FREDERICK LIBBY AND THE AMERICAN PEACE MOVEMENT, 1921-1941

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ABSTRACT

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By

George Peter Marabell

Disillusionment and the fear of war after World War I led to the emergence of impatient peace activists like Frederick Joseph Libby. Stung by the horror of war and encouraged by pacifist beliefs, Libby organized the National Council for the Prevention of War as a clearing-house for peace work. Libby believed that the "forces of war" exerted pressure on policy makers because they were organized, thus, he organized the "forces of peace." Peace activists welcomed the NCPW and quickly joined Libby to influence the proceedings of the Washington Conference of 1921-1922.

During the twenties, as Libby organized one successful campaign after another, he constantly sought support for his analysis of international affairs and his solution to international political problems. The world was divided into "have" and "have-not" nations, he argued, in which the "haves" controlled the

"have-nots" until the "have-nots" challenged the status-quo in order to enjoy equal access to the world's resources and markets. Libby advocated an end to colonial empires and the dropping of all trade restrictions so that "have" and "have-not" alike might acquire their fair share. He also suggested that the best way to avoid war was to deal with a problem before it became a crisis. In order to accomplish this he advocated the establishment of peace machinery: a world organization, a world court and the outlawry of war.

Libby was primarily a political organizer and therefore he concentrated his efforts on coordinating peace activists. To this end, he refined as yet unsophisticated mass communications techniques--letters, petitions, telegrams, news releases--for his own purposes. Libby brought into the NCPW nonpeace groups who expressed an interest in avoiding war but who had never before had a voice in Washington. The peace groups and nonpeace groups who comprised the NCPW could, at Libby's request, flood Congress or the President with letters and petitions.

Libby also created an effective lobbying force through the use of staff personnel and allies in Congress. On several occasions significant pressure was exerted to accomplish a specific task. Libby's belief in the necessity of pressure politics brought him and the NCPW into

the political arena where his decisions reflected not only his moral and ethical beliefs but his political judgment.

As long as Libby focused his efforts on the attainment of internationalist goals like disarmament, as he did in the twenties, Libby enjoyed substantial support from the peace movement. But, as the international order began to crumble, first in Manchuria and finally in Europe, many peace activists withdrew their support. The internationalists increasingly advocated collective action to halt the aggressors while Libby ignored internationalist goals in his pursuit of American isolation from war. Libby now directed all his efforts at keeping America out of war and advocated learning "to live in a world dominated by Hitler." The distaste for that position cost Libby his influence and support within the peace movement. The leadership and flexibility he had shown in the 1920s was superseded by his fear of war and the spiritual and physical devastation it caused. His fanatical determination to keep America out of war was not in keeping with his judgments in the twenties and was unacceptable in a world on the brink of global war.

It is unfortunate that much of what Libby had worked so hard to achieve should be obscured by the rigidity of his position in the thirties. He helped remove the negative connotations from the word "pacifist"

and brought peace activism a new respectability it deserved. But through his advocacy of isolationism Libby allowed pacifists and peace activists to again be judged within the confines of rigid moral guidelines.

In the preparation of this dissertation the public and private writings of Frederick Libby were examined. Particular attention was paid to the newsletters which Libby edited for thirty-three years. Also consulted were his two books, his diaries and his correspondence. Many of the more important secondary works on the interwar period were also examined.

FREDERICK LIBBY AND THE AMERICAN PEACE MOVEMENT, 1921-1941

By

George Peter Marabell

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

The Metropolitan police estimated that on November 12, 1921 almost 1,500 people withstood a cold wind to watch the foreign dignitaries arrive: Briand from France, Balfour from England, Shidehara and Kato from Japan and Schanzer from Italy. To Congress, Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes and President Warren G. Harding the visitors were representing their governments in discussions that would lead to new agreements on armaments. But to the people in the streets they represented the belief that people around the world agreed on the necessity of arms limitations.

The atmosphere of post-war America was characterized by disillusionment over the horror of war, the failure of the Senate to ratify the Versailles Treaty and the failure of the United States to join the League of Nations. But disillusionment was tempered by a faint optimism brought on by the acknowledged necessity of coming to grips with the problems of war and peace, armaments limitations and the settlement of disputes if the world was to have any chance of avoiding another holocaust. Such feelings were nothing new and the

National Council for the Limitations of Armaments was organized to effectively express American opinion on the subject and to make " . . . an outstanding success of the Hughes Conference."[1] Many people such as Frederick J. Libby, founder of the Council, worked actively toward the resolution of these problems.

I

The 1920s have frequently been described by observers as "normalcy" at home and as a time of isolation from world affairs. But the validity of these judgments depended largely on the perspective used. If the domestic scene was viewed as a return to the nostalgic calm of an earlier time, of jazz, automobiles and F. Scott Fitzgerald then "Normalcy" is as useful a label as any. If the perspective is enlarged somewhat, prohibition, the Ku Klux Klan, Teapot Dome and the "Red Scare" quickly come to mind. It was not if a person was a "flapper" that mattered, but whether one was a "radical" or a "one-hundred percent American." Only those of British stock were above suspicion; all others were suspect and the intensity of suspicion depended on one's reaffirmation of America's traditions, beliefs and symbols. Not adhering to these vague standards could result in being

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[1]Frederick J. Libby, To End War: The Story of the National Council for the Prevention of War (Nyack, N.Y.: Fellowship Publications, 1969), p. 10.

railroaded out of town by the local constable or being shipped out of the country by an enterprising Attorney General with eyes on the White House.[2]

The degree to which America was judged to be isolationist presented similar problems. Compared with America's participation in the war, in the peace conference and her brief attempts at internationalism through the League of Nations, the 1920s did indeed seem isolationist. But viewed within a larger framework encompassing at least the pre-war years, America's participation in world affairs was significant. Cooperative efforts with other governments on the problem of armaments and arbitration of disputes and the expansion of economic interests were important concerns to America's policy makers.

Perhaps a more accurate description of the mood of the period (also frequently used) was disillusionment. It was the mental void of disillusionment that would be filled by "Red Scares" and the rise of economic nationalism. "The events of 1919," said Scott Fitzgerald, "left us cynical . . . " about America's entrance in the Great War and about continued participation in the

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[2]Stanley Coben, "A Study in Nativism: The American Red Scare of 1919-1920," Political Science Quarterly 79 (March 1964): 73. For a different assessment see William J. Preston, Jr., Aliens and Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903-1933 (New York: Harper & Row, 1963; Harper Torchbooks), pp. 181-276.

political affairs of the world.[3] This war had been different. There were few songs sung or romantic adventures told to trigger the memory about the war. Instead people questioned the rationale President Wilson used as he led the nation to war and measured it against the results of the Treaty of Paris. In attempting to gain enthusiastic support for the war, Wilson resorted to rhetoric and moralistic images rather than concrete issues. By contrasting the nature and motives of autocratic and democratic governments, he hoped to arouse the moral indignation of the people against Germany for putting an end to world peace. "A steadfast concert for peace," he argued, "can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenents."[4] Wilson's assertions about the illegitimacy of autocratic governments and their tendency to ignore such vague concepts as neutral rights were difficult concepts for the average American to comprehend. Had he chosen less lofty reasons for fighting; that a victorious Germany would threaten the United States or that the defeat of the

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[3]F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Crack-up," in The Diversity of Modern America: Essays in History Since World War One, ed. David Burner (New York: Appleton-Crofts, 1970), p. 56.

[4]Woodrow Wilson, Congressional Record, 65th Congress, 1st Session, April 2, 1917, vol. 55, Part I, p. 104.

Allies would have destroyed the community of interest between Atlantic neighbors, the nation probably would have understood. But, as Walter Lippmann argued shortly before the United States began fighting, "If we put the matter on the basis of neutral rights we shall never know whether we have vindicated them or not, and our participation in the war would be as futile as a duel of honor."[5] By linking entrance in the war with its outcome, Wilson tied the validity of his rationale for intervention to the perceived accomplishments of the treaty conference.

