

# War Is The Enemy

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## 1. The Way Of Nonviolence

This pamphlet is an attempt to state the underlying philosophy of those persons who in the face of the present world situation hold to the way of nonviolence; its purpose is explanation and clarification rather than argument. It is a prerequisite of any fruitful thought and discussion in such a crisis as the present that we should think of each other, pacifists and non-pacifists, as fellow-searchers for truth, not as intellectual adversaries. In each of the diverse positions which men hold there will be something that is valid, that represents an effort to respond to the situation, a fidelity to the truth as they see it. Recognizing this fact is a way of achieving at-one-ment with our fellows.

At-one-ment, however, must not be confused with appeasement. The truth is often hard and harsh. There is sometimes a tendency, therefore, to refrain from stating issues sharply and clearly, to gloss over differences, perhaps on the pretext that "our agreements are so much greater than our differences after all" and that bringing out and facing the issues "does not make for reconciliation." Similarly we often hear it said that in the church or religious meeting or elsewhere "controversial issues" ought not to be discussed.

Grave dangers may lurk behind these plausible sayings. No reconciliation — within a single human soul, between man and wife, in a family, an industry, a nation, or between nations — was ever built on a lie or a half-truth. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"; conversely, aught but the truth leads to slavery and

strife. Have we not all experienced this many times? What a healing coolness and balm come into any situation the moment nobody is pretending any more, nobody is holding anything back. Even though it be a very difficult situation, the poison has been sucked out of it, when those involved "speak their minds freely."

For the individual, salvation, reconciliation with God, begins with the bitter experience of facing the truth about himself, shedding all pretension and evasion, and crying out, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." In our relations with one another, although it ill becomes us to try to beat our version of the truth into our neighbor's brain with arguments, we owe it to him to bear faithful witness to the truth as we see it, holding nothing back and in nought equivocating. And any parent knows that making oneself agreeable to a child is not the same as loving him.

Sometimes behind our reticences, there is a subtle snobbishness, a feeling of "why bother to discuss with him or tell him what I think: he wouldn't understand anyway." There is no greater honor a man can pay his fellows, no greater service he can render them, than to share with them such truth as has been vouchsafed to him. And as for the proposal to avoid "controversial issues," usually it amounts to a counsel of despair, for if an issue is a real one there are bound to be differences of opinion; it is bound to be "controversial."

Much the same observations apply to many of the proposals that a moratorium be declared on the discussion of certain matters for a certain time, for example for the duration of the war, and that during this period pacifists should devote themselves exclusively to "works of mercy and healing." That pacifists should be not mere talkers, but practical friends and helpers, and especially in wartime, can hardly be too often or too emphatically stated. We have no desire to obstruct our fellow-citizens in the performance

of what they regard as their patriotic duty. "There is a time for silence" and probably many of us talk too much. We are not all called to perform the same tasks in the same way. Nor must we press impatiently for immediate results like the child who sows his seeds one day and digs them up the next to see if they are sprouting. Having given witness to the truth as best we can, we must be content to let it make its own way in the minds and hearts of men.

But the idea that in wartime there might be such a thing as a general moratorium on the preaching of our philosophy and gospel, including their application to the immediate concrete situation, and that this would somehow make for reconciliation, seems to me unsound. Let us suppose that the religious pacifist analysis of war, of its effects, of its evils, is suspended. Obviously that does not mean that people have no ideas presented to them, that no analysis of current developments is attempted. It will mean that what the religious pacifist regards as false and dangerous ideas are presented, but no criticism and no alternatives. Why should we regard such conduct as democratic, or as loyalty on our part to our fellows? We hope that some day men will experience a great revulsion against war, will lay down their arms, and cease to trust those who advocate or acquiesce in the method of war. If in that hour we try to tell them of a better way will they not ask, "Why did you keep still while we were engaged in senseless slaughter? And why should we have any special confidence in you who took pains to keep your counsel until everybody agreed with you?"

