

# NOTES AND COMMENTS

*Edited by Louis Midgley*

## War and Peace

*A. C. Lambert*

*The following material appeared as Lesson 44 in an interesting though today little known book entitled FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE: FIRST COURSE IN THE RESTORED GOSPEL, "a text for the Freshman Course in Religious Education in Church Institutions at the College Level," by A. C. Lambert (Provo: Brigham Young University, 1938). It is interesting to contrast this lesson, part of every B.Y.U. freshman's curriculum in 1938, with recent events. Lambert's statement that "so long as curriculum makers give practically no place to the facts and the immorality of war in the organized courses in public and private schools, the solution of war will remain . . . far away," seems particularly significant in the light of recent events. It is interesting to contrast Lambert's suggestion that college men and women should search out the historical, sociological, psychological and economic causes of war, and his decrying the lack of such courses in the academic curriculum, with the public furor that arose not yet two years ago when many institutions underwent a "reconstitution" of their courses to study just such factors in response to Presidential expansion of the Indochinese war. Many faculty and administrations throughout the country came under extreme censure for following a course quite similar to the one recommended to the youth of the Church in 1938. That those recommendations were not superficial is evidenced by the readings recommended at the end of the lesson's text, which are also reproduced here.*

One of mankind's great social, political, and moral problems is war. The constant menace of war keeps the minds of thinking men disturbed and grieved. More than any other thing, war destroys wealth, art, culture, morals, and happiness.

In times of war practically every humanitarian sentiment and every moral code except the military law is set aside. In war man reverts to the most primitive motives, passions, and acts with which he is cursed. War destroys life itself. War destroys economic security. And above all war destroys the things of the spirit — the things that really have brought man his short but significant distance from savagery and barbarism.

Despite the age-long parade of military heroes, despite the glitter and glamour with which its exponents have surrounded militarism, despite the powerful propaganda of modern military leaders, despite the noble and stirring emotions that influence the hearts of common men under the threat of aggression and the throb of war drums, there is still no glory in war. War is savage, cruel, bloody, destructive.

Are we in fact forced to conclude that war is an inevitable evil, an uncontrollable social disease? Determined men found ways to abolish human slavery. In the face of tremendous opposition, the democratic way of life

was found and established. Intelligent and courageous men likewise found the causes and cures of smallpox, bubonic plague, and yellow fever. Courageous societies and governments have made the use of vaccines and serums compulsory. The causes and cures of these physical diseases were taught systematically to each generation of children who in turn became the parents of a succeeding generation. These illustrations show that evils and fears that once were thought to be permanent and unconquerable scourges of mankind have been conquered. Perhaps the same thing may become true of war.

While war as a disease is different from smallpox, there are sound reasons for believing that the same instruments which fundamentally solved the problems of smallpox and slavery can be made to solve the problems of war. Those instruments are (1) intelligence, (2) moral insight, and (3) moral courage.

The first question to decide is whether aggressive war is ever to be approved. And that question can not be left much longer solely to the old men in societies. Neither can such a question be left to the militaristic groups in society whose profession, livelihood, glory, and emotional traditions center about war.

The fundamental morality or immorality of war must be examined at every period and every stage in the education of youth. Serious and direct consideration of war is equally as important in the religious, social, and secular education of youth as is consideration, for example, of the Songs of Solomon, the immaculate conception, the multiplication table, the Ride of Paul Revere, the nature of positive and negative numbers, the proper ritual for worship, the geologic age of the earth, the plot of "As You Like It," the conjugation of verbs, or the metamorphosis of butterflies. The utterly silly sense of relative values displayed at times in the formulation of curricula in schools of all grades invites man in his sadder moods almost to despair of human intelligence.

So long as the true facts of war are never revealed<sup>1</sup> and are never taught, so long as the news of war is always rigorously censored and modified by the military authorities, so long as war remains glorified in the history books that go into schools and colleges, and so long as curriculum makers give practically no place to the facts and the immorality of war in the organized courses in public and private schools, the solution of war will remain as far away as was the solution of smallpox prior to the deliberate teaching of the germ theory of disease in all civilized nations. If it is ever to be solved, men must first of all be willing to *study* systematically this monstrous thing called war.

In every nation college men and women are in the most favored position of any large group to find out the causes of war from searching study of history, sociology, psychology, and economics. And yet one may search university catalogues for days before he will find a place where intelligent and courageous scholars offer even two-hour courses in the causes, history, and effects of war.

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<sup>1</sup>Definite proof of how facts are suppressed, distorted, and manufactured in the news of war is contained, for example, in Will Irwin's striking volume, *Propaganda and the News*.