Adverse reaction to the treaty negotiated by the Allied representatives at Paris thus contributed to the feeling of disillusionment. What Americans observed was not the acceptance of fourteen honorable points but the assertion of nationalistic desires by the victors, and a compromise of ideals by Wilson. The world, it seemed, was no better off than before the war. The bitter debate at home that followed, symbolized by Wilson and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, added to the confusion. The futile battle over the Treaty, the League and Article X led Americans into the 1920s with the determination to avoid another war and maintain the peace. In this atmosphere pacifist thought was to gain wider acceptance than anytime before or since.

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[5]Walter Lippmann, "The Defense of the Atlantic World," New Republic 10 (February 17, 1917): 61.

Pacifist sentiment has always lived on the fringe of respectability.[6] It has gained marginal acceptance only when joining movements with wider support. Such was the case during the interwar years. Historically, the nature of pacifism has been either religious or ethical. Positive and optimistic, the religious pacifist valued such things as trust, good will and love. Their personal relationships, particularly the family set the standards by which all other relationships were measured including a pattern for operating in the national and international world. For the religious pacifist, this approach to life was the example they offered for others to follow.

Less theologically oriented, the secular pacifist focused on the value of humanity and the consequences of war and violence on the human spirit. The secular pacifists were those who saw violence and war as irrational and costly in terms of its effects on human progress and society and in terms of money, lives and property wasted.[7]

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[6]Several useful works, of varying quality, were used for this overview, including: Peter Brock, Pacifism in the United States: From the Colonial Era to the First World War (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968); Merle Curti, Peace or War: The American Struggle (New York: W. W. Norton, 1936); and C. Roland Marchand, The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898-1918 (Princeton, N.J.: University of Princeton Press, 1972).

[7]John K. Nelson, The Peace Prophets: American Pacifist Thought, 1919-1941 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), p. 5.

The American pacifist experience has manifested itself in several forms with significant yet subtle intellectual differences. The Mennonites, for example, adhere to the separation of church and state quite literally and refuse participation in worldly-governmental affairs. Although they oppose war and violence they refuse participation in activities working to alleviate them. Quakers, on the other hand, are more likely to be activists, working tirelessly toward their goal of changing the order of things. Because they are not bound by dogma, Quakers are constantly questioning and changing the tactics used. Their attempts to change the order of things have led them to oppose not only war and violence but oppression of the human spirit. It would not be until after the war that the Quaker ideal of working for a new social order would gain pre-eminence. Political action was still a secondary tactic to education and discussion.[8]

Before 1917, many pacifists joined nonpacifist peace societies as an outlet for their ideas on the conduct of national and international affairs. Two of the earliest societies, the Massachusetts Peace Society (1815) and the first New York Peace Society (1828), argued not only against war but were influenced by

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[8]Charles Chatfield, "World War I and the Liberal Pacifist in the United States," American Historical Review 75 (December 1970): 1921.

humanitarian motives as they opposed social ills ranging from the disenfranchisement of women to slavery.[9] With the establishment by Andrew Carnegie of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in 1910, peace societies were cast in a different light. Their primary goal was now the prevention of war and their activities were called pacifistic. Although the label was incorrect, it was one that would remain through, and following, the war to describe any and all peace efforts irrespective of group membership, aims or methods.[10] The label would also take on negative connotations--Communist, draft dodger--and the accepted definition of the day was governed not by principles or ideology but by rapidly changing circumstances in foreign affairs. As the nation progressed toward involvement in World War I the definition narrowed to "opposition to all war" with decidedly negative descriptions. As the desire for peace gained wider acceptance, as it did in the 1920s, the definition broadened with equally favorable descriptions.[11]

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[9]Curti, Peace or War, p. 35. For a discussion of early peace society activity see Curti, Peace or War, pp. 16-103 and Peter Brock, Pacifism in the United States, pp. 333-866.

[10]Norman Angell, "Pacifism," Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 11, 527-28.

[11]Charles Chatfield, For Peace and Justice: Pacifism in America, 1914-1941 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), p. 4.

In understanding the mind and methods of pacifists like Frederick Libby, a narrow definition of pacifism is misleading. A more appropriate label, one that leads to greater understanding of post-war motives and tactics, would be "peace activist." The term permits flexibility in our understanding and it grants, to those under examination, flexibility not allowed by the narrow confines of the term "pacifist." All too often those studying pacifism have evaluated pacifists only in terms of the rigid moral guidelines that that term permits. This built-in qualification has led to restricted and often shallow judgments of those working for peace, allowing for little or no intellectual change, of cynically calling intellectual change opportunistic and of such crude appraisals of pacifism as too idealistic, overly moral and irrelevant.[12] It will be seen shortly that to define a person like Frederick Libby solely in terms of his pacifism restricts not only accurate judgments but limits an appreciation of a man who was intellectually open, broadminded and never ceasing in his efforts to expand his thinking.

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[12]For example, see the treatment of pacifists and pacifism in Robert Osgood, Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957); Selig Adler, The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth Century Reaction (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1957); and Donald B. Meyers, The Protestant Search for Political Realism, 1919-1941 (Berkley: University of California Press, 1960).

Despite the stereotypes imposed on pacifists, they frequently confused their contemporaries with several opinions on issues many nonpacifists believed had only one position. Their emphasis on tactics and the use of worldly apparatus, for example, led to varying opinions on the legitimacy of the use of force. The seriousness of this debate manifested itself as pacifists joined so-called internationalists prior to World War I in an attempt to establish some form of machinery for settling disputes. The argument focused on the role, if any, the use of force through sanctions and mutual defense agreements should play in the mechanism of an organization. Those who " . . . thought in terms of an organic functioning body," the "internationalists," supported, in varying degrees and methods, the use of economic and military sanctions as a means of enforcing compliance with the will of the organization.[13]

Although most pacifists accepted the use of diplomatic sanctions, the debate over sanctions of force can be seen by briefly examining the League to Enforce Peace.[14] Considered the " . . . most active and influential . . . " of the pre-war internationalist

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[13]Warren F. Kuehl, Seeking World Order: The United States and International Organization to 1920 (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1969), pp. viii, 200-19.

[14]Nelson, The Peace Prophets, p. 111.

societies, the League came into being following a series of organizational meetings leading to a statement of principles.[15] That statement--the League's program--was deliberately worded to encourage wide support among disorganized internationalists. Although its tenets suggested the supremacy of dispute settlement by methods generally referred to as arbitration and conciliation, which pleased pacifists, its advocacy of force produced dissent. Nicholas Murray Butler of the Carnegie Endowment argued that the use of sanctions was unacceptable. He suggested that if any organization was forthcoming it should be based on a system of justice via courts,

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[15]Kuehl, Seeking World Order, pp. 200, 214. The final resolutions of the group were:

"1. That it is the opinion of those present that it is desirable for the United States to form a League of all great nations in which all justiciable questions between them would be submitted to a judicial tribunal.
2. That members of the League shall jointly use their military force to prevent any one of their number from going to war or committing acts of hostility against any member before the question at issue has been submitted to the tribunal.
3. That nations shall be compelled to submit non-justiciable questions to a Council of Conciliation before going to war, under the same penalty as provided above.
4. That conferences between the parties to this agreement shall be held from time to time to formulate and to codify rules of international law which, unless some nation shall signify its dissent within a stated period, shall thereafter govern in the decision of the aforementioned tribunal." p. 190.

inquiries and commissions.[16] Other pacifists argued that some form of neutral enforcement agency was permissible. Their rationale was based on the analogy of the domestic police force which was necessary to maintain order but was not considered, at least theoretically, a military unit, but an impartial administrator of the law. The distinction was not one clearly understood by internationalists. During the crises of the inter-war years, pacifists would reluctantly advocate economic sanctions ranging from simple threats to complete blockades and boycotts.