Surely the time to witness against tragic, self-righteous distortion of the truth is at the moment when it is widely proclaimed and believed. Moreover, silence and passivity in the presence of falsehood, injustice and oppression, and the waging of war, is likely to mean that for a momentary and delusive sense of unity with our "own

folk” we pay in the coin of alienation from the victims of injustice and from God’s children on the other side of the border. And the reconciliation with our own people is certain to be temporary and unreal; we have not really done them a service, when, for example, by our silence we permit the impression to stand that we acquiesce in the version of the Japanese mentality and character which prevails in so many American circles today. For what men need finally is not that other men should agree with their ideas or be indulgent toward them. What they need to save them from “the hell of fire” is to be able to believe in themselves, in truth, in an inexorable moral order, in the God of Love. The only thing that has ever enabled men so to believe is the sight of men who were true to themselves, who refused to blunt “the Word of God which is a two-edged sword,” who could “hate” father, mother, wife, child, their own life, for God’s sake. These men, though in their life they may have been rejected and crucified, have always been the great reconcilers, the centers around which human societies were built.

Often it is true we cannot speak or act where conflict rages and evil is being done, because we do not love enough. We know that our eye is not single, that we are not disinterested, that we desire the satisfaction of setting somebody right rather than the right itself. It is true that while we are in this condition we cannot speak, or that if we do, we merely bungle or destroy; our only course, then, is to change our condition.

The reconciliation which whether we be pacifists or non-pacifists must take place first of all in our own minds and spirits is promoted when we try to think through each problem and each discussion with our fellows with something of that innocence and freshness and child-likeness and humility which Jesus taught is the gateway to truth and felicity. In other words, in each moment we

seek to divest ourselves of any notion that our knowledge is sufficient and final; of prejudices; of inappropriate emotions. The moment we find resistance and resentment against an idea stiffening our mental attitude, stridency creeping into our voices, we should examine ourselves. It will be the signal that there is something in that very idea of which we have not yet been willing fully to take account. Our highly emotional “certainty” that it is palpably absurd will really mean that deep down we are not sure of our own position.

Our unwillingness to be reconciled to truth, which is a manifestation of God, to accept it in its fullness and with our whole mind (“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind”) is one of the fundamental causes of division in life, of the divided self, the divided human family. On the other hand, almost nothing can do so much to increase our spiritual health and power, our effectiveness in the work of reconciliation, as to discipline ourselves to discern and renounce our prejudices. When we think of our insights as having finality, as something to be possessed and defended, we set up a wall against God who is the Source of Light and whom we can receive only if we become infinitely receptive like little children.<sup>1</sup>

Now in the degree that we have divested ourselves of inner resistance to the truth and have developed a readiness to receive it from whatever source, we are also enabled to “speak the truth — in love.” We can hope that our fellows may see and come to welcome the light that we have. And we can let our testimony go forth, let our light shine, and not, out of a secret cowardice or false modesty which is also “self-propitiation” and self-indulgence, put our light “under a bushel, but on a stand so that it may shine to all that are in the house.”

It does not, however, follow that disinterested love invariably wins an immediate and predictable victory. That

has not, alas, been the Eternal Father's experience with us; and in this as in other respects, "the servant is not above his Master." There is no reconciliation through the medium of any partial love, but only through a love that is prepared to pay the final price, which lasts unto and through death. The final price is not always required; often it is, and always the readiness to pay must be clearly demonstrated.

Certainly until individuals and nations are prepared, if need be, to sacrifice as much in practicing reconciliation and non-violence as they sacrifice in the pursuit of war, we cannot reasonably expect an end of wars. It is a simple fact, as well established as any in history, that human enmities are healed and human communities are built through the process of costing, sacrificial love. "The apostle Paul spoke, not of a remote theological dogma but of this demonstrable truth when he wrote to the Ephesians: "Ye that once were far off are made nigh *in the blood of Christ.*" He who would save men and heal strife must always first unite in himself both reconciliation and a new order. He must "create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace" and reconciling both in one body unto God through the cross, *having slain the enmity thereby.*" To what as yet uncalculated sacrifice in prayer, in giving, in witnessing, in renunciation of war, in service to human need, are we called in order that in us the world's enmity may be slain!