Until mankind actually tries out the method of studying seriously such problems as (1) relative frequency of war in agrarian and industrial societies, (2) population pressures, food supply, and war, (3) war and profits, (4) the stimulative effects of war upon "prosperity," (5) propaganda, munition manufacture, and war, (6) chemistry and war, (7) international non-co-operation and war, (8) diplomats and war, there is no ground for the doctrine that war cannot be solved.

When one considers the length of time during which churches and religious leaders of all creeds and denominations have preached the peace ideal, he is tempted to wonder how long it will still be before religious groups, in addition to all their other activities toward peace, may come to believe that it is appropriate and necessary to have the facts of war and the causes of war studied in churches and schools with the same vigor and depth that characterize our study of the effects of narcotics and stimulants. Religious leaders with other leaders must insist that the causes and facts of war shall be studied in the school of the land as systematically, as extensively, and as vigorously as are the facts and causes of personal physical disease. Not to promote this prolonged and systematic study of war would be to fail to do the things that are already within man's power to make peace a real thing instead of a mere ideal.

Men can not continue simply to pray for peace, they must *do* something for peace, and do it on a large and effective scale. To promote serious, systematic, extensive education about war is to use one effective instrument that man already possesses but does not yet use extensively.

The true facts of war are never pleasant. The true facts of war are never popular with those who prosecute war, whether militaristic groups or individuals. But it is possible to become informed about what happens to persons, resources, and the human spirit under "modern" warfare. The bibliography attached to this lesson will provide the uninformed student with at least an introduction to the facts about war.

The question of whether war should ever be declared without a popular referendum has often been argued. While this is an important question, it can not be discussed in the short space available in this manual. This lesson has to be devoted essentially to making college students early in their student days aware of the great problem of war. But a recent *summary* of the pro's and con's of war referendum can be read on page seven of the *Literary Digest* for January 1, 1938. Additional information can be found in the sources included at the end of this lesson.

While, at this writing, this nation is at peace and is attempting to maintain neutrality, the menace of war can not be shut from our minds. On January 28, 1938, in a message to Congress the President of the United States said,

"We, as a peaceful nation, cannot and will not abandon active search for an agreement among the nations to limit armaments and end aggression.

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But it is clear that until such an agreement is reached — and I have not given up hope of it — we are compelled to think of our own national safety.

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It is an ominous fact that at least one-fourth of the world's population is involved in merciless, devastating conflict in spite of the fact that most people in most countries, including those where conflict rages, wish to live at peace.

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As commander in chief of the army and navy of the United States it is my constitutional duty to report to the congress that our national defense is, in the light of increasing armaments of other nations, inadequate for purposes of national security and requires increase for that reason.

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I believe that the time has come for the congress to enact legislation aimed at the prevention of profiteering in time of war and the equalization of the burdens of possible war.

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It is our duty to further every effort toward peace, but at the same time to protect our nation. That is the purpose of these recommendations. Such protection is and will be based not on aggression, but on defense."

Students who subscribe to the teachings of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, must above all other students take over seriously the responsibility of studying the causes, effects, and cures of war at the same time that they teach and preach the gospel of "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

Cut deep in marble in the third panel of the north inside wall of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C., that contains Lincoln's second inaugural address are these words, "Fondly do we hope — fervently do we pray — that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away." Those vivid words voice a prayer that should rise each day to the lips of every man.

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## A Godlike Potential

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*The words poured over the heads of graduates often are not worthy of being preserved in print. There are exceptions. Printed below is a rare but worthy graduation speech. It was originally delivered as a "Charge to the Graduates" at Brigham Young University Graduate Convocation, 21 August 1970.*

I have been asked to give the charge to the graduates. This demands that I shall strive to indicate to you what is important and what has significance for you above all else.

I can quickly tell you the answer. What is important to you is what you enjoy. I can tell you more about your character and your destiny from a knowledge of what pleasures you seek, what brings joy to your heart, than any other information you can provide. For man is that he might have joy; and it is within God's power to cloak your eternal uncreated, indestructible will with that physical body, that biological sensor and computer for a brain, and provide you with that environment which will bring you the joy for which you strive. And I assert that he has done just that. Man is in very fact, here and now, that he might have joy.

Why then do we see everywhere about us anger, frustration, sorrow, and despair? Is there not a paradox here? Man is that he might have joy. Why then do we see so little of it? Has God failed us? We must of necessity answer this in the negative. God's work is perfect. The answer to the paradox is to be found in the nature of man.

Jesus, in the Parable of the Talents, describes a situation in which men are given money and are expected to produce in proportion to the amount given — the man who has given five talents was expected to return ten, he who was given two talents to return four, and so on. The Saviour compared the Kingdom of Heaven to this situation. The parable clearly was intended to express the fact that this same expectation applies to one's spiritual stature. One's character is not expected to remain static but to develop in proportion to one's present endowments. But is this an expectation for this life only? Joseph Smith has stated otherwise. This is an eternal law,