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THE WORLD PEACE FOUNDATION AND PROGRESSIVISM: 1910-1918

PETER FILENE

EDWIN Ginn, founder of the publishing house of Ginn and Company, was the first man to give one million dollars to the cause of peace. Early in 1910, at the age of seventy-two, he announced the creation of The International School of Peace to which he would contribute \$50,000 annually until his death when his will provided for the bequest of one million dollars. By the end of the year the organization, under the new name of the World Peace Foundation, was a vigorous member of the American peace movement. If the importance of the Foundation were simply this generous gesture of a millionaire, its significance would be limited. Much more is involved, however, for this peace organization serves as a sensitive indicator of the principles of American liberal thought preceding this nation's entry into World War I. Not only did the directors of the Foundation embody in their policies and attitudes the ideology of the American peace movement as a whole, but also they applied to international affairs the premises which guided Progressivism in its domestic programs. The history of the Foundation was not an isolated and peculiar phenomenon, but was symptomatic of the most vital aspects of prewar America. Indeed, in its energetic optimism until 1914 and its dismayed confusion during the next four years, the evolution of the Foundation foreshadowed that of Wilson's New Freedom when the President transferred his ideals to the international scene. The history of this peace society provides for the historian a laboratory in which the central themes and problems of early twentieth-century, American liberalism were tested in compressed and intensified form.

I

In 1910 dozens of societies were devoted to the cause of peace, many of which had been in existence for decades and

almost all of which had been rapidly gaining strength since the turn of the century.¹ Indeed, the auspicious developments within the political environment during the decade before 1910 had incited unprecedented optimism among veteran peace workers as well as newcomers like Ginn. Outstanding were the meetings of the first two Hague Conferences in 1899 and 1907 which, in addition to discussing disarmament, international law, and other issues, had created a Permanent Court of Arbitration in 1899 (actually neither permanent nor a court, but rather a group of judges collected for each case) and, in 1907, had provided for a Permanent Court of Arbitral Justice. Because of these meetings, said a leading peace worker, "we are living in a different world. . . ."²

Equally exhilarating to pacifists was the signing of an unprecedented number of arbitration treaties (over 130 from 1899 to 1910) among almost all the nations.³ These treaties obligated the signers to submit a dispute to the judgment of an impartial board which would settle the matter rationally. Lastly, the American public itself was outgrowing the bellicosity of 1898 and the navalism of Mahan and Roosevelt, turning instead to the reform enthusiasm which was flourishing so remarkably. Liberalism had become fashionable and the peace movement shared the limelight. The New York Peace Congress of 1907, for instance, was attended by ten mayors, nineteen Congressmen, four Supreme Court justices, two Presidential candidates, thirty labor leaders, forty bishops, sixty newspaper editors and twenty-seven millionaires.⁴ As Merle

¹ I have not been able to discover the exact number of societies in existence in 1910, but of the sixty-three in 1914, most were founded more than five years before. See Merle Curti, *Peace or War, The American Struggle, 1636-1936* (New York, 1936), p. 201.

² Edwin Mead, "The Results of the Two Hague Conferences and the Demands upon the Third Conference," *World Peace Foundation Pamphlet Series* [hereafter cited as *WPF Pamphlet Series*], Vol. 1, No. 1, Pt. 1 (April, 1911), p. 1.

³ S. N. D. North, editor, *American Year Book, 1910* (New York and London, 1911), p. 105; Denys P. Myers, "Arbitration Agreements Now Existing in Treaties, Treaty Provisions and National Constitutions," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. v, No. 5, Pt. III (October, 1915).

⁴ Curti, *Peace or War* . . . , p. 207.

Curti remarks: "Even the more cautious and realistic believed that the dawn of peace could not be far off, if it was not already at hand."⁵

A natural question, at this point, is why Ginn set up still another peace organization when apparently the peace movement needed his money rather than another institution to jostle against the many already in existence. Two motives persuaded him to act. First of all, he felt that the particular area in which the Foundation was to operate, that of education, was being neglected. Too much of the peace work was devoted to abstract and technical problems, while the conversion of the masses, particularly young people, was being ignored.⁶ Integrally related to this motive was his preoccupation with the need for business-like efficiency in the peace campaign. As a friend once remarked to him, he dealt with the promotion of peace in the same way that he dealt with promotion of textbooks.⁷ This attitude colored and eventually dominated Ginn's policies as president of the Foundation. Thus, when comparing the total of more than a billion dollars spent annually by nations for armaments to the mere hundred thousand spent on peace, he invariably concluded: "Does not this indicate strongly the trend of public sentiment upon this question?"⁸ His inference reveals the extent to which he was an accountant of emotional commitment.

Ginn's donation to the peace movement in 1910 was not simply a sudden inspiration. As far back as 1901 he was asking: "We spend hundreds of millions a year for war; can we afford to spend one million for peace?"⁹ And in the same year his creation of the International Library provided organized expression for both his ideas and his wealth. By means of this

⁵ *Peace or War . . .*, p. 196.

⁶ As one example, see a letter from Ginn to Andrew Carnegie, March 28, 1911, MSS. at the World Peace Foundation in Boston [hereafter cited as WPF].

⁷ George W. Anderson to Ginn, November 21, 1912, MSS. at WPF.