The argument over sanctions in the pre-war years was clearly symptomatic of a deeper, more fundamental dispute over the nature of man and the ability of an international organization to succeed in a hostile environment. The internationalists believed that a workable system could be imposed to accomplish highly desirable ends regardless of the environment, but sanctions would be needed to enforce compliance. The pacifists responded that no imposed system could succeed without a basic change in the outlook of people. They felt that if people believed in and actively sought the benefits of peace, resorting to sanctions and force would be unnecessary. Pacifists refused support for internationalists as the debate continued and neither group

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[16] Ibid., p. 208.

was to be satisfied with the international organization that came out of Paris. The problems of that organization and its environment would be left largely to a new generation--"liberal pacifists" Charles Chatfield called them--whose opposition to war and violence developed during and immediately following World War I. They included A. J. Muste, Kirby Page and Frederick J. Libby.

II

The Libby heritage was firmly rooted in southeastern Maine farming beginning with John Libby in 1637. On November 24, 1874, in the small town of Richmond, Frederick Joseph Libby was born into a family in which community service was both vocation and avocation. His father, Abial Libby, who rejected farming to study medicine at Bowdoin College, was the epitome of the country doctor. Using an "open sleigh in winter and a buggy in summer . . . " he never refused a patient's request for help and payment was often made with apples or potatoes.[17] At great personal risk, Abial Libby often advocated Democratic politics in solidly Republican Maine and taught his son to be an independent thinker.

Libby's mother, Susan Lennan Libby, also served the community well as a schoolteacher. Libby called her a "born teacher," the truth of which was reflected in her

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[17]Libby, To End War, p. 2.

preparing him so well that he began college at the age of fifteen--after waiting a year to mature. Like his father, Libby attended Bowdoin College in nearby Brunswick. In 1894, at the age of nineteen, he graduated " . . . second in a class of forty-eight and 'magna cum laude' lest anyone should think I was too young for college."[18]

Uncertain of his future, Libby followed the family's tradition of community service as high school principal in Boothbay Harbor and Richmond, Maine. He rather vaguely defined his goals as international travel and expanding his education, and for the next twenty years he would do both. His experiences in England and the Continent, the Middle East, the Pacific and the Far East contributed to his fundamental understanding of people and lay the foundations for his pacifist sentiments and his dedication to working for peace.

After the death of his father in 1898, Libby made his first trip to Germany, where he studied German philosophy. He returned to Germany in 1902 after graduating from Andover Theological Seminary with a two-year travel/study fellowship award. He traveled extensively throughout the Continent and the Middle East during vacations from study at universities in Marburg and Berlin, Germany and Oxford, England. Libby felt that he had profited from study in two completely different

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[18]Ibid., p. 3.

educational systems: " . . . the accurate and precise scholarship . . . " of the German university and the " . . . broad grasp of principles . . . " offered at Oxford.[19]

It was while studying at the Congregational Mansfield College (Oxford) that Libby met pacifist Leyton Richards. Richards gained prominence while a pastor in Melbourne, Australia fighting that country's conscription laws and was a leader of the British Fellowship of Reconciliation. Through his friendship with Richards, Libby gained a broad understanding of pacifism and pacifist thinking prior to his peace activism in the twenties.[20] He recalled Richards answering all the hard questions put to him on the subject. Libby was no doubt impressed by his willingness to discuss issues ranging from simple to complex and with his well thought-out answers. Several years later, in preparation for an interview that probably began with questions as basic as those he first asked Richards, Libby wrote a long memo entitled "Answers

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[19]Ibid.

[20]Three sermons on pacifism by Libby, 1904-05; Libby letters to parents, August 17, 1918 and December 15, 1918; Frederick J. Libby Papers, MS Division, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as Libby Papers).

to Hard Questions."[21] After dispensing with the mundane, he offered some responses that, although directed to personal conduct, were indicative of his outlook on the conduct of international affairs.[22] Responding to an either-or question; would he take the life of an attacker if that was the only way to prevent the death of a loved one, Libby said, "Probably I should if I allowed the situation to reach that (point) . . . "[23] The implications for conduct were clear; all necessary steps should be taken to prevent tension from turning into crisis. Furthermore, steps should be taken to reduce tension and discourage policies that lead to it. At the time this was written, Libby was actively engaged in efforts to influence policy along precisely those lines. Answering the question, "Do you 'turn the other cheek' when anybody hits you?," Libby said, "Nobody lives up to his ideals."[24] This statement predated by ten years

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[21]F. J. Libby Memo, August 24, 1928, Archives of the National Council for the Prevention of War (hereafter cited as NCPW files), Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

[22]Not without a certain degree of humor, the memo went, in part:

"Question: Would you fight for your wife?
Answer: I am not married.
Question: Would you fight for your mother?
Answer: My mother is dead. . . ."

[23]Ibid., p. 1.

[24]Ibid., p. 2.

Libby's moral predicament over the use of sanctions as the world crept closer to another war. His "ideals" were based on his understanding of pacifism, to which Richards contributed so much. Their friendship was one of the two most important influences directing Libby towards a life devoted to peace activism.

Libby was an intellectual adventurer, always questioning, seeking and explaining. Although a person of firm convictions, he was always allowing them to be challenged on the theory that great harm was done by closing one's mind to new ideas. If beliefs were soundly based on evidence and morality they would not suffer from re-examination. If they were unsound, the only acceptable alternative was change. A brief examination of Libby's evolving attitude toward the struggle of blacks for acceptance and equality exemplifies this point. In 1908 Libby spent a month touring the states of the Old Confederacy " . . . to study the Negro problem. . . . "[25] In his journal of the trip, after many pages of description, anecdote and personal observation, Libby concluded by paternalistically speculating on the future of blacks in this country, focusing on blacks not on whites, or on white racism. The solution to the "Negro problem" was through "Industrial education for the masses. . . . They

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[25]Journal of Southern Trip, September 23-October 17, 1908, Libby Papers.

need development of their powers. They are but ignorant children else [sic]." Regarding social and political justice, Libby suggested that whites must "give it," that by "clamoring for it" blacks only weaken their position. "The Negro must depend on the sense of justice of the best whites" if not for himself then "for his children."[26] The origins of anti-black bias are frequently debated, but the effects of that bias are long term and usually strengthen with age. And yet, in 1930 at the age of fifty-six, while speculating on what the empires of Africa and Asia would be like in twenty years, he argued that " . . . the white man loved to boss other people around for their own good and for his own . . . the white man with one-eighth of the population of the world dominates three-fourths of the earth's surface." But in the 1930s black people were "clamoring" for social and political justice; "The principle of self-determination is loose in the world." The quelling of discontented peoples " . . . would certainly require the aid of force," which Libby did not condone. Thus, he advocated a voluntary end to white domination.[27]

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[26]Ibid., last three pages of Journal. (pages unnumbered)

[27]"Where Shall We Be in 1950?," July 10, 1930, NCPW files.

It could, of course, be argued that Libby's new attitude reflected sixty years of changed circumstances, but this would be only partially correct. Changing conditions alone are no guarantee of flexibility unless one is predisposed to such mental activity. Libby's open-mindedness existed before his acceptance of pacifist thought and his evolving attitude toward the black struggle was indicative of his application of both to explain the causes of war. Minority oppression was a major cause of conflict and war, which the ethnic problems of Central Europe prior to World War I clearly demonstrated. "A nation is judged by its treatment of minorities," he argued, and there was little doubt in his mind that the "underprivileged nations" and "exploited peoples of Africa and the Orient are 'on the move.' . . . The colored races are not content with a white man's world and the 'Have Nots' are determined to resist the domination of the more fortunate 'Haves.' . . . We are confronted with the problem of achieving peace in the whole world and not in a small portion of it."[28] Thus, to Libby, whatever threatened peace--imperialism, economic exploitation or, in this case, oppression--must be eliminated to reduce tensions that ultimately lead to violence and war.