## 2. The Non-Pacifist Position

From this vantage point, then, let us consider for a moment the problems confronting our own nation and all the world's peoples in this grim hour. Many sincere persons are saying: "We are faced with a terrible dilemma, a choice of diabolical evils. We know what it means to resort to war, war under modern conditions and with modern weapons, war on the planetary scale which is required to stop Hitler

and the other aggressors. We recognize that we share to a large extent in responsibility for things having come to their present pass. But as things stand now, we cannot believe that anything except decisive defeat in war can stop the sweep of the utterly inhuman, brutal dictatorships. The possibility of a hegemony of Nazi might and the Nazi philosophy of life over the world, over our own children, for a generation, many generations, possibly centuries, seems to us an evil so monstrous that it is better to resort to war on the chance that we may prevent it than to stand aside from the conflict. We have no illusions about war or about our own superior virtues; therefore we believe that we can fight without bitterness and hate. If, by the grace of God, we win, we shall make a wiser, more Christian use of our victory than we made the last time. We believe the English-speaking world has learned a bitter lesson as a result of the last war and of the peace which we lost following that war. We shall not make those mistakes again.”

It would require a whole book even to begin to deal adequately with all the problems here presented. We must therefore here confine ourselves to a brief statement of what seem to us the basic elements in the religious pacifist criticism of this position. And we take the points made in the preceding paragraph in reverse order so as to come to the most fundamental issue last.

In the first place, then, we believe that it is a dangerous delusion to think that if the United Nations win, we shall make a much better use of our opportunity than we did the last time. The argument assumes that the course followed after the last war and until the outbreak of the present war was a major factor in bringing on the latter. Yet since the outbreak of that war in 1939, the United States has followed step for step a course similar to that followed in 1914-1917. The result is that we are now again completely involved in total world-wide war. Every indication

seems to point to our following the same familiar pattern from this point on, i.e., we aim at a decisive military victory, indeed one which will cripple our national enemies much more completely and give us a much greater relative superiority than the last time. But we tell ourselves that, having arrived with fatal precision at that point, a miracle will happen. The momentum acquired in the terrific plunge downhill into which the nations are pouring all their energies, will evaporate as by magic. We shall suddenly get off this road and strike out boldly in another direction. What reason have we to believe this? Surely we have a right to ask for concrete evidence.

When we examine that concrete evidence, I think we find either that it is very shaky or that it points in quite the opposite direction. For example, men cite the better treatment of conscientious objectors and the extent to which civil liberties are preserved in Britain and the United States. But it cannot be denied that these things occur within a general context of increasing concentration of power in the executive, regimentation of the entire population, and the gearing of all energies to war purposes, and that it is these developments that are decisive. Furthermore, the period after a great war is always one of catastrophic spiritual let-down; and we see no good reason for supposing that it can be otherwise this time.

Will those who write the peace this time, whoever they are, have more favorable conditions with which to work than Wilson and Lloyd-George had? To ask the question is to answer it in the negative, though it is safe to say that few have even tried to imagine and none can really visualize conditions after many more months or years of war and bloodletting; after the subjugated peoples of Europe turn upon the Germans and wreak vengeance upon them (avowedly a part of Allied strategy); after pestilence, famine, social chaos have done their work. If the job of policing the

situation proved too much after the last war and ended in the debacles of 1929 and 1939, what reason to expect a different result now?

Furthermore, responsible leaders quite frankly pitch their objectives much lower than did the statesmen of the last war and of the "peace." Their frankness may be to their credit, but we cannot safely discount the significance of their announced aims. So able and temperate an expert in international affairs as John Foster Dulles has said of the Atlantic Charter: "In its present form, it falls far short of the conceptions of President Wilson, and *short even of their expression in the Treaty of Versailles.*" During the last war we said that we must disarm Germany and then we too must promptly disarm, since not to do so could only mean war. This time our statesmen frankly say that we do not think in terms of no more war following the present, that we must disarm "the aggressors" even more completely than before, "Make it impossible for them to raise their heads ever again," while we remain "suitably protected." This can only mean American-British military domination of the earth. It seems to us to require a grave arrogance or a great simplicity to suppose that in the context of the postwar situation this can spell aught but disaster for us and for mankind. Altogether the prospect for a "better peace" is scarcely so promising as to constitute a convincing reason for participation in war.