⁸ Ginn, *An International School of Peace* (Address delivered at the International Peace Congress at Lucerne, September, 1905) (no publisher), pp. 3-4.

⁹ *Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration, 1901*, p. 22.

institution he hoped to sell peace literature at a price low enough for the general public to afford. By 1909 he felt that a larger scope of activity was feasible and, in a letter to the *Nation*, he appealed for other rich men to join him in the formation of a peace organization, the outline of which he sketched at length.¹⁰ The premise underlying his appeal, one which he never abandoned, was that the peace campaign would succeed only with contributions by other men of their effort and especially their money. It was for this reason that he withheld his gift of one million dollars until after his death, for he believed that too large an initial sum would encourage others to feel that their money was not needed.¹¹ Because of the lack of response to his letter, however, he had to act autonomously and hope that others would participate in the Foundation once it was active.

At the first annual meeting of July 12, 1910, the Foundation was incorporated with the intention, as stated in the by-laws, to educate the people about the evil and wastefulness of war, to encourage international justice "and generally by every practical means to promote peace and good-will among all mankind."¹² The actual structure was more precise than these heady abstractions. The model was that of a college: the trustees to serve without salary for seven years and to be responsible for general policy, for the supervision of funds and for the election of officers, while the directors ("faculty") were to be salaried and to conduct the daily activity of the corporation.

Although the nine men present elected themselves as the first board of trustees, a second board, organized at the second meeting in December and including five of the first board, is of more direct interest here because it held office throughout most of the period until 1917. The ten trustees comprising

¹⁰ Ginn, letter to *The Nation*, Vol. 89, No. 2308 (September 23, 1909), pp. 275-276.

¹¹ For one of many examples of this attitude, see Ginn to Samuel T. Dutton, May 16, 1912, MSS. at WPF.

¹² Annual meeting of July 12, 1910, in "Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Trustees, 1910-1926," [hereafter cited as "Minutes"], pp. 1-12, MSS. at WPF.

this later group were: Edwin Ginn; W. H. P. Faunce, president of Brown University; Samuel T. Dutton, professor at Columbia University; Sarah L. Arnold, dean of Simmons College; Joseph Swain, president of Swarthmore College; A. Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard University; Samuel W. McCall, United States Representative of Massachusetts; Edward Cummings, a Unitarian minister and secretary of the Foundation; George A. Plimpton, an executive in Ginn and Co.; and George W. Anderson, a noted Bostonian lawyer. Seven directors were appointed by the end of the year, including: David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford University, an outstanding ichthyologist and chief director of the Foundation; Edwin Mead; James A. Macdonald, editor of the *Toronto Globe*; Hamilton Holt, editor of the *Independent*; James B. Scott, Solicitor in the State Department; Charles R. Brown, dean of Yale Divinity School; and John R. Mott, secretary-general of the Christian Students Federation.¹³

Before considering in detail the activities of the Foundation, it is important to locate its personnel in a context. Clearly this group was dominated by educators, but there was also evident a strong business element exemplified in Ginn, Plimpton, and Samuel Capen, the latter being a rug manufacturer as well as a reformer who was made a trustee in 1911. The element of religion was strong, not only in the persons of Reverend Messrs. Cummings, Mott, and Brown, but also as represented by Capen, who was president of the American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions, by Faunce, who had been a Baptist clergyman, by Dutton, whose father had been a Congregational deacon and who once had considered the ministry as a career, and by Ginn himself, who also had considered the ministry temporarily.¹⁴ These three types of interests account

¹³ Annual meetings of July 12 and December 22, 1910, "Minutes," pp. 17-29.

¹⁴ For biographical information see Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography*, 22 vols. (New York, 1928-1958); Charles H. Levermore, *Samuel Train Dutton: A Biography* (New York, 1922); Chauncy J. Hawkins, *Samuel Billings Capen, His Life and Work* (Boston, 1914); Ginn, *Outline of the Life of Edwin Ginn, Including his Preparation for the Publishing Business and the Establishment of Ginn and Company* (Boston, 1908).

for the salient characteristics of the Foundation's policy—namely, propaganda and proselytizing on an efficient economic basis and under the impulse of a fervor of conviction and optimism.

Two other factors were strong enough to be noted. In the first place, almost all of these men came from poor or modest backgrounds and many were very self-conscious of their ascent from poverty to success by hard, individual effort. Ginn typified this feeling when he wrote that, as a child, he had been “*blessed with poverty. You may think that sounds strange; but where poverty harms one child, wealth ruins a thousand.*”¹⁵ Secondly, a striking number of these men belonged to families whose ancestors had landed in America before the middle of the seventeenth century.¹⁶ This fact has a significance to be discussed later.

Although the members of the Foundation shared many personal traits, even more obviously they were united by the complex network of reform activities which characterized the Progressive age. That is to say, most of these men had been involved in reform long before the creation of the Foundation, and now brought a common experience and set of premises to their work in this new organization. Capen had worked with Mead as early as 1893 in the Boston Municipal League.¹⁷ The anti-imperialist campaign at the end of the century was supported by many of these men, as might be expected; Jordan had even been vice-president of the Anti-Imperialist League.¹⁸ The most important institutional contact before 1910, however, was the Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration which Albert K. Smiley founded in 1895 as an annual forum for discussion of internationalism and which soon was attended by almost every major figure in the peace movement, including

¹⁵ Ginn, *Outline of the Life of Edwin Ginn*, p. 3.