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[28]Notes by Libby, 1943, NCPW files; Notes on "Peace" by Libby, late 1930s (no date), NCPW files.

The important point, for understanding Libby, was his ability and willingness to change because circumstances had indeed changed, but also because the accomplishment of desirable goals (peace) necessitated changing the means (opposition to oppression, etc.) by which those goals were attained. Since he was convinced that his own willingness to change had furthered his efforts for peace, Libby argued that change also played a significant role in international affairs and the quest for peace. "We shall have to begin by ridding our minds . . . and the world of the notion that peace means preservation of the status-quo." Belief in this "fallacy" has caused numerous conflicts. "The plain fact is that there is no 'status-quo' to be disturbed . . . change is the only constant in human relations." Libby argued that the Versailles Treaty was an attempt to preserve the status-quo that was doomed to failure because change was "inevitable." " . . . Our choice is only between violent change and peaceful change."[29] The political world, unfortunately, was not as openminded as Frederick Libby.

Except for a year (1911) of travel in the Pacific and the Far East, Libby remained in the United States from 1904 to 1917 as pastor of Union Congregational

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[29]"The Problem of Peace," June 11, 1937, NCPW files.

Church in Magnolia, Massachusetts and then as a member of the faculty at Phillips Exeter Academy teaching Religion and German and as an advisor to the Christian Fraternity.[30] As the stability of the European alliance system deteriorated into war, he spoke out against the inhumanity and destructiveness of it and cautioned the United States against involvement. But in the Spring of 1917 American participation was a fact, and like millions of people on both sides of the Atlantic, Libby's future was directly affected by his experiences with the war. Following considerable anti-pacifist pressure from some Exeter alumni, Libby was among nine faculty members who tendered their resignation from the school. Rather than agree to his resignation, the trustees of the Academy offered Libby a leave of absence, which he accepted.[31]

He now turned his attention to the task of how best to serve the cause of peace and humanity in the midst of war. As an ordained Congregational minister who also happened to be forty-four years old, Libby was not subject to the draft. He offered his services to the Young Mens Christian Association which was working

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[30]Myron R. Williams, The Story of Phillips Exeter (Exeter, N.H.: Phillips Exeter Academy, 1957), pp. 157-58.

[31]Libby, To End War, p. 5; Laurence M. Crosbie, The Phillips Exeter Academy: A History (Norwood, Mass.: Plimpton Press, 1924), p. 261.

in German prisoner of war camps. Despite his fluency in German, the application was rejected because of mounting criticism that the YMCA was a refuge for conscientious objectors. Quite by accident--"God took a hand in my affairs. . . . " Libby reflected--he read in the New York Post, which he subscribed to "out of loyalty" to its pacifist publisher, Oswald Garrison Villard, that conscientious objectors were authorized by the Secretary of War to help in restoring French villages.[32] The work was being done by a newly organized Quaker group, the American Friends Service Committee. This time his offer of help was accepted and Libby sailed for France in July, 1918. Through the AFSC, Libby's experience with the aftermath of war was to be the other important influence leading him to a life dedicated to working for peace. Visiting a recent battlefield, Libby wrote: "We happened upon several bodies that had been overlooked. There sprawled the remains of husbands, fathers . . . sons, sodden bodies rotting in the sun. The roots of my pacifism sank deep into that rich earth."[33]

In the Spring of 1920, after a brief stay at Phillips Exeter Academy, Libby returned to Europe at the

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[32]Libby, To End War, p. 5.

[33]Ibid., p. 6. Libby letter to parents, February 15, 1919, Libby Papers.

invitation of the AFSC as European Commissioner to coordinate Friends missions in Central Europe. After visiting Germany, Austria and Poland, Libby returned to the United States to help make public opinion aware of the need for food and clothing by the victims of the war.

It had been more than two years since Libby stood in that French battlefield and he wrote later that " . . . the purpose of my life was growing clearer and clearer."[34] The culmination of events and emotions surrounding World War I left many "cynical," but Libby's resolve led him to what was left of the peace movement. "The growth of peace sentiment in our country in the Spring of 1921," he said, "was as striking as was the lack of coordination among the many peace movements."[35] After joining the Religious Society of Friends in Philadelphia, Libby, who had resigned from the AFSC, and several leading Friends exchanged ideas about the "next" war, and the future of the peace movement. Their first decisive step was the founding of the ten-member Friends Disarmament Council, the nucleus for a larger organization that would act as a clearinghouse for those dedicated to working for peace. The calling of the Washington

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[34]Ibid., p. 6.

[35]Libby biographical information sheet, December 6, 1924, NCPW files.

Conference provided them with their first opportunity for effective action.

In the years immediately preceding the 1921 Conference, Libby's decision to dedicate his life to working for peace was based on his pacifism, his relief work and his estimate of the nation's sentiment for peace. The Friends Disarmament Council was his first practical step toward organizing peace advocates. Libby's intention was to bring them together not on an ideological basis, but with a clear view of real-world problems and real-world solutions.

CHAPTER 2

The goals had been peace, security and an end to war. But publication of the Versailles Treaty and its rejection by the United States Senate made those goals seem just as illusive as before. Many people who had supported Wilson and the war became cynical and with their despair indulged in the trivia of the 1920s--the "Lost Generation," Gertrude Stein called them. But at the same time there were those, Frederick Libby among them, who did not resign from the world, who embraced not trivia but the belief that those goals were still attainable.

I

Explaining why some were disillusioned and some were not is a difficult task but for Libby and others like him one thing seemed certain: unlike the reformers and liberal intellectuals such as John Dewey who had accepted Wilson's lofty rhetoric, Libby had no illusions about the reality of war. He was not persuaded by Wilson that the war was a positive good or that its outcome would mean security or the realization of idealism. Libby would have agreed with Randolph Bourne, the war's anti-hero, that:

> . . . values such as artistic creation, knowledge, reason, beauty, the enhancement of life, are instantly and almost unanimously sacrificed. . . . The war--or American promise: one must choose. One cannot be interested in both. For the effect of war will be to impoverish American promise.[1]

With this thought in mind, many peace activists began thinking about the methods and tactics needed to face the challenges of the post-war era and they hoped for the right opportunity to act.

Libby was convinced that the disillusionment of both activist and average American was so widespread that the desire for peace was a deeply felt emotion. He was correct, but the problem was how to translate that desire into effective, meaningful action. By the Spring of 1921, there were literally dozens of peace societies in addition to numerous groups, like the YMCA, the Parent-Teachers Association and the newly formed National League of Women Voters whose secondary concern was peace. They all acted independently on peace-related issues resulting in needless duplication of effort and expense. According to Libby, the "chief subject of conversation everywhere" was the "next war."[2]

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[1]Randolph S. Bourne, War and the Intellectuals: Collected Essays, 1915-1919, ed. Carl Resek (New York: Harper & Row, 1964; Harper Torchbooks), pp. 46, 71.

[2]Libby, To End War, p. 8.

The impetus for action came from fear and desperation felt by many activists over the armament programs of the United States, Great Britain and Japan. The rivalry among these nations expressed itself in a race to build naval armaments "but it went much deeper, it had its origins in a shifting distribution of world power."[3] The crucial point for understanding this rivalry was the rise in power of Japan and the United States and the relative decline of Germany and Great Britain. In the Pacific, defeated Germany was gone and victorious England had reduced her presence considerably. Thus it was left for the United States to meet the increasingly powerful Japanese. But, Tokyo was clearly distrustful of Washington's intentions. Their relationship had been characterized by America's opposition to Japanese rights in Shantung, by continuing immigration restrictions and by continuing anti-Japanese sentiment on the West Coast. Across the Atlantic, England, weakened financially by the war, refused to relinquish her superior position at sea but found underwriting that position extremely costly. Most important for the Japanese and the British was America's stronger physical and financial position should a naval race continue unabated. Faced with just such a prospect and a massive

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[3]Osgood, Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations, p. 334.

building request from the Navy Department, Idaho Senator William E. Borah, who later became Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, introduced a resolution in December, 1920 calling on President Harding to initiate a three-way conference to discuss the dangers of, and hopefully an end to, the armaments race.