A word, in the second place, about the contention that war can be waged without hate and bitterness. People come back from England and report that they have not encountered a single trace of these emotions. It may be that our penchant for seeing and hearing what we want to see and hear plays a part here. Certainly expressions calculated to stir up hate and contempt for a people are not absent from Mr. Churchill's references to Germans. Dr. Arthur Salter, M.P., stated in the House of Commons recently:

“Open retaliation and revenge are now being advocated in the highest quarters. No apologies are being offered for the indiscriminate bombing of women and children. Now we have photographs showing whole streets of working-class houses being blown sky-high by our bombs.” It is evident that hatred for the Japanese has been fairly general in the United States in recent weeks. The training in our military forces is not based on the theory that teaching our young men to love their enemies is the best way to make good soldiers of them.

If it is true that people do all that modern warfare requires without being aware of any emotions of hate and anger, feeling quite composed and virtuous and “sweet,” it is evident that we are faced with a grave psychological and moral problem. This is not the first time that such a phenomenon has been witnessed. The men who tortured and killed the victims of the Inquisition did so “for the greater glory of God” and out of compassion, in order to save the souls of those victims! The amazing and dangerous situation into which we may now be moving was suggested by the columnist who recently urged that we need not grow hysterical with hate as we did in the last war, and went on to say that it might become a military necessity to blot out whole Japanese cities by bombing from the air, but that we should do that calmly and objectively with no poison of hate in our hearts.

But what has happened here? As Prof. Harper Brown of the Wellesley faculty pointed out in a recent discussion, a complete splitting of personality has taken place. There is no relationship between what men feel and what they do. If this process continues there will be no limit to the deeds we may perform, the havoc that may be wrought, while all the time we experience no inner turmoil, feel quite composed, even congratulate ourselves on the fact that we do not experience the emotions which in ordinary mortals

accompany the performance of acts of destruction, deceit and killing. Under other circumstances this would be regarded as an advanced form of insanity. Perhaps the ordinary mortal who is not free from rages and hate when performing the acts of a soldier is, after all, a better integrated personality and nearer to a state of grace, whether from the standpoint of the psychologist or of the gospel. And what will be the personal and the social reactions as the divorce between inner state and outward act becomes more complete — and in that hour of awakening and return to reality when men contemplate with unveiled eyes what they have done “for the greater glory of God” and in “love” for their enemies?

We come thus to the most crucial question. Men of goodwill recognize how terrible is the dilemma, but choose war because, in spite of everything, it seems the only way to prevent the establishment of a diabolical, demonic tyranny over all men, the only chance to build a decent world again. Here we are face to face with the problem of calculating the consequences of our decisions and actions in complex social situations; and at this point all of us, pacifists and non-pacifists alike, suffer from the limitation that we are human and fallible and can see only a short distance ahead and calculate only a few of the consequences of our decisions, and these only imperfectly. Political campaigns and wars and treaty-making seldom are what they appear to be or accomplish what the actors in them professedly or actually seek to accomplish. If, therefore, non-pacifist friends assert that I may not be fully aware of the consequences of my refusal to support the United States government in war, I readily agree that this is so. But neither can they calculate the consequences of their actions; certain it is that in helping to release the terrible forces of modern warfare, they release forces over which they have no control and the consequences of which, to

judge by the experience of the last war, they may live to regret bitterly.

Are we then utterly without guide and compass in this wilderness? Are we condemned to mere guesswork? Aldous Huxley has given an answer to that question in his remarkable recent book, **Grey Eminence**: "It is by no means impossible to foresee, in the light of past historical experience, the sort of consequences that are likely, in a general way, to follow certain sorts of acts. Thus, from the records of past experience, it seems sufficiently clear that the consequences attendant on a course of action involving large-scale war, violent revolution, unrestrained tyranny and persecution are likely to be bad."

Another way to put the answer would be to point out that in the more restricted realm of personal relationships we are guided by our moral codes and moral impulses. We do not deceive, steal, assault, blackmail, even though it looks as if the immediate consequences in a specific situation might be favorable. Whether we think of moral codes and impulses as expressions of an objective moral order or simply as representing what the race has by experience found to be good in the long run, does not in this connection make any important difference. The point is that in a real sense conscience, the Inner Light, is the only guide among the complexities of life. What we know surely, and the only thing we can know, is that evil cannot produce good, violence can produce only violence, love is forever the only power that can conquer evil and establish good on earth.