¹⁶ Mead, Capen, Jordan, Plimpton, Faunce and perhaps others whose ancestry I have not been able to trace.

¹⁷ Hawkins, *Capen*, p. 84.

¹⁸ Edward McNall Burns, *David Starr Jordan: Prophet of Freedom* (Stanford, 1953), p. 23.

all but a few of the Foundation members who have been mentioned.¹⁹ It was here that Ginn first was inspired to devote his money to the cause of peace.

In the field of organized pacifism there was the same history of coöperation. The American Peace Society, founded in 1828 and by now the dominant member in the peace campaign because of its maturity and scope, included many of the original staff of the Foundation among its personnel before 1910. When the New York Peace Society was founded in 1906, Samuel Dutton served as a principal figure in the initial organization and subsequent activity. The Massachusetts Peace Society included Capen as president, Ginn, Lowell, and McCall among the vice-presidents and Mead as a director.

Clearly there was an impressive overlap of personnel, a fact which indicates, perhaps, the relatively small number of individuals exerting themselves for the cause of peace, but which also indicates that the peace movement, although fragmented into organizations which too often duplicated one another's work, operated from a unanimity on principles. These men were in full agreement on the ideals toward which they were laboring—disarmament, the substitution of rational for armed settlement of international conflicts and, most intangible of all, international amity and coöperation.

Although united in respect to ideals, the peace movement was much less in concurrence about the best techniques by which to realize these ends. The situation within the Foundation most clearly manifests the nature of this dispute. As mentioned above, Ginn was primarily motivated by a concern for efficiency in the peace effort. On this important point he differed from many of his colleagues, particularly Mead who was the Foundation's central figure in terms of energy, experience, and prestige. If Ginn was the businessman of the peace movement, Mead was its prophet, exerting himself to incredible lengths in order to make his ideas known. Mead was well known as a reformer, especially in Boston, because of his

¹⁹ *Reports of the . . . Lake Mohonk Conference, 1895-1915.*

concern for urban problems, his participation in the Anti-Imperialist League and the Twentieth Century Club and, finally, because of his editorship of the *New England Magazine*. After the turn of the century he devoted most of his energy specifically to the peace movement. It was he whom Ginn had chosen as editor of the International Library and now placed on the Foundation's board of directors, from 1912 to 1915 as its chief. Mead's whole life was dedicated to reform and his world was defined in those terms.²⁰

It is apparent that he and Ginn complemented each other with coinciding approaches of idealism and efficiency, but it also was natural that the juxtaposition of their temperaments would tend to be abrasive. When Ginn suggested in 1911, for example, that the Foundation needed a business manager, Mead replied with an undertone of arrogance: "It is perfectly evident to me, as it has been from the beginning, and as I expect is now evident to you also, that, whatever titles have been carelessly distributed, the real responsibility for the administration of the Foundation must rest with me, just as the preliminary work of these years for bringing the Foundation to its present position has been mine."²¹

Ginn never overcame this temperamental and ideological separation from Mead, the Foundation's vital center. This isolation increased because the other major individual in the Foundation, David Starr Jordan, fully shared Mead's views. Jordan's background as a biologist was very different from Mead's, but his ascent from poverty to success and his strenuously moral advocacy of reform coincided with the traits of his colleague. Both men believed that the greatest success in educating the masses would result from the inspiration of a few agitators, a few prophets.²² As for Ginn's insistence that the peace movement would succeed only if the general public gave its money along with its attention, Jordan argued that it was

²⁰ See Arthur Mann's sketch of Mead in *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. 22, pp. 442-443.

²¹ Mead to Ginn, October 14, 1911, MSS. at WPF.

²² Jordan to Ginn, February 5, 1912, MSS. at WPF.

certainly more probable that fifty men would each give \$1000 than that fifty thousand men would each give one dollar.²³

This lack of cohesion between idealism and tactics within the Foundation was characteristic of the whole American peace movement. In fact, the disjunction of means and ends, of accomplishments and intentions, which was to confront Progressives because of American participation in the war, already can be seen in this division among pacifists.

It is within the framework of this dual leadership by Ginn on the one hand, and Mead and Jordan on the other, and against the general background of reform by them and their associates, that one should view the Foundation's activities during the prewar years. Its guiding purpose was to obtain the coöperation of the crucial organs of publicity in the country—the schools, press, pulpits, and business organizations—for the dissemination of its principles. Certain definite methods were used and therefore its activities are most easily described in terms of categories rather than chronology. Primary, particularly since Ginn himself was a publisher, was the distribution of peace literature. Pamphlets, being more appealing and less expensive than books, were the usual format, and in its first year the Foundation circulated 300,000 copies of several tracts written either by the members themselves or by historic proponents of peace such as Immanuel Kant.²⁴ Another mode of publicity was excerpts or *précis* of articles and speeches which Mead compiled for distribution to newspapers. As he explained to Ginn, "One can often bring down game with three hundred words, where three thousand would not pierce the skin."²⁵ Finally, many of the Foundation members wrote under their own auspices, Jordan and Mead being especially prolific.

Although the written word was important, the spoken word was felt to be ultimately more effective, so the Foundation

²³ Jordan to Ginn, October 21, 1912, MSS. at WPF.

²⁴ *Advocate of Peace*, Vol. LXXIV, No. 1 (January, 1912), p. 22.