Robert Endicott Osgood argued that these two events--the Naval appropriations request and the Borah Resolution--made the desire for arms limitations "a full-fledged movement in December, 1920." But this judgment seems premature. Libby, certainly at the center of any "movement," found it difficult to rally any sizable support until the late Spring of the following year. Charles Chatfield has argued that even peace societies were slow to act and John Chalmers Vinson argued more cautiously that the appropriations request and the resolution "awakened an . . . enthusiastic response from the American people," but little else.[4] It was only after numerous groups like the National League of Women Voters and the Federal Council of Churches took up the cause of disarmament that public momentum really began.

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[4]Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, p. 149; John Chalmers Vinson, The Parchment Peace: The United States Senate and the Washington Conference, 1921-1922 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1955), pp. 51-52. Also see Vinson, William E. Borah and the Outlawry of War (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1957), pp. 37, 38.

Disarmament, or more properly, arms limitation, was of high priority with many of the groups interested in securing peace. It was an issue easily comprehended, for the "connection" between arms and war missed no one. A limitation on armaments was seen by peace activists as a preventative to war. According to their line of thinking, armament building programs always led to war; the arms were built to be used. Thus, any government that reduced its armament program was thought to be more interested in securing peace than in preparing for war. Furthermore, a reduction in arms building would have been in keeping with America's traditional policy of disarming at the conclusion of a war. Peace activists also argued that a reduction in arms building would mean a reduction in taxes on the average citizen since tax revenues financed the armaments programs.

Disarmament advocates also believed that a conference for arms limitation would appeal to those like Senator Borah who argued against cooperation with any League of Nations efforts at arms limitation. According to Borah, by taking the initiative for reducing armaments itself, the United States could preserve the sovereignty it would lose by cooperating with the League. Such voluntary action would result in specific requirements agreed to in writing instead of adhering to the vague pronouncements of the League. Thus, the United States

could not be caught off guard by unforeseen contingencies. California Senator, Hiram Johnson, a long-time opponent of international cooperation, voiced his support for Borah's resolution. So, two of the most stalwart, vocal opponents of international cooperation through the League, came out in favor of international cooperation sponsored by the United States because they believed her freedom of action was preserved.

Throughout the Winter of 1920-21, Libby spoke on behalf of peace and the necessity of arms limitation but he was frustrated that the Quaker Speakers Bureau limited his speaking engagements to audiences so predisposed to their line of thinking. Libby pleaded with the Bureau to schedule appearances before groups with more diverse opinions on peace and war. He believed that those most in need of hearing his speeches were the opponents of arms limitation and those who had decided for peace but had yet to become actively involved in working for it.

On June 22, 1921, shortly before Congress was to consider the Borah Resolution, Libby was invited by the leaders of several Philadelphia Quaker groups to join them in discussions concerning tactics and the limitation of armaments. Sympathetic to Libby's desire to reach more people, these Quaker leaders hoped Libby could contribute to the development of some type of

coordinated, effective plan to further the cause of arms reduction. The outcome of this meeting was the formation of the Friends Disarmament Council whose objective was "to coordinate the disarmament work of Friends while not displacing . . . (other) peace committees . . . (and) to articulate . . . the great disarmament sentiment of America and the world." It was the hope of those present that the Council would be the forerunner of a larger clearinghouse of the nation's diversified groups that sought peace; "we should appeal not only to friends but to the general public . . . (and) farmer organizations, labor, women's clubs, churches, etc. . . . "[5]

The formation of the Council did not initially meet with universal Quaker approval. The American Friends Service Committee objected to the political nature of the Council's raison d'etre. The AFSC was organized to conduct relief work and its brief but solid tradition, pointedly nonpolitical, frowned on political action by its workers. Since most of the Council's members belonged to the AFSC, the Committee felt its traditions and policies were being violated. Libby, apparently aware of the problem ahead of time, was prepared to defend the Council against the Committee's objections. The Friends Disarmament Council,

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[5]"Suggestions for Consideration," F. J. Libby memo, Spring, 1921, NCPW files.

he argued, "will not concern itself with relief work; will be from the start politically active at Washington and will extend its influence as rapidly as possible throughout the country . . . ; will need to break its own path in a new field unhampered by traditions; and will demand of those who determine policy . . . to make wise decisions unhurried by the unrelated specific problem of feeding children. . . . "[6] Libby further contended that the purpose, function and objective of the two groups was "related only . . . in that both . . . serve the cause of peace." It would be dysfunctional to put a politically oriented group under the direction of a relief committee since "decentralization" was what would best serve the needs of the AFSC and the Disarmament Council. Libby's rationale overcame the AFSC's objections and the Council began its work "limited to the propogation and organization . . . of sentiment for disarmament, to render it effective to the point of making every nation secure and . . . safe."[7]

Through the Spring of 1921, Libby's speaking engagements emphasized the subject of disarmament. It had been decided by the members of the Council that rather than spread themselves too thin by dealing with too many peace-related topics, they would focus on disarmament and capitalize on its growing popularity

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[6]Ibid., p. 3.

[7]Ibid., pp. 3, 4.

around the nation.[8] The handling of too many topics was one of the chief criticisms they had of most peace groups. Emphasizing one objective at a time was hereafter characteristic of Libby's work in the 1920s and 1930s.

Senate consideration of the Borah Resolution calling on Harding to initiate an arms limitation conference began in the Spring of 1921 without Administration support. Generally, Harding was opposed to international cooperation through the League of Nations favoring instead an "association of nations," a vague concept he never defined but used effectively in the campaign of 1920. The President also spoke favorably about the need for disarmament, but his continued advocacy of a strong United States Navy implied he favored more traditional avenues toward peace and security.

Despite Administration objections, Senator Borah eventually won the day and the Senate passed his resolution on May 25 by a vote of 74-0. The Senate's unanimous adoption of the Borah Resolution was also the result of increased public pressure from organized groups. It was the activities of these groups that

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[8]Letter from M. Albert Linton to Allen T. Hole, August 19, 1921, NCPW files. Linton wrote to fellow Council-member Hole: Our speakers should "not take up the broad question of peace excepting as it relates to the disarmament issue."

convinced members of the Senate of the public sentiment favoring an arms limitation conference.[9] It was also these pressure groups that Libby hoped to coordinate because they could effectively compel participation from their members to write letters and circulate petitions. What would help keep them enthusiastic and convince them that their work was not being done in vain, would be the figure of Senator Borah, powerful, influential and, most important, vocally supportive of their efforts. With such a person on their side, they believed that success was only a matter of time.

A month later, on June 29, the House adopted the Borah Resolution 332-4. Congressional acceptance of Borah's call for a conference on arms limitation reflected both the public pressure in favor of such action and the desire of Congress to move the President away from his preoccupation with American naval strength. These pressures helped change the Administration's mind and invitations to the conference were issued in August, 1921.[10]

Libby and the Friends Disarmament Council did not ignore the effectiveness of the groups that helped gain passage of the Borah Resolution. Libby saw the

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[9]Vinson, The Parchment Peace, pp. 92-95.

[10]Ibid., pp. 97-98, 114-16.

calling of the conference as the opportunity he had hoped for and he quickly urged the Council to take the initiative of organizing a clearinghouse for disarmament work. Most of the organizations mentioned by Vinson as being most influential on Congress and the Administration; The Women's Committee for World Disarmament, The National League of Women Voters, The National Consumer League, The National Council of Jewish Women and The Women's Christian Temperance Union soon accepted invitations to a meeting to discuss the formation of a clearinghouse.

