

Peace and Democracy

By HON. SAMUEL W. McCALL

Formerly Governor of Massachusetts

WE have been side by side with the most civilized nations of the world in the most colossal struggle, in the most deadly war of all history, in a war that has been more expensive probably than all the previous wars that have ever taken place. It is clearly our duty to do all in our power to prevent any repetition of such a tragedy. That is the plain duty before us; and how are we going to perform it?

Are we to have a league of nations, a concert of nations, compacted together to wage war against war? I believe in a league of nations. It does not follow that I believe in any league of nations, but something of the sort we must have. I believe in debate. The Constitution of the United States was adopted after a long debate by the ablest men in America. It then went to the conventions in the thirteen states, where it was again debated. It was finally adopted, but it was adopted with very radical amendments, which are now a part of the document. That debate gave us a better Constitution. The formation of a league of nations is too vital a question to be settled without discussion. I think that the speech for instance made by Senator Philander Knox of Pennsylvania was the most illuminating speech that has been made upon the covenant, and if more such speeches can be made in the Senate I trust they will be made. If amendments are needed to improve the league they should be made. Undoubtedly the men in Paris have profoundly considered the covenant of the league, but they have not put it in the crucible of debate. There may be some question whether that part of the covenant relating to the Monroe Doctrine, in the form in which it now appears, should be sanctioned. The Monroe Doctrine does not mean simply the guarantee by the United States of the territorial boundaries of the other countries upon this hemisphere. That view overlooks entirely the essential political character of the doctrine. Mr. Olney contended that it contemplated a struggle between monarchical institutions and free government. President Monroe and John

Quincy Adams put it forth as necessary to our peace and safety that the governmental systems of Europe should not be extended upon this continent. If it is necessary to safeguard the Monroe Doctrine then an amendment should be adopted. But I doubt very much whether it is wise for us to guarantee the territorial boundaries of all the nations of the world, so that we may have a static world. Much of the advance in civilization has come from the shifting of the boundary lines of nations.

The paramount thing is that the covenant is aimed against war. We do not seem to comprehend just what war is. We are apt to regard it as a struggle in the abstract between nations, and we do not get beneath the surface. War, in effect, means the offering up of boys in what is called the cause of their country. In our Civil war, of 2,800,000 enlistments more than 2,100,000 were of boys of twenty-one years old and under. It was the same in ancient times. After a great war in Athens, Pericles said, "The youth perished from the city like the Spring from the year," and Plato said that war is a monster that lies in wait upon the rich meadow land of generous youth. So it has always been. Uncounted millions of boys have been offered up—and for what? In this war nearly 10,000,000 boys of the different nations of the world have gone to their destruction. Those young spirits were beating at the dawn of their careers eager to run their race and they were cut off in a war which they did not initiate. We want to put an end to the system that is likely every fifty years or a hundred years to require the offering up of 5,000,000 or 10,000,000 of the flower of the youth of the race. It is said that men are going to do what they always have done and that we must remain in servitude to the old system of war. But cannibalism has gone. Slavery has followed cannibalism, and it seems to be an indictment of the statesmanship as well as the humanity of the world if we shall permit this system involving the destruction of the young men of the world to continue. Therefore, the League of Nations as a whole is admirably devised.

There is somewhere in Paris or Versailles a painting of Louis XIV who was all his life engaged in war. He is covered with armor and is seated upon a war horse. The picture bears the title "Louis the XIV. Bringing Peace to Europe." Happily the head of the American nation is really attempting to bring peace,

not merely to Europe but to the world, and he is appearing in no such spectacular and hypocritical attitude. We want to adopt some sort of an organization in this present moment to preserve the peace of the world. The whole world is ripe for it. The philosophers of the world, and its poets for the last fifty years have been writing about it. There is a public spirit abroad that demands it.

We cannot establish forms of government in the different nations, however much we might like to have this country or that a republic. Each nation must adopt its own form of government or that government will not stand.

Two years ago when President Wilson spoke of making the world safe for democracy, I suggested that democracy also should be made safe for the world. I did not intend to criticize what the President had said, but I thought that the two ideas should go together. Democracy is not a timid weakling. It is not a violet, something that is crushed by a breath, but it is a great, strong creature with all the power of the combined units of the race and it can take anything that it wants. Therefore, the problem is to make democracy safe for the world, and in order to do that we must endow it with the necessary organs. We must give to this formless mass organization and the opportunity to develop a considered opinion so that it can be delivered from wild leadership that will lead it to quick and violent action and make it in effect an undisciplined mob. We have seen in Russia and other countries some of the things that are done in the name of democracy but which are a disgrace to it—the wicked crimes that have been committed in the name of democracy. The primal thing in government is to have the world established upon such a democratic basis that this basis shall permit a real expression of the will of the people, and everywhere the protection of every man in his rights. This was the aim of our Constitution.

We have something to do in this country with reference to the organization of peace in our own internal affairs. In a time of war nearly everybody who has a hobby gets it out and rides it. We have had things done at Washington by the central government that were unnecessary infringements upon the individual liberties of the men and women of this country. Let them be charged to the war. But now that it is over, let the American people

resume their liberties. Let us get back to the old paths of an ordered liberty. Let us have restored again the right of the American citizen to stand on his feet. Let us secure him in the results of his enterprise and industry. Let us encourage him to do those innocent things, which have been done in the past and which have resulted in making us a great nation.

In the international organization of peace we want our League of Nations. We want it solidly established. We want it to go into force and have effect upon any great crisis that may come among the nations of the future. As to our own country, in the national organization of peace, we want to establish ourselves upon that rock of American liberty which has distinguished us in the past, and which has made us an example to all the nations of the world.