²⁵ Mead to Ginn, June 16, 1913, MSS. at WPF.

concentrated most of its attention on lectures and conferences. In 1911, for example, Jordan delivered about one hundred lectures across the country and sixty-four more in Japan and Korea.²⁶ The speakers exerted their influence through organizations already created. The International Chambers of Commerce, for instance, having been persuaded by the Foundation to hold their 1912 Congress in Boston, placed the problem of peace prominently on the agenda and approved a declaration in favor of substituting judicial for armed solutions to international disputes. This was the most successful venture by the Foundation in its first four years.²⁷ The same kind of approach was used in regard to other segments of the population: religious organizations, women's clubs, the Grange, the American School Peace League, and the Cosmopolitan Clubs, an intercollegiate federation of pacifist organizations.

Internationally, the Foundation proceeded in a less clearly defined way. George Nasmyth, president of the Association of Cosmopolitan Clubs as well as a Foundation member, coöperated with the European counterpart of the Clubs, the *Corda Fratres*; Jordan and Holt toured the Far East several times between 1910 and 1914; and Mead, Macdonald, and Mott made speeches and personal contacts in Europe. Because of the funds which such operations required and because the European peace organizations were already very active, the Foundation never devoted so much time or money to international work as to domestic programs. One noteworthy link with European activities, however, was provided by the English pacifist Norman Angell whose book, *The Great Illusion*, was the most famous peace publication of the time. In 1913, the Foundation persuaded him to make a lecture tour in the United States under its auspices.

The fact that the Foundation was able to employ as im-

²⁶ Mead, "The World Peace Foundation, Its Present Activities," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. II, No. 6, Pt. 1 (July, 1912), p. 8.

²⁷ Mead to the Finance Committee, February 9, 1911, MSS. at WPF; Mead's annual report for 1912, in "The World Peace Foundation, Work in 1912," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. III, No. 1 (January, 1913).

portant a figure as Angell demonstrates the status that it had attained within only a few years of existence. Indeed, the entire peace cause in America achieved impressive successes in the four years before the war, encouraging greater and greater optimism among its participants. Perhaps the apex of excitement was reached in mid-1911 after President Taft proposed and finally signed unlimited treaties of arbitration with England and France. The significant point was that these were to be without the reservations of "national honor" on which previous American arbitration treaties had insisted and which, in effect, vitiated them by allowing either signer to exempt a case from arbitration because it involved its honor.

Taft's action prompted the *Advocate of Peace*, the official journal of the peace movement, hopefully to ask in an editorial: "Are we indeed near the day when the system of war and armed peace is to be renounced . . . ?"²⁸ Yet the pacifists' optimistic campaign to persuade the Senate to approve the treaties ended in failure by early 1912 when the Senate added the traditional limitations of "national honor."

The enthusiasm did not vanish, however; it became clothed instead with a grim determination to use this near victory as a wedge for complete success in the future. The peace workers were confident that the unprecedented public approval of their cause eventually would prevail. And indeed in 1911 and 1912 small victories were won with the limitation of battleship appropriations by Congress to two, instead of the usual four, ships. Wilson's defeat of the bellicose Bull Moose candidate, Roosevelt, the appointment of a pacifist as Secretary of State, and the numerous "cooling-off" treaties negotiated by Bryan incited further elation among the peace workers in the years immediately preceding the fateful summer of 1914.

Within the peace movement corresponding progress took place during the half decade before the war. The National Peace Congress of 1911 at Baltimore, for example, not only was the first Congress to be addressed by the President of the

²⁸ *Advocate of Peace*, Vol. LXXIII, No. 6 (June, 1911), p. 122.

United States, but also was the first to be held under the auspices of all the leading American peace societies.²⁹ This sign of coördination among the pacifist groups was carried farther in 1912 when the American Peace Society amended its constitution so that its board of directors would include a representative from each of six major peace organizations, among which was the World Peace Foundation.³⁰ An event which gained more public interest than either of these, however, was Andrew Carnegie's announcement, in December of 1910, that he was creating the ten million dollar Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Ginn's contribution to peace no longer was unique; in fact, within less than a decade it had been overshadowed tenfold.

Yet the Foundation welcomed the immense prestige and financial vigor which Carnegie injected into the movement, and Ginn was hopeful that other rich men were at last following his example. There could be no rivalry because Carnegie's organization was concerned with a very different sphere, that of research into the causes of war and the ways to remove them. In fact, immediately after Carnegie's announcement of his grant, Ginn began to consider ways in which some of this money could be channeled into the Foundation for its work.³¹ He was entranced by the vision of financial and administrative efficiency which would result from an alliance of the two corporations.

Unfortunately, when he proposed to Carnegie that they co-operate to secure \$25,000,000 for the peace movement, \$500,000 of which the Foundation could use "very effectively," Carnegie was distinctly cool to the idea, advising Ginn: "Frankly, my friend, I wish to say that I think you will find great difficulty in obtaining additional funds unless you transfer the \$1,000,000 to your organization; that would be a nucleus and mite [*sic*] induce others to contribute."³² This was

²⁹ *Advocate of Peace*, Vol. LXXIII, No. 7 (July, 1911), p. 152.

³⁰ *Advocate of Peace*, Vol. LXXIV, No. 6 (June, 1912), p. 129.

