

The Average American and the Next War

With Increasing Expenditures for Armaments Appearing to Herald Another Conflict, the Bid of "Underprivileged Nations" for a Place in the Sun Arouses Apprehension

By FREDERICK HANSEN

Of the 126,500,000 people now alive in the Continental United States, approximately 111,000,000 will be alive a decade hence. Will they live to see another great war? What is even more important to them, will the United States be a party?

Does the memory of the World War act as a bar to another great conflict? Does the functioning of the League of Nations act as an important deterrent? Does the rise of youth against war in countries such as the United States, Great Britain, and France herald a change? Will proposals to eliminate munitions profits stop war?

Youth Opposes War

The poll conducted by THE LITERARY DIGEST in the colleges of this country clearly reflects the temper of the youth of the land. It is unquestionably opposed to war. But one significant fact does stand out—that is, that more than 80 per cent. favor *defensive* warfare. Along with this fact it must be remembered that the peoples in the World War were actuated by the opinion that they were engaged in defensive warfare.

What does history teach? In the first place, it teaches that competitive armament leads to war.

Now if the progressive increase of armament expenditures is an indication of the outbreak of a major war, then one would think that these expenditures were being carefully watched throughout the world, and that they were easily available.

An estimate indicates that total armament expenditures for the ten years ending with 1913 for the whole world were \$20,613,100,000. This estimate is low, rather than high, because of the policy of many Governments to conceal armament expenditures.

But when these same figures for the decade ending with 1935 are assembled, a truly sensational result is revealed.

For those ten years world expenditures on armaments reach the colossal total of \$41,825,000,000. In other words, the world is spending twice as much on armaments now as in the ten years preceding the World War.

Certainly this amazing statistical "fact of life" stands as a clear challenge to the man who has been comforting himself with the thought that he

would not live to see another great war.

Next, what other great lesson is taught by history? History teaches that when public opinion in a given country has concluded that it has been unjustly dealt with, that country is ripe for war.

In this connection another statistical fact becomes of prime importance. That is, that the population of Europe, which never had exceeded 180,000,000 before 1800, now is near the 500,000,000 mark. These masses are bringing increasing pressure upon their Governments to provide them with a rising standard of living.

When a country feels that it has been unjustly dealt with, and that its people demand more, what can its Government do? Again, history teaches that, thus far, the only way found to right an injustice of this kind is by war. Clearly, continuing the existing status which gives certain countries the best of it, and others the worst of it, merely intensifies public opinion in the underprivileged countries that something will have to be done about it.

World Expenditures for Armaments (In millions of dollars)

Figures in Italics prepared by the author, all others from Jacobson's "World's Armament Expenditure."

	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908
Great Britain.....	374.2	342.9	345.1	330.4	305.2	288.7
France.....	303.8	307.8	277.9	248.0	236.4	216.0
Germany.....	463.6	331.5	313.9	301.5	306.3	286.7
Italy.....	142.2	158.4	133.7	124.9	115.3	87.5
Russia.....	435.0	387.0	334.5	324.0	315.5	291.6
Total Great European Powers.....	1,778.8	1,524.6	1,395.1	1,328.3	1,290.7	1,168.5
All Other European Countries.....	515.0	445.0	404.8	386.8	371.4	338.9
Total Europe.....	2,293.8	1,979.6	1,799.7	1,714.1	1,652.1	1,507.4
United States.....	244.6	227.0	197.0	197.0	199.0	189.5
Japan.....	104.5	107.7	110.7	100.2	95.7	83.7
TOTAL.....	2,643.0	2,314.3	2,107.4	2,011.5	1,946.8	1,780.4
Rest of the World.....	894.8	831.4	810.7	801.1	794.7	770.0
GRAND TOTAL.....	3,537.8	3,145.7	2,918.1	2,812.6	2,741.5	2,550.4

Grand totals: 1907—1,323.1; 1906—1,087.5; 1905—1,692.1; 1904—1,446.0.

The figures in the above table represent the United States dollar as evaluated before January 31, 1934.

What of the underprivileged major countries—Germany, Italy, and Japan?

These same three have a relatively rapid population growth. Germany feels the injustice of the Treaty of Versailles, and already has broken it down to the point where her debts have been repudiated, and her armament limitations nullified. Her next logical step is to regain an increased place in the sun by breaking down the territorial allocations of that Treaty.

It seems fair to offer the opinion that a major war is likely within the next ten years because the pressure of rising armament expenditures promises to be so great as to develop the explosion that is bound to come.

But, asks the average man, who still has these ten years or more to live, why should the United States get into it?

Facing "Facts of Life"

In the European field there is the danger that England will become involved in such a conflict, and that, based on historical precedent, this country again will become a party thereto. In the Far East Japan is spending nearly half of her governmental income on armament, and is rather realistically violating the Chinese Open Door by steadily adding to her sphere of influence in Asia.

Clearly, then, if the United States is to keep out of the next war, it should try to keep England from becoming involved in any European conflict, and try to keep Japan from expanding toward our possessions in the Far East.

Meanwhile, the citizens of this country must face "the facts of life" just as our Government is doing. They must prepare themselves for another war, and work as effectively as possible to keep us out of it. What our Government is doing is revealed by another important statistical fact. That is we spent \$244,000,000 for armament in 1913, and propose to spend \$792,484,265 for armament in the twelve months ending with June 30, 1936.

World Expenditures for Armaments (In millions of dollars)

Figures in italics prepared by the author, all others from League of Nations "Armaments Year-Book," 1927-1934

	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	*1934	*1935
Great Britain.....	519.1	608.9	481.6	483.0	467.5	452.4	434.0	444.7	*471.0	454.0
France.....	253.9	303.0	370.5	430.0	440.8	408.2	508.4	448.7	438.5	451.0
Germany.....	154.4	166.5	173.7	169.1	162.7	150.7	149.8	148.0	196.4	213.0
Italy.....	258.7	251.7	240.3	259.2	278.3	201.5	270.7	257.2	233.6	229.4
Russia.....	314.8	367.9	430.9	475.1	495.0	507.5	*679.9	*773.7	*786.7	836.3
Total Great European Powers..	1,500.9	1,598.0	1,703.0	1,817.0	1,850.3	1,938.3	2,051.8	2,072.3	2,106.2	2,249.6
All other European Countries..	677.5	666.3	639.3	676.6	713.6	632.9	443.0	567.1	608.8	549.3
Total Europe (60% of total).....	2,178.4	2,264.3	2,342.3	2,493.6	2,563.9	2,571.2	2,494.8	2,639.4	2,715.0	2,798.9
United States.....	584.7	604.6	651.4	690.5	703.2	696.7	665.7	553.9	327.8	431.8
Japan.....	217.4	237.7	254.4	249.2	226.7	224.6	316.9	405.0	*434.9	440.0
TOTAL.....	2,970.5	3,096.5	3,268.0	3,432.3	3,493.7	3,502.5	3,477.4	3,598.3	3,466.8	3,664.0
Rest of World.....	643.6	660.5	680.0	723.7	779.9	799.5	680.6	800.7	1,068.2	990.0
GRAND TOTAL.....	3,614.0	3,757.0	3,948.0	4,156.0	4,273.0	4,302.0	4,158.0	4,399.0	*4,535.0	*4,654.0

*Estimated.
The figures in the above table represent the United States dollar as evaluated before January 31, 1934.

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