Here I bear witness for a moment out of personal experience. In the days of the last war I was a Christian pacifist. Like most of the other people in the small pacifist group of that time, I was ill-informed about economics and politics, utterly unsophisticated. Later as a result largely of experiences in the labor and radical movement, I abandoned

my religion and my pacifism, arriving eventually at an out-and-out Marxist-Leninist position. When I hear my non-pacifist friends, including many who consider themselves conservative and substantial citizens, talking about “choice between evils” and the need of being “realistic,” when I hear them say that we must first by violence get the situation in hand and then, and only then, can we set about building a brave new world; I can close my eyes and feel that I am hearing the Communists who for a time converted me to Leninism!

Two things emerged out of that experience which greatly influence my outlook today. In the first place, the pacifists of the last war, ill-informed and unsophisticated though we were, somehow sensed what the war was really about, sensed the unreliability of the war propaganda, sensed what would come after the war. Later, when I had ceased to be a pacifist, I became much better informed. But presently I found that although I was much more experienced in analyzing what lay just ahead and taking the next step, my grasp of the total development in my own life and in the world became more and more fumbling; I drifted into a complete opportunism which brought outward confusion and inner disintegration. The only explanation I have for this experience is that the law that evil can be overcome only by its opposite, i.e., by a dynamic, sacrificial goodness, is so basic in the structure of the universe, so central for an understanding of life and history, that if one stands at that center one sees things in clear focus. He may not know much, but that much he will see clearly. Contrariwise, if one moves away from that center, he may know and see vastly more, but it will all be out of focus, blurred.

In the second place, Lenin taught me that if you are going to be “realistic,” you must be thoroughly realistic. If the success of your movement may depend on violence

applied effectively at the right moment, then it is criminal to prepare “too little and too late.” You must accustom your people to the idea of violence, you must acquire weapons. Since in war the offensive may be the best defense, you must be ready for that too. From this experience I became convinced that in spite of all the brains, the vast energies, the titanic sacrifices that went into the revolutionary movement, the effort to establish democracy by dictatorship, brotherhood by terrorism and espionage, fullness of life by war and violence, left you with dictatorship, terrorism and strife, not with the fair goals of which men had dreamed.

The end could not be divorced from the means; the means thwarted and corrupted the idealistic end. All the leading early revolutionists in Russia except Lenin and Stalin were liquidated by assassination or exile; no less than three million peasants were destroyed in the forcible collectivization of agriculture, and the Russians are so far from having achieved the classless society of which ancient seers and modern revolutionists and proletarians dreamed that an analysis of statistics published in the Soviet press reveals that the upper 11 or 12 percent of the population receives approximately half of the national income. (This differentiation is even sharper than in the United States where the upper 10 percent receives approximately 35 per cent of the national income.)

Demoralization and defeat overtook the modern revolutionary movements in all other important centers also, as for example in Germany, often spoken of as “the classic land of Marxism,” where the degeneration of the whole movement of social protest and revolt had gone so far that when Hitler came to power it did not offer even a gesture of resistance, violent or non-violent.

Few would question the analysis of the relationship between means and ends in this case. In the 1920's and 1930's people were practically unanimous in pointing out

that World War I had miserably failed to accomplish what good people had believed it would do; and college faculties still contain many members who are troubled about the “souls” of their students, because the students still believe what the professors told them about war a few years ago. Again we ask: What reason have men to believe that “this time” it will all be different?

So much for the negative side of our position. Now for the positive proposals.

### 3. A Pacifist Proposal

It is significant that the friends to whom we have been addressing much of this statement, who have often said to us, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a pacifist,” are now saying that a great deal of thought must be given at once, even though the war so far as the United States is concerned has only begun, to the problem of “a just and durable peace.” It is inevitable that reasonable and conscientious men should feel this concern; for obviously the only justifiable end of war is a “good peace,” a peace that does not sow the seed of future war. Unless men can believe in such a goal, war, wholesale slaughter, becomes utterly irrational and completely immoral. It would then, beyond a shadow of doubt, be “the sum of all evils.”