³¹ Ginn to Dutton, February 15, 1911, MSS. at WPF.

³² Ginn to Carnegie, March 2, 1911; Carnegie to Ginn, March 22, 1911, MSS. at WPF.

precisely the opinion of Mead, who, a month earlier, had urged Ginn to abandon his constricting policy of thrift.³³

Predictably, Ginn refused to heed these suggestions. By 1912, after making no headway with Carnegie, he was referring to the Endowment as a group of "old men seventy or so" (he himself was seventy-four) and by 1913 he was convinced that Carnegie was jealous because Ginn had been the first great philanthropist of peace.³⁴

It is evident that Ginn's premises about human psychology and business practices were becoming more intractable than ever. As he transferred to his peace work the *laissez-faire* principles which had been successfully enacted in his own career, he increased his isolation within the Foundation and lost all sympathy with its policies. His axiom that "people are interested [only] in that in which they have an investment" led him to condemn the lectures of his colleagues as touching merely "the very outsides" of the problem of educating the people. A passive audience which is not asked to contribute effort and money, he said, will not be converted, will only be entertained.³⁵ In fact, he carried this reasoning to the point of raising the prices of the peace books, contrary to the policy of the International Library a decade before.³⁶ Finally, he urged the Foundation to begin the creation of "hundreds of thousands of centers of activity" all over the world, from which was to emanate a network of coördinated propaganda obtaining the public's active support, financial and intellectual. By the time that he had come to these attitudes in 1912 he no longer attended the Mohonk Conferences, the scene of his own conversion to the cause of peace, because he felt that they produced more rhetoric than activity.³⁷

Ginn was never successful in converting his colleagues to

³³ Mead to Ginn, February 15, 1911, MSS. at WPF.

³⁴ Ginn to Mead, November 1, 1912; Ginn to Dutton, July 30, 1913, MSS. at WPF.

³⁵ Ginn to Mead, May 16, 1912; Ginn to Mead and Jordan, March 29, 1912, MSS. at WPF.

³⁶ Ginn to R. L. Bridgman, April 26, 1913, MSS. at WPF.

³⁷ Ginn to Dutton, May 16, 1912, MSS. at WPF.

his fiscal theories, but he did finally put into effect, over the strenuous objections of Mead, his intention of employing a business manager to coördinate the work of the Foundation. In September, 1913, Albert G. Bryant, a militant convert to pacifism by the influence of Jordan, was given this new office. Immediately, he began to apply Ginn's principle of "centers of activity" scattered across the country.³⁸ Ginn could not take advantage of this appointment; he died of a stroke on January 21, 1914.

It is fair to say that Ginn's obsession with self-help and a balanced budget was exaggerated beyond validity. Nevertheless, it gave needed balance to the ineffectuality of the majority of pacifists who were so concerned with their ideology that they overlooked the awkwardness of the machinery by which they publicized that ideology. The successes of arbitration treaties, battleship reductions and the like only inflated their confidence. Ginn and others of his opinion were a disregarded minority.

The death of the Foundation's creator and president saddened its members but hardly disturbed their activities. Six months later a death with much more serious consequences for the peace movement occurred at Sarajevo. The first World War had begun with shocking suddenness. The event was a tremendous blow to the hopes and plans of the pacifists who had anticipated the eradication of war and now were drastically contradicted. At the annual meeting of the board of trustees in November, 1914, Dutton observed, only too clearly and ominously, that "this is the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the Foundation."³⁹ There was a marked atmosphere of indecision at the meeting, a consciousness that the old certainties no longer were so certain. The trustees finally decided that no large expenditures should be made until the desirable lines of activity should be clear once again.⁴⁰ This is

³⁸ Bryant's annual report for 1913, "The World Peace Foundation, Work in 1913," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. III, No. 12 (December, 1913), pp. 44-46.

³⁹ Annual meeting of the trustees, November 24, 1914, "Minutes," p. 57.

⁴⁰ Annual meeting of the trustees, p. 69.

an appropriate point, then, to turn to a discussion of the ideology with which the Foundation and the whole American peace movement were operating before the war explosively gave birth to a new era.

II

The most illuminating method of presenting the philosophy of the peace workers is to begin with their explanation of the causes of war, for it was on the basis of this analysis that they devised their proposed solutions. From among the possible stimuli to armed conflict they isolated armaments as the primary factor.⁴¹ Yet this reasoning, alluring because of its simplicity, obscured a crucial ambiguity, for there is a vast difference between arms as a cause of war and arms as a condition of war. If the pacifists meant the second, they were merely stating the trivial circularity that a war cannot be fought without weapons. If they meant the first, they were ignoring the rôle of political and economic motives which undoubtedly play a part in the outbreak of all wars. The more perceptive peace workers recognized and avoided this logical dead end.

Realizing that the weapons were murderous only when used and that war really was the consequence of their use rather than of their existence, these advocates of peace ascribed both the existence and the use to a minority of the world's population, the minority which profited from the production of war materials. In this way they absolved the public from any responsibility for international violence, shifting the blame to an evil few. Jordan expressed this point blatantly when he said: "The defence our nations need is not protection from each other, but rather defence from the money-lender and from the armament syndicate."⁴² Thus, the "merchants of death" argument, so popular in the postwar period, was also a major tenet in the pacifists' thesis before the first World War.

