionaries, stands in direct opposition to Locarno, the new and progressive spirit of the Empire, to peaceful reconstruction in China. Its exponents would bring about, not only another world war, but a period of world chaos, if they thought the Communist world revolution would come out of it at the end.

We must remember that not only international peace is in question. Everywhere the attempt to promote Communism means civil war and can mean nothing else. Everywhere it means the extinction of civil liberty. Out-

side Russia where a Red Tyranny has established itself—it is doomed to fall—the Communist movement, as inspired by the efforts and examples of the Lenin-Bakunin school, makes for the creation of reactionary regimes, for the disintegration of the moderate Labor movements. In short, no wider undermining influence against constructive civilization has ever been known in the world.

Moscow has been definitely guilty of acute arson in foreign politics, with specific incendiarism seeking to burn down Western, and especially British, interests in China, with the hope that the conflagration started there would spread further and further. They attempted to place before Britain the alternative of unexampled humiliation, involving abject and unconditional surrender of existing rights, or of a bloody collision with the Chinese national forces. That is why the solution in China came within a hair's breadth of disaster, and remains grave to this hour. The propaganda of British imperialism and capitalism was unceasingly preached. We have been witnesses to the very worst attack ever made by one country against another while nominal peace existed between them.

Propaganda of this kind is the poison gas of peace. Such is of necessity fatal to the spirit and methods of real peace. But forces will rise within Russia to destroy the theorists and muddling idealogues of the world revolution. That will be their affair. Britain demands, and demands rightly, non-interference. She carried patience nigh to the limit in the face of the provocation of this disturber of the peace.

World revolution never can be attempted except through world war, complicated by universal civil war; and the world reaction is what would triumph even then. The whole earth is getting tired of disturbers. If this playing with world war and social war continues, and the methods used in China are spread, the common cry of civilization must ultimately be; "Ecrasez l'infame!" But we look to see the baloon of world revolution burst from its latest distention rather than that should be necessary.

—J. R. H. F.

The drying up of a single tear has more of honest fame than shedding seas of gore.—*Byron*.