II

The issuing of invitations to a conference on arms limitation was a positive step toward international cooperation and peace. In the 1920s, when the mood of America was divided between disillusionment and the faded idealism of Wilson, the conference seemed to be a compromise for those like Libby who sought cooperation for peace and those who sought a return to traditional pre-war isolation. Several of America's peace societies tried to alter the conduct of foreign affairs to suit their particular vision of the world. The Women's Peace Union, for example, tried to gain support for a Constitutional amendment outlawing war while pacifist Kirby Page advocated the establishment of a cabinet level post entitled "Department of Peace." In addition to these various methods of securing peace, most societies

supported the calling of the arms conference as a step in the right direction.[11] Frederick Libby's first concern was to seize the moment and not let the opportunity of the conference pass.

Sharing Libby's concern for peace and sympathetic with his impatience, AFSC member Harold Evans discussed the formation of a clearinghouse with Christina Merriman, Executive Secretary of the Foreign Policy Association. As a member of the Association and as a representative of the National League of Women Voters, Ms. Merriman was, according to Libby, experienced in foreign affairs. Respected by her colleagues and influential among them, her knowledge of, and contacts in, a wide assortment of civic groups was to prove indispensable to Libby's efforts. Evans was able to convince her of the need for a nationwide clearinghouse and she soon became enthusiastic about its chances for success. After discussing some preliminary matters with the Disarmament Council, Ms. Merriman issued invitations in the name of the Foreign Policy Association to all "concerned" groups to attend an organizational meeting in Washington, D.C.

On the morning of September 8, 1921, thirty-one men and women met at the Shoreham Hotel "filled with determination to prevent America's involvement in

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[11]Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, p. 147.

another war. America's recent participation in one of Europe's wars had been a costly experience," Libby wrote later, "It must not be repeated."[12] They met because they shared a desire to influence the forthcoming conference not simply by creating another peace society, but by forming a group to coordinate the activities of those societies already in existence. The problem in the past of needlessly duplicated efforts by the overlapping goals of many societies had created more confusion than anything else. If a new organization could establish some sense of order, and if a list of priorities for all the peace societies could be established, the effectiveness of campaigns on behalf of specific goals would definitely be increased.

That first meeting and two that quickly followed were largely organizational. Libby's recollections of the initial gathering reflected his confidence in the organization's attractiveness to diverse segments of America: "We represented nearly the whole range of American life," he wrote, "farm organizations . . . women's organizations, all three of the great religious groups . . . the National Education Association and the Parent-Teacher Association . . . the National League of

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[12]Libby, To End War, p. 1.

Women Voters and two labor unions."[13] Since the task was to influence the Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments, they constituted themselves as the National Council for the Limitation of Armaments (NCLA). Each member group would be represented on the Council whose activities would be directed by an executive board. An Executive Secretary, Frederick J. Libby, was chosen to run the organization.

It was clear from the beginning that Libby saw the NCLA as an ongoing organization whose work would not end with the conclusion of the Conference. In the first Bulletin issued by the Council, he stated unequivocally that the Conference "will constitute chapter one of our work. Chapter two will begin when the conference is over. . . . "[14] In the same issue of the Bulletin, Libby discussed the functions of the new organization and the tactics they planned to use to influence the Washington Conference. "To coordinate the work of the member organizations . . . to cooperate with them in maintaining an information service (and) . . . to suggest . . . possible lines of action based on the findings

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[13]Ibid., pp. 9-10; "Bulletin for Workers Among Friends," September 19, 1921; "Bulletin . . . ," October 14, 1921.

[14]"Disarmament Up to the Minute: Bulletin for Workers Among Friends," September 9, 1921, p. 2, NCPW files.

of the executive board" were listed as its primary functions.[15] These would serve as a framework for the members as they began to employ the tactics outlined by Libby. The tactics were designed to arouse and maintain grass roots enthusiasm because Libby was convinced that "the people" were always more peace oriented than the governmental bureaucracy but were without effective means to make their views known and felt. Therefore, he suggested "rousing" the local newspaper editor through the use of pamphlets, books and speakers on the need for disarmament. He urged that each library have a "Disarmament shelf"; that schools award prizes for the "best essays on Disarmament"; and that disarmament should be discussed at all fraternal or civic association meetings. The ultimate goal of all this was "a great outpouring of the people" during the week prior to the opening of the Conference on November 12.[16]

With very little time to spare, Libby began the task of putting together a working organization. He opened the NCLA headquarters on Seventeenth Street, N.W. in Washington, a mere two blocks from the site of

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[15]Ibid., p. 1.

[16]Ibid., p. 4. A few of the titles for the "disarmament shelf"; Will Irwin's The Next War, Kirby Page's The Sword and the Cross, and John Maynard Keynes' The Economic Consequences of the Peace.

the Conference and directly across the street from the departments of Navy, State and War. Assembling an efficient office was his next responsibility. Gladys Gould Mackenzie was chosen by Libby to run the office and Laura Puffer Morgan became the resident expert on foreign affairs.[17] Most important in terms of her contribution was Florence Brewer Boeckel, the chief publicist of the Council. Quite literally walking in off the street one day to offer her services, Ms. Boeckel was at one time editor of the Suffragist and was publicity director and a founder of the National Women's Press Club. These three people, the heart of the organization, would remain with Libby through the 1930s. In the weeks before November twelfth the staff sent hundreds of mailings to its members. Posters, pamphlets, reprints and peace bibliographies were aimed at informing and explaining the task at hand.

III

As the Washington Conference convened on November 12, 1921, the NCLA began a campaign aimed at informing the public of Conference activities. The Council's weekly Bulletin provided a constant flow of information to NCLA members about the "trend of thought

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[17]To Ms. Mackenzie fell the task of the preliminary arrangement of the NCPW files for presentation to the Swarthmore College Peace Collection.

in Washington."[18] The staff also sent mailings to members relating progress on specific items under discussion. Libby also asked members to help in their area by organizing study groups, holding public meetings and keeping themselves well informed.[19] The most important, and certainly the most useful, activity of the Council during the months of the Conference was forty-one international forums held at NCLA headquarters. Under the direction of Laura Puffer Morgan, the forums provided up-to-date information about the Conference and presented many speakers, including delegates to the Conference. Since most of the Conference sessions were closed to the public, the forums were an important and popular source of information. As Libby wrote later, "They kept the Washington Conference before the public and at the same time introduced our infant Council to Washington and the world."[20]

When the Washington Conference adjourned in February, 1922, it had concluded three important treaties, the first of which was the Four-Power Treaty

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[18]"Statement of the National Council for the Limitation of Armaments," December 6, 1921, NCPW files.

[19]Ibid.; "Statement of Activities," March 31, NCPW files.

[20]Libby, To End War, p. 13.

of December 13, 1921. Under the terms of this agreement the United States, Great Britain, France and Japan each agreed to support the Pacific Ocean possessions of the others. All disputes among the four were to be settled by negotiation and, in the event of attack by another power, the signatories were obliged to confer before action was taken. The treaty was to expire in ten years.

On February 6, 1922, the Five-Power Treaty was signed and for the first time large nations voluntarily agreed to restrictions in naval armaments. The United States, Great Britain, Japan, France and Italy agreed to end all capital ship (battleship) programs for at least ten years and to place limits on their size. Most important, however, was the tonnage ratios for the countries involved which were distributed on a 5:5:3:1.7:1.7 basis for the United States, Britain, Japan, France and Italy respectively. Finally, there were to be no new fortifications built by the signatories on their Pacific possessions.

The last treaty, also signed on February 6, was designed to respect the territorial integrity of China. Under the terms of the Nine-Power Treaty, the United States, Britain, Japan, France, Italy, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands and China agreed to allow the Chinese people to be masters of their own fate and agreed not to seek special privileges, either legal or economic.

Reaction to the treaties was generally favorable and all were finally ratified by the Senate. Only the Four-Power Treaty was received critically, largely because many people, including some Senators who voted against it, saw its nonaggression agreement as an entangling alliance to be avoided.