⁴¹ For example, Mead, "The United States and the Third Hague Conference," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. III (n.d.), p. 6.

⁴² Jordan, "Concerning Sea Power," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. II, No. 4, Pt. I (January, 1912), p. 7.

Again and again, militarism was described as the "enslavement of the people."⁴³

Yet this type of argument became particularly persuasive, in the opinion of its proponents, only when allied with the exposé of another malevolent aspect of armaments, their cost. The enslavement by weapons was not even so appalling as the enslavement by taxes and debt. The usual technique of the peace propagandists was to calculate the huge national expenditures on arms and then, in an appeal to the common sense of the audience or readers, to sketch the innumerable constructive ways in which this money could be spent for the good, rather than the death, of the people. Reasoning from pre-Keynsian economic theory, they believed it was an obvious fact that "the greater the sea power, the weaker the nation which buys it on borrowed money."⁴⁴ By thus drawing a tacit analogy between the individual and the nation—a favorite method of the pacifists—they devised a kind of logic which, it was hoped, would be compelling to the average man.

In the field of economics the peace movement wielded a more sophisticated type of argument taken directly from Norman Angell's *The Great Illusion*. The author's main line of reasoning was that the international character of commerce and credit invalidated the possibility that war could be successfully waged for profits. An aggressive nation would discover either that everything would be the same after the war, everyone buying and selling and profiting regardless of the altered frontiers and therefore without any economic gains by the "victorious" nation, or that the conquered territory would be devastated, in which case it was a liability to the "victors." The inescapable inference, then, was that war had become an anachronism in the modern world bound by an interdependent economy.⁴⁵

⁴³ For example, Ginn to Rev. Francis E. Clark, February 24, 1911; G. W. Anderson to Jordan, March 14, 1911, MSS. at WPF.

⁴⁴ Jordan, "Concerning Sea Power," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. II, No. 4, Pt. I (January, 1912), p. 6.

⁴⁵ Norman Angell, *The Great Illusion: A Study of the Relation of Military*

Angell's thesis instantly became the *coup de grâce* in the pacifists' propaganda among business leaders who, they hoped, would now oppose war in the name of profit. Here again the pacifists' analogy from the individual to the national level introduced distortion, for it is clear today that a state is not simply the sum of its inhabitants but is different from its parts. Although the merchants, manufacturers, and financiers do not change if boundaries are altered, the economic strength of the affected states certainly does. A second fallacy appeared when a few overzealous disciples of Angell declared that he had proved war to be "impossible." This optimistic inference was true only if every government was convinced by Angell's analysis or if none dared to gamble for a profitable outcome to aggression.

These various types of arguments were concerned with the special issues of world peace. Yet their general premises, both philosophical and emotional, encompass an ideological territory shared by other reform movements. Specifically, the remarkable correlation between the sets of ideas characterizing pacifism and Progressivism justifies some attention and, as will be shown, justifies the conclusion that the peace movement was not at all an anomaly but rather, in almost every respect, the international counterpart of Progressivism.

Preliminary to discussion on the intellectual level, a comparison between the social origins of the Foundation members and the Progressives reveals a similarity which is more than merely fortuitous. Working from the analysis provided by Richard Hofstadter,⁴⁶ it is clear that this group of peace workers embodied many of the typical Progressives' characteristics: their American ancestry dating, for so many of these men, to the early seventeenth century; their membership in the professional classes, with the exceptions of Ginn, Plimpton and a few others; and their modest economic positions, again

Power in Nations to their Economic and Social Advantage (New York, 1910), passim.

⁴⁶ Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F. D. R.* (New York, 1955), pp. 139-168.

with the exceptions of Ginn, Plimpton and a few others. Although these men tended to be on the chronological fringes of the Progressive generation, which Hofstadter describes as reaching the age of thirty around 1890, this fact becomes trivial when added to the above evidence and to the incessant reform activities in which most of them were engaged.

Far more convincing than a sociological parallel is an ideological one. Both movements possessed a secular faith that men are rational creatures who, when educated, can be relied upon to act morally, whether in their personal lives or in their rôles as citizens. On such premises, the pacifists confidently argued that wars are the consequence of misguided thinking, of ignorance rather than malice. Similarly, it was this trust in human rationality which impelled the World Peace Foundation to concentrate on education. At the core of these ideas was a great and urgent belief in democracy. The Progressivist solutions of initiative, referendum and recall, for example, were derived from the same kind of reasoning which Mead used in advocating an international court. When nations have to explain the facts of an international dispute before a public tribunal, he declared, when they have to justify their actions, "the end of war will be in sight; for no man living can remember a war whose inauguration would have been able to abide the world's critical discussion."⁴⁷

The vital optimism of these views is best defined as humanistic. Both movements took for granted the inevitable progress of mankind, progress which they described as often in material as in moral terms, but very rarely in religious ones. Thus, although many members of the Foundation were directly or indirectly concerned with religion, they did not describe the immorality of war as an infraction of God's will; rather, the sin was the infraction of human potentiality, of civilization itself. Reverend Edward Cummings furnished a succinct example of this theme in a sermon at the Boston South Congre-

⁴⁷ Mead, "The Results of the Two Hague Conferences and the Demands upon the Third Conference," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. I, Pt. I (April, 1911), pp. 8-9.

gational Church in 1909. "Peace," he announced, "is the thing most needed to guarantee prosperity. International justice and a properly organized family of nations is the next great step in social and political evolution. It also represents the best aspirations of morality and religion."⁴⁸ The belated addition of "morality and religion" dramatically illustrates the priority which prosperity and justice had among the justifications of peace. They were equally high among the Progressivist priorities.