We have already stated our disbelief in the possibility that we can follow the same fatal path as in the last war, and then suddenly, at the moment of victory for “our side,” strike out in an entirely new direction to a durable and tolerable, not to mention a noble, peace. Before the United States entered into war, the religious pacifist could only say: “Go not to war, keep the sword in its scabbard; instead of drifting into war, take the initiative in offering to the world a creative, dynamic peace, a way out of this fearful impasse of a military victory of this Axis or that.” It seems

to me the only thing we can say to our nation now is: "Stop the war, put up your sword before it is altogether too late. Instead of automatically going through the old motions, be imaginative, be creative. There is no hope in a peace dictated by 'totalitarian' powers; nor in a peace dictated by 'democratic' powers. That has already been tried and proved disastrous. We are incurring stupendous risks in trying that course once more; let us rather take some risks for a new course. O, our country, pioneer again, this time on a world scale, for mankind's sake. Try the Way of Reconciliation."

In political terms such a policy would express itself in an offer by the United States to enter negotiations immediately with all nations, Axis and Allies, based on some such terms as the following:

1. The United States will take its full share of responsibility, with other nations, for the building of federal world government along some such lines as those of our American union.

2. Instead of seeking to hold on to what we have, which is so much more than any other people have, the United States will offer to invest the billions which it would otherwise devote to war preparation and war, in a sound international plan for the economic rehabilitation of Europe and Asia, and in order to stay the inroads of famine and pestilence which otherwise threaten to engulf mankind.

3. In the coming peace no attempt shall be made to fasten sole war-guilt on any nation or group of nations. Instead, all people should take up the works of repentance in a common effort to halt the breakup of civilization and to build the good life which the earth's resources and modern technology make possible for all.

4. All subject nations, including India, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Denmark, Norway, France, Belgium, Holland,

and subject peoples on every continent must be given a genuine opportunity to determine their own destinies. In those few cases where a people are clearly not yet ready for self-government, their affairs should be administered by the federal world government with a primary view to the welfare of such people and to the granting of full self-determination at the earliest possible time.

5. All peoples should be assured of equitable access to markets and to essential raw materials. To this end concerted action to adjust, and ultimately to remove, tariff barriers should be undertaken. Immigration and emigration should be internationally controlled with a view to the welfare of every nation. There is a direct and infinitely tragic connection between (1) the fact that since 1914 there has been no free movement of population and labor from one country to another and (2) the forcible uprooting of millions by brutal discriminatory legislation and by war. Stifle immigration and you get refugees.

6. To give a lead in furthering democracy, the United States will undertake to establish equality of opportunity for all within its own borders; to begin with a national program to provide decent housing for all who now lack it, to make unused land accessible to those who will till it, to encourage cooperatives for the maintenance and revival of the initiative of our people, to provide adequate medical and hospital service and equal educational facilities for all, including Negroes and Orientals.

7. The United States will repudiate every form of racism in dealing with all minority groups and, as an initial move toward reconciliation in the Far East, repeal the Oriental Exclusion Act. It will call on Germany and other countries similarly to renounce racist doctrines and practices.

8. There should be immediate and drastic reduction of armament by all nations, and steps to move from an armaments-and-war economy to an economy of peace should be taken as rapidly as possible.

We readily admit that from the standpoint of “power politics,” national aggrandizement — any materialistic interpretation of history, this seems a fantastic proposal. But any proposal made by idealistic non-pacifists seems to us quite as untenable. They believe, for example, that a wedge must ultimately be driven, and can be driven, between the German people and Hitler and Hitlerism. There can be no good peace, they say, until the demons have been driven out of the souls of the German people. For the present, however, they believe that military means must be used to that end. But to say to the German people, “The world has no realistic choice except a military victory — decisive, crushing — of your side or our side” is to tell them the same thing that Hitler tells them. This is what keeps them fighting behind Hitler, as practically all observers admit, for on that basis they believe that the only alternative to a victory behind Hitler is “something worse than Versailles.” They might as well keep on fighting, therefore, since they face hell in any case and there remains the outside chance that they might win and then let the rest of the world find out what it means to be the under dog. There is, furthermore, the ghastly record of what our “success” in separating the German people from the Kaiser by military means amounted to: it gave us Hitler in place of the Kaiser.