Libby's appraisal of the Conference was also favorable. "The treaties complimented one another," he wrote later. "Their aim was to make war impossible across the Pacific and to remove the possible causes of future war."[21] More specifically, he saw the 5:5:3 ratio as a step in the right direction toward the "gradual reduction in armaments advocated by the Council," and the Four-Power Treaty "as a small step toward the world organization which (the Council) advocates."[22] "Has the Washington Conference been a success?" Libby asked rhetorically in an address given to the League of Women Voters.

> Yes . . . if only for the better understanding that it has brought among nations, particularly between the English speaking nations and between America and Japan. The United States and Japan were drifting rapidly towards war . . . at the time the Conference was called.[23]

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[21]Ibid., p. 17.

[22]F. J. Libby memo, March 28, 1922, p. 1, NCPW files.

[23]January 25, 1922, NCPW files.

Libby had hoped for more, like a greater, more all encompassing, reduction in armaments and that more nations would have been included in the Four-Power Treaty, but he and the NCLA were pleased. Before the Washington Conference adjourned in February, 1922, the Council voted unanimously to remain constituted and changed its name to the National Council for the Reduction of Armaments. "Some limitations (had been) achieved," Libby suggested as he cast his vote in favor of the name change, and the next step was the "worldwide reduction of armaments by international agreement."[24]

Libby also gained a great deal of satisfaction from the accomplishments of the new clearinghouse. He had a right to be satisfied, for they had come together quickly, almost haphazardly, and had created an efficient operation coordinating activities of so many independent and diverse groups. Much of the success of the NCLA was due to the competency of its workers, but Libby overlooked the fact that they were able to capitalize on the slow, steady growth of disarmament sentiment and its prestigious advocate, Borah. Although the Washington Conference had been the "rallying point for

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[24]NCLA form letter; "Constitution of the National Council for the Reduction of Armaments," January, 1922, NCPW files.

our group," Libby wrote later, it remained to be seen if public enthusiasm and support would surface as quickly the next time he issued a call to action.

Allen A. Kuusisto argued that the influence of the NCLA on the Washington Conference "was probably not too great"; that the "lion's share" of the credit should go to the Federal Council of Churches.[25] While it is true that the NCLA did not officially come into being until shortly before the Conference convened, it must be remembered that the Friends Disarmament Council (the nucleus of the NCLA) was at work five months earlier in the Spring of 1921. Since real momentum for calling the Conference did not begin until that time, the Disarmament Council functioned at the same time to arouse support. This is not to suggest that the role of the Federal Council of Churches was less than Kuusisto argues, but rather to elevate the efforts of Libby and his peace activists. The NCLA also pulled many groups into concerted activity between September and November, 1921, and the respect that Libby and the Disarmament Council gained among these groups during the Spring and Summer was aptly rewarded.

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[25]Allen Kuusisto, "The Influence of the National Council for the Prevention of War on United States Foreign Policy, 1935-1939" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1950), p. 35ff.

One last problem, however, was that Libby's enthusiasm for the success of the NCLA obscured his assessment of the overall impact of the Conference. His assumption that "future wars" were "impossible" overlooked not only changing circumstances, to which he seemed so attuned, but the strength and determination of the "opposition." No sooner had he stated his belief that the shipbuilding ratios defined maximum naval strength, than the Navy Department, with the aid of the NCLA's opposite number, the Navy League, urged the necessity of "building up to the Washington Treaty." As if this was not enough, the Navy then called for an increase in personnel and Libby described the "astonishment" of the Council as they read the proposed increase.[26] Frustration turned their thoughts to educating the people as well as themselves for what they saw as a continuing fight. Libby believed that if the "forces of war" had not ceased their efforts, neither could the "forces of peace." The decision facing Libby was the direction the NCLA should now take. It seemed that if the enemy was the forces of war, their efforts should now turn toward the prevention of war.

The first test of Libby's new coordinating group was passed successfully because he correctly assessed both the need for the Council and the popular sentiment

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[26]Libby, To End War, p. 18.

for limits on armaments. By mobilizing the latter through the effective use of the former, Libby established his credentials among peace advocates. He clearly demonstrated the need for coordinated action on the very practical level of informing Congress and the President of public attitudes on peace-related issues. Libby learned much about popular and elite opinion from this early episode and he now sought ways to improve the Council's effectiveness.

CHAPTER 3

The realization that fighting for peace did not end with the limited accomplishments of the Washington Conference, nor would it end with international disarmament, persuaded Libby and the NCLA staff to rethink their position. Libby determined that the focus of the National Council for the Reduction of Armaments (NCRA) was too narrow. Although Libby would continue to concentrate on each issue as it arose, the outlook and orientation of the NCRA had to change to meet the challenge of the "forces of war."

I

Although it was not until October 31, 1922 that the executive board voted unanimously to change the NCRA's name to the National Council for the Prevention of War, an evolution of outlook was taking place. With the end of the Washington Conference, popular momentum for disarmament and arms limitation quietly declined. What worried Libby most was how the staff would hold the member organizations together so the clearinghouse would continue to function. The Council had come into being

and gained support by its advocacy of arms limitation which, as a topical issue, was now gone. By mid-1922 the Council's Bulletin had a circulation of almost 10,000, most of whom were affiliated with a member group.[1] Since to most of these people the aims of the NCPW were ranked behind the primary aims of the group to which they belonged, Libby wanted to use the Bulletin to broaden the NCPW's appeal and keep the clearinghouse alive. He therefore emphasized an earlier theme, the substitution of law for war, hoping to capitalize on their inclination for reason and logic. He urged members to "keep a constant watch" on the activities and statements of Congress and the Administration and to scrutinize legislation "from the point of view of . . . (being) for or against war." Readers were urged to support, as the Council did, the Washington Conference treaties as steps toward world organization and disarmament. They were encouraged to write their Congressmen and demand a "50 per cent cut in army and navy appropriations . . . " and "government control" of the manufacturing of munitions. Support for American participation in the World Court was also advocated.[2]

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[1]F. J. Libby, "Statement of Activities of the National Council for the Reduction of Armaments," March 31, 1922, p. 2, NCPW files.

[2]Ibid., p. 1.

What Libby was trying to do seemed clear. He was emphasizing policy positions that the NCLA/NCRA had always advocated but which had been given only secondary attention to the primary objective of arms limitation. As that topic faded, the more general concerns involved with opposing war surfaced.

From March until July, 1922, Libby had no real indication whether his messages were favorably received, much less listened to. But in late July, the opportunity came to test the response. Libby learned that the British National Peace Council was planning mass demonstrations for July 29 and 30, the eighth anniversary of the outbreak of World War I. It was to be called "International No More War Day." Realizing that a summer weekend was not the best time for organizing a demonstration, Florence Boeckel suggested printing cheap "No More War" window stickers to be used that weekend as part of the demonstration and offering them in the Bulletin. By the time "No More War Day" arrived, almost two hundred thousand copies of the sticker had been requested and mailed.[3] The staff was encouraged by this response and Libby believed it was indicative of a general feeling among the NCPW's members that the prevention of war was important and that the clearinghouse was still a useful mechanism for expressing that feeling

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[3]Libby, To End War, p. 21.

and furthering public education on peace-related matters. But competition for the public attention was not left to the peace activists alone. Responding to "No More War Day," the Navy League held (on Teddy Roosevelt's birthday, no less) "Navy Day," filled with pomp and circumstance and supported by the Administration. The Navy League even opened its new office just down the street from the NCPW headquarters. After his earlier experience with the League, this episode merely confirmed Libby's suspicion, and stiffened his resolve to keep the NCPW at the forefront of the peace movement.