The confident trust in progress as a natural force operating within society was intimately allied with a belief in *laissez faire*. Both of these movements were confident that general prosperity and peace would result most directly and effectively from the unrestrained economic activity of individuals who would see their own, and therefore everyone's, best interests. Yet the two reform groups recognized that this ideal did not at all correspond to the reality of an American economy clogged by monopoly and of a world caught in an accelerating arms race. To explain this deviation they blamed certain segments of the population who had acquired power by unjust means and now were using it for rapacious profit. Both used a muck-raking approach to expose such malevolent practices, whether by captains of industry or the arms syndicate, with the intention of directing public outrage and restraint upon these groups. The reformers' ultimate goal was not a welfare state but a return to genuine expression of individuality. Jordan's remark that "unwise charity is responsible for half the pauperism of the world" is typical of the thinking of his colleagues and of most Progressives.⁴⁹ Another peace worker expressed the real emphasis of these reformers when he declared: "Once remove the forces which now stunt body, mind and soul, and in a single generation a new breed of men will be produced. . . ."⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Reprinted in *Advocate of Peace*, Vol. LXXI, No. 2 (February, 1909), p. 36.

⁴⁹ Jordan, *The Human Harvest: A Study of the Decay of Races through the Survival of the Unfit* (Boston, 1907), p. 62.

⁵⁰ Charles E. Beals, speech before the Religious Education Association, reprinted in *Advocate of Peace*, Vol. LXXI, No. 3 (March, 1909), p. 57.

By stunting forces he was referring to armaments, whereas a Progressive would have meant monopolists or political bosses, but in each case the utopian prediction was the same.

In reference to another aspect of individualism, however, Progressivism and the peace movement diverged radically. Although both believed in *laissez faire*, many Progressives tended to agree with the Social Darwinists that force was an inherent, creative element in free competition, and they likewise tended to share the sentiment of imperialism.⁵¹ The peace workers, on the other hand, characterized violence as a primitive impulse which man, in his evolution towards excellence, would overcome. They approved of competition in trade or ideas, but condemned competition involving force. Jordan provides a fascinating example of this conjunction of attitudes because, as has been noted, he was a Social Darwinist on economic questions and yet, as a famous biologist, he rejected evolution as a process of force. He asserted that "the instinct for murder and robbery . . . is being bred out of the race. With every year the crust grows deeper over the primitive man."⁵²

Despite this fundamental disagreement over the rôle of force, both movements attempted to achieve their goals with a similar fervor which, in many participants, became a missionary spirit. The basis for this missionary tone was their faith in democracy, specifically American democracy. They were convinced that it was the destiny of the United States to lead the rest of the world to freedom and happiness. The two Progressive Presidents, Roosevelt and Wilson, shared this faith in the unique American rôle, however much they have disagreed on means and ends. Hamilton Holt pointed out that the harmonious relationship among the American states was a proof and model of the ideal future of nations. "It seems the destiny of the United States to lead in the peace movement," he said.

⁵¹ William E. Leuchtenberg, "Progressivism and Imperialism: The Progressive Movement and American Foreign Policy, 1898-1916," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. xxxix, No. 3 (December, 1952), pp. 483-504.

⁵² Jordan, "Bankers as Peace Guardians," *The World To-Day*, Vol. xxi, No. 8 (February, 1912), p. 1788.

"The United States is the world in miniature."⁵³ And finally, Jordan partook of this patriotism in the form of a racist attitude derived from his empirical conclusion that the Nordic peoples had always been in the vanguard of civilization.⁵⁴

From these several philosophical tenets the two reform groups devised methods by which to ensure the fulfillment of their ideals and which, not surprisingly, followed almost identical lines. Rule by law rather than men was the crucial formula for a system of rationality, justice, and morality. The multitude of reforms legislated under Progressivist influence is too familiar to require listing. As for the peace workers, their foremost objective was a world court. If traditional diplomacy failed to settle a dispute between nations, the case, so long as it was justiciable (that is, so long as it fell within the scope of existing law or equity) was to be submitted to arbitration by an *ad hoc* panel of judges or by a permanent world court, the latter of which had been planned by the second Hague Conference. If there was disagreement as to whether the case was justiciable, a commission of inquiry would ascertain the facts and make a decision binding on the nations concerned.

Both groups, therefore, applied their faith that a set of rules, constructed rationally and administered impartially, would replace the oppression by a selfish minority with a system supervising the well-being of the majority. It is an important fact that the peace workers had, as their ideal, a world court rather than a world government. In this way they manifested their belief that justice and order would be maintained by machinery which was created by men but thereafter was only to be administered by them. Once the system of world law had been manipulated into existence, they felt, interjection of personality would only impair its functioning. Like the Progressives, they tended to be preoccupied with the virtues of machinery rather than governors.

⁵³ "Mr. Carnegie's Gift," *The Independent*, Vol. LXIX, No. 3237 (December 15, 1910), p. 1340.

⁵⁴ Burns, *Jordan*, pp. 59-77.