This brings us to another dilemma. Our proposal for a dynamic peace at this time is dismissed by non-pacifists as “unrealistic.” It would require an impossibly great change of heart in the German people and others. The American people, too, would have to rise to heights of repentance, faith in spiritual forces and moral courage, which it is felt unreasonable to expect. But isn't that what people generally

have assumed would take place after the War and a “democratic” victory? For obviously, unless a spirit of humility and repentance, a high spiritual imaginativeness and courage animate the victorious peoples; and unless the German and Japanese people feel that they can trust us and are freed from fear and resentment and the inverted egoism of an inferiority complex — unless the world experiences a spiritual rebirth — there can be no good peace after this greatest and most destructive of all wars. We cannot believe there will be. But what shred of evidence is there that conditions at the end of a long War “to the finish” will be favorable for such a rebirth, more favorable than conditions today? Is not rather every day the War drags on fresh evidence that we have not the will nor the strength to “turn again and be saved”? And when was the law repealed which warns men, even as it woos their spirits. “Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation”?

If we do not wait with proposals for a creative peace until the spiritual energies of this generation are utterly exhausted, we may yet find salvation. It may not seem probable, but when we think of the deep-seated reluctance to go to war in the hearts of all peoples, the inability of all the modern machinery of propaganda to arouse any enthusiasm for war in their breasts, it is not impossible that one of these days the utter futility and irrationality of it all might seize upon millions, that they would lay down their arms, and walk home. When we remember with what joy the masses in 1917-18 hailed the bright promise which was held out by President Wilson’s Fourteen Points and by the Russian Revolution in its early idealistic days, there is a possibility that to such dynamic peace action by the United States now as we have proposed, there would be a tremendous, spontaneous response, which simply could not be ignored. Why, in any event, should so many Christians be so sure that the Way of Reconciliation would not work?

Even as these words were being written, the fall of Manila, Singapore, Rangoon, Sumatra, Java stunned the western world. With fearful dispatch an end has been made of white supremacy in the Orient. Whatever the future course of the war, that has been settled. These developments cause many people to feel that for the time being there is no basis left for any imaginative peace proposal by the United States. The Axis Powers, and Japan in particular, would inevitably regard such a move as a sign of weakness or even cowardice on our part. They feel that world-domination is in their grasp after decades of defeat and frustration, and nothing except crushing military defeat can now keep them from driving on to the attainment of that prize. Space permits only a brief comment. If we are prepared to make proposals looking toward a genuine peace only when we clearly have the upper hand, we cannot expect our national enemies to do otherwise. In that case there is nothing to do but fight to the bitter end. It is now plain just how bitter that end will be. If the full strength of the United States, the millions and hundreds of millions of Russia, China, India, the Near East, South America and the desperate ultimate efforts of Great Britain, Germany, Italy and Japan are to be thrown into this war before an end is made of it, it must eventuate either in a stalemate of complete exhaustion or in the "victory" of one group of embittered peoples over another group of despairing peoples. Both will have been brutalized by the most hideous warfare in all the tortured course of human history and both must dwell on a devastated planet of which it will indeed be said that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." This is not a goal for which human beings can rationally fight. Verily, if there was ever an occasion when it seemed wise for adversaries to agree quickly, this is it.

Nor is it utterly fantastic to suppose that precisely now when they feel that the stigma of inferiority has to some

extent been removed from them and that they could negotiate as equals with equals, the Japanese and the German people may be more willing and able to discuss a just peace than before. There is no evidence that they are intoxicated with victory as nations have sometimes been. It is reasonable to suppose that, whatever may be true of certain of their leaders, multitudes in these as in other lands are well aware that the costs of prolonged conflict will be incalculable. A chance to sit down with the peoples of the earth in friendship and to work together at utilizing the earth's resources and modern technology in order to build the good life for all, offers them more than Hitler and the Japanese militarists, even if victorious, can bring to them. By offering them that chance we on our part will gain more than a victory of the United Nations can bring to us.