III

After this discussion of the peace movement's ideology, the narrative of events can be resumed with a more precise understanding of the pacifists' dilemma in late 1914, at the beginning of the "new epoch." The precipitous calamity of war not only surprised them, but seemed to render dubious some of their central tenets. Advocacy of a system that was mechanically perfect on paper apparently had been an inadequate approach to a problem with more intangible and ineradicable roots. Indeed, a skeptical observer might have claimed that the entire faith around which the movement had been constructed—that man is an essentially rational and educable creature—had been invalidated. Certainly the optimism of the peace workers had been diminished. Mead's nervous breakdown in March, 1915, can be regarded as a symbol of the vital injury which the European conflict had inflicted. As for any racist theory of Nordic superiority, such as Jordan's, the Anglo-German struggle had consigned that to absurdity.

The peace movement was in a state of shock. The reaction within the World Peace Foundation was a pathetic symptom of the general immobilization. At the meeting of the trustees in October, 1915, the Committee on Organization recommended that the department of women's clubs be discontinued, that the position of Bryant (who had died in February) be left vacant, that the appropriations for lecturers and the School Peace League be eliminated.⁵⁵ In effect, it was recommending the virtual suspension of all activity, a suggestion which already had been met because, as the Finance Committee noted, "the Foundation has had for more than a year no very well defined policy or great apparent activity," although "we have spent most of our income."⁵⁶ The statement might have been humorous in a context less bleak.

⁵⁵ Special meeting of the board of trustees, October 11, 1915, "Minutes," pp. 93-94.

⁵⁶ Annual report of the Finance Committee for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1915, presented at special meeting of the board of trustees, January 8, 1916, "Minutes," p. 103.

Nevertheless, many pacifists still found grounds for hope. First of all, they could point out, with a kind of bitter pride, that they had always predicted such a disaster if some measures of disarmament were not introduced.⁵⁷ And in a more constructive pose they could declare: "The war itself is preaching our gospel with greater power than we could ever do it."⁵⁸ It provided a harsh but compelling means of persuasion. Most hopeful of all was the fact that the United States was still at peace and could exert to the fullest the rôle of destiny in which the peace workers had always believed so strongly.

Yet when they tried, on the basis of these desperate rationalizations, to reactivate the movement in 1915, worse problems ensued, primarily the problem of fierce, self-defeating factionalism. The theoretical unanimity which had been such a striking feature of the movement before 1914 now disintegrated. The dissension began with the creation of the League to Enforce Peace in June, 1915. Before the war, Hamilton Holt had proposed a "League of Peace," a political organization designed to ensure international amity. Now he revived the idea with the addition of a means of compulsion, indicating a new view of human nature and political reality.⁵⁹ Immediately, the peace movement underwent a profound split as its members debated the validity of the logic that peace could be "enforced." The American Peace Society, for so long the patron of the movement, rejected the League as a dangerous and inconsistent objective for any pacifist, while the Foundation not only supported the League but also appropriated \$10,000 towards its propaganda campaign.⁶⁰ But the Foundation itself was not at all free of dissent. Indeed, Jordan,

⁵⁷ For example, *Advocate of Peace*, Vol. LXXVI, No. 9 (October, 1914), p. 197.

⁵⁸ Mead, "The World Peace Foundation, Work in 1914," *WPF Pamphlet Series*, Vol. IV, No. 7 (December, 1914), p. 21.

⁵⁹ Holt, "A League of Peace," *The Independent*, Vol. LXX, No. 3258 (May 11, 1911), pp. 995-999; Holt, "The Way to Disarm: A Practical Proposal," *The Independent*, Vol. LXXIX, No. 3433 (September 28, 1914), pp. 427-429.

⁶⁰ Edson L. Whitney, *The American Peace Society, A Centennial History* (Washington, D. C., 1928), pp. 298-299; Special meeting of the board of trustees, June 3, 1916, "Minutes," p. 121.

one of its most influential members, was so adamant in his denunciation of the League and, until very late in 1917, so opposed to American entry into the war, that he was removed from the board of directors.⁶¹

The question of the feasibility of preserving peace by compulsion was an academic one when Europe was at war. More immediate was the question of the American rôle in *returning* the world to peace, the American destiny on which the pacifists had relied. When the United States joined the war, a minority within the peace movement, as well as a large number outside of it who advocated peace from religious or Socialist premises, vigorously dissented, insisting that the *sine qua non* of pacifism was rejection of war as an end *or* a means. The majority of the peace workers were not so tenaciously pacifist, for Wilson had led the nation into the fight under a moral banner. Their ideology, which utilized humanitarian and rational arguments, allowed them to countenance intervention on Wilsonian terms. Even the American Peace Society recognized patriotic duty and the necessity to defeat Germany as preclusive of an unyielding opposition to all force in all circumstances.⁶² Later, however, it opposed Wilson's League, while the Foundation strongly supported the creation of Versailles.

Thus, victory in the war to end war did not fulfill the aspirations of all the peace workers. Instead, it left the movement in a tumult and left the country in disillusionment. Idealism had not survived the war without deep wounds.

⁶¹ Burns, *Jordan*, pp. 26-31, 100-118.

⁶² *Advocate of Peace*, Vol. LXXIX, No. 4 (April, 1917), pp. 99-100; Vol. LXXIX, No. 5 (May 1917), pp. 132-134.