#### 4. If The Way Of Reconciliation Is Rejected?

And if, finally, the nation and the world are not ready to try this Way and we pacifists find ourselves a minority which seems to have no immediate political influence, seems indeed to be quite irrelevant, to belong as it were to another world, what then? That will not alter our course. As Howard H. Brinton has reminded us so effectively in his recent contribution to the Pendle Hill Historical Studies, "Sources of the Quaker Peace Testimony," our pacifism is not primarily that of objectors to war or of peace propagandists. We believe that there are rational and pragmatic arguments to support it; but it rests finally upon "arguments based on the direct insight of the soul into the nature of Truth and Goodness, an insight interpreted as a revelation through Divine Light and Life. According to this view, a certain way of life is intuitively recognized as good and with this way war is seen to be incongruous. This argument is primary because the Divine Light is not only the source of

knowledge but the source of power. The Light shines deep within at the springs of the will." Wherefore, God helping us, we can do no other.

We are indeed sustained by the evidence which history affords that "the little fellowships of the holy imagination which keep alive in men sensitivity to moral issues" and faith in the Eternal Love, may indeed be more effective than surface appearances indicate. Sometimes they may have been the carriers of the seed out of which sprang the harvests that have nourished nations and civilizations. If God's peaceable Kingdom is ever to come on earth, it must, as Isaac Pennington wrote in 1661, "have a beginning before it can grow and be perfected. And where should it begin but in some particulars (individuals) in a nation and so spread by degrees. Therefore whoever desires to see this lovely state brought forth in the general must cherish it in the particular." Or, as one said many centuries earlier: "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savor, it is thenceforth good for nothing."

Yes, though we be driven still further "out of this world," into seeming futility, confined to very simple living in small cooperative groups and for the rest giving ourselves to silence, meditation, prayer, discipline of the mind and spirit, we shall hold to The Way. The trouble with the world today is precisely that men have come to believe that "the only means which work are the material and the only goal attainable is also material. The world as perceived by the untrained physical senses is reality and the way to master that reality is through physical force." The result is that tremendous material energies are at our disposal; but our souls are empty and exhausted. Developing a consciousness of the reality of spiritual things and generating moral power is the supreme need of such a world. It may well be that now, as in other such crises, this cannot be done save through small groups of men and women who austerely

renounce outward things, strip down to the bare essentials, and give themselves to the task of “purifying the springs of history which are within ourselves,” to “that secret labor by which those of a little faith raise, first of all in themselves, the level of mankind’s spiritual energy.”

There have been other minorities; for example, that Party in Germany which had seven members when Hitler joined it a score of years ago, but which dared to aim at becoming the majority and wiping out all opposition so that there would never be a minority again; and there is that minority, of which we seek to be a part, to which the Word was and is spoken: “The Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news. Go into all the world and preach the good news and make disciples of all the nations. Fear not, little flock. It is your Father’s good pleasure to give unto you the kingdom. And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age. For God hath not given us a spirit of fearfulness, but of power and love and discipline.”

### Notes

1. So important is this matter that I want to call attention to a psychologist’s presentation of it. Dr. Trigant Burrow, Scientific Director of the Lifwyn Foundation, in an article entitled “The Human Equation” in *Mental Hygiene* for April, 1941, speaks of a “subtle attitude of secret self-propitiation ... a delusive sense of personal approbation” in people and in social groups as a most pernicious danger to society. “There is no question but that” such a “one-sided ideology leads to a two-sided wrangle ... There would be no question of a two-sided wrangle, individual or social, if man’s *total powers of observation* were brought to bear” upon the situation. The self which thus tries to justify itself and which sees itself standing over against others, rather than indissolubly bound to

others, both limited and sustained by them in the attempt to apprehend truth, necessarily sees the world, any problem, in a partial distorted sense, not as a whole and objectively. Furthermore, it is itself a divided self, it cannot function with its whole, undivided attention, cannot *give* itself freely, unreservedly, *to* the situation. It has been, says Dr. Burrow, “the outstanding finding” of his “laboratory of human biology that *the brain of man*, unlike other organs in the body, *does not now operate as a functioning whole.*” He has only a “specialized, restrictive use of his part-brain.” He must supplant this with “the total function of man’s brain.” How? “Applying universal principles to a universal situation, man needs to abjure his habitual partitive approach to the problem of his behavior, and to *encompass this problem of his own making with the whole of himself.*” (Italics by A. J. Muste.)