II

The National Council for the Prevention of War, which was chartered for one hundred years in the District of Columbia in 1922, was similar to its predecessors in terms of its principles, its staff, its middle-of-the-road outlook and its middle-class constituency.[4] But it was more tightly organized, more efficient and bore little resemblance to genteel pre-war peace societies. In fact it resembled only a handful of other peace

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[4]Libby, "What Is the NCPW," in "Program of the NCPW-1923," NCPW files; Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, pp. 107-08; Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," pp. 27-28, 54-55; also see James Wechsler, "War in the Peace Movement," Nation, March 19, 1938.

societies (characterized as radical by Robert H. Ferrell) because they were "impatient for peace."[5]

During the twenties, the relationship between Libby and the leaders of other peace societies was cordial and productive. But in the thirties, it became strained and counter-productive. Libby's original intention in organizing the Council was to coordinate peace group activity by emphasizing common goals. In the twenties the most important goals--disarmament and world organization--were common to several important peace leaders: James T. Shotwell (Carnegie Endowment), Clark Eichelberger (League of Nations Association), Dorothy Detzer (Women's International League) and John Nevin Sayre (Fellowship of Reconciliation). The general overlap of goals among these groups made cooperation for their attainment through Libby's NCPW attractive.

Libby worked most effectively with Detzer and Sayre whose groups were participating members of the NCPW.

The organizational structure of the Council resembled a confederation; each member group was, in theory, autonomous and had a voice in the decision-making process. Thus, when the Council met annually

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[5]Robert H. Ferrell, "The Peace Movement," in Isolation and Security, ed. Alexander DeConde (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1957), pp. 100-03.

to decide policy matters each participating group sent one representative.[6] In practice, however, the Executive Board, run by Libby, made the important decisions which were then ratified by the representatives. The relationship between Libby's Washington staff and the member groups was mutually dependent. Libby needed the groups because of the public access they offered him for money, letters and petitions. On the other hand, the groups needed the NCPW, as long as it generally reflected their sentiments on peace issues, to voice their beliefs in Washington. Should either side fail to meet the needs of the other, the relationship would break down. This was precisely what happened in the late 1930s when Libby's increasingly isolationist stand no longer reflected the feeling of the members. As a result his influence and support in the movement declined.

Despite agreement on goals in the twenties, there were disagreements on other matters. Shotwell and Eichelberger and their organizations were representative of those groups who sought to influence political elites and officials in high places. They endeavored to educate the people on the necessity of disarmament or international organization. They promoted international agreements and were generally satisfied with

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[6] "The By-Laws of the National Council for the Prevention of War," NCPW files.

the existing relationships among nations. They saw no need for basic political or economic change; the existing system did not hinder the path to peace.

Libby, Detzer and Sayre agreed with their colleagues on the need for education and the promotion of disarmament or international agreements. But they sought to organize public opinion, to rally it to the cause of peace by exerting pressure on the President or Congress. But this was a matter of approach and technique and did not pose a problem for coordinated action between the "conservative" groups and those "impatient for peace." Libby was simply of the opinion that peace forces could be organized and that advocates needed to work to achieve their goals.

What differentiated these segments of the peace movement was Libby's attitude toward existing political and economic relationships. Unlike the "conservative" groups, Libby saw the political and economic order that followed the Versailles Treaty as a threat to peace because of its inherent antagonisms. Rivalries that could lead to violence and war were an integral part of colonial empires. Not only were colonies a constant threat to peace should they challenge their mother country, but competing imperial powers often collided in their quest for more colonies to renew the balance of power. Competition for the world's resources and

access to the world's markets also produced rivalries that could lead to war. This situation only hindered the chances for peace and therefore, Libby, Detzer and Sayre argued that the status-quo had to be changed in order to attain a peace system. Thus, by advocating political and economic change, Libby was to the "left" of Shotwell and Eichelberger who felt there was no need for such change.

Although the label of "radical" was attached to Libby or Detzer in the twenties because they sought to change the status-quo, it still did not prevent cooperative efforts with the "conservative" groups when common goals were at stake. Thus, Libby could call on Shotwell to help rally peace forces during the Mexican war scare of 1927 and virtually all peace groups could, without hesitation, join to push for ratification of the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928.

This loose, but amicable, relationship began to sour in the thirties as Shotwell and Eichelberger increasingly advocated collective security at the risk of American involvement while Libby and Detzer argued for mandatory neutrality to keep America out of war. As the split widened, the opposing sides could still join in two movement-wide campaigns in the mid-thirties: the National Peace Conference and the Emergency Peace Campaign. When friends asked Libby how well he was

working with Clark Eichelberger, his colleague on the steering committee of the NPC, Libby responded, "Admirably!"[7] But below this facade of cooperation existed divergent opinions on neutrality. Libby and Detzer adamantly demanded isolation from foreign conflicts while Eichelberger and Shotwell supported collective action to halt aggressors. Illustrative of the depth of division between these peace movement leaders was a two-author symposium answering the question "How Can (the) United States Serve Peace?" The authors, Libby and Eichelberger, agreed only on the desirability of peace. Eichelberger ridiculed Libby's naive adherence to negotiation and arbitration. We have reached a stage in world affairs, he argued, "at which practices of the past must be abandoned for better ones" in which a society of nations "guarantees the security of its members." Libby criticized Eichelberger for adhering to the status-quo which "resists peaceful change" and to "old fashioned military and naval alliances." He concluded by wondering why Eichelberger "should continue to put faith in the blind and stupid unrealities of militarism when its bankruptcy . . . (was) so strikingly manifested in the quick reversal of the outcome of the

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[7]Peace Action 2 (April 1936): 2.

World War."[8] The disagreement over method and outlook between the "radicals" (Libby) and the "conservatives" (Eichelberger) in the twenties was qualitatively different from the degree of division evident in that exchange. Even the very fundamental argument over the necessity for changing the status-quo could be overlooked while common goals were being pursued. But when Libby ranked those goals behind isolation, differences became division and the movement was split irrevocably.

Libby worked with other peace leaders, like A. J. Muste and Kirby Page, who continued to support him even after the movement divided in the thirties. Like Libby, Muste and Page were strongly influenced by their wartime experiences and sought to develop a peace system as an alternative to war. They agreed with Libby on the need for changes in existing political and economic relationships, and so, they too were labeled "radical." Their work brought Muste and Page a higher degree of public recognition than Libby achieved. Page was a prolific writer whose works (like War: Its Causes, Consequences and Cure, 1923) were widely distributed among church organizations, civic groups and peace societies. Muste's notoriety resulted from his integrating his peace work with labor organizing and

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[8] Christian Science Monitor, May 18, 1938.

the establishment of Brookwood Labor College for the education of workers. While Libby agreed with them on the need to educate the public on the wisdom of a peace system based on peaceful change, he saw education not as an end (as did Muste and Page) but a beginning. Education was the foundation upon which Libby organized pressure to try and influence policy making. Thus, Libby spent more of his time away from the public eye, attempting to use the ideas popularized by people like Muste and Page to marshall the grass roots into an effective voice for peace sentiment.

III

When Libby organized the Council in 1921 the staff totaled five people including himself. Since their attention was aimed at the Washington Conference little time was left for fund raising among the twenty-six participating groups. As a result, the Council's initial budget of $10,000 came from the three Philadelphia Friends organizations that were instrumental in forming the Friends Disarmament Council several months earlier.[9]

After incorporation, Libby devoted more time to the necessities of organization and finance. At the end

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[9]The three Friends groups were the Five Year Meeting, the Philadelphia Orthodox and the Philadelphia Hicksite. "Details of Plans for National Council for Limitation of Armaments," January 13, 1922, NCPW files.

of the NCPW's first year of operation, Libby reported that the Council had receipts of $42,179 and expenditures of $42,103. Slightly over half of that income was the result of small contributions ($1 to $5) from Quakers throughout the country. The remaining money came from unsolicited contributions, subscriptions to the News Bulletin (circulation: 10,000), and the sale of pamphlets, reprints, peace literature and speaker's fees. During that year the NCPW increased its official membership to thirty-nine groups.[10]

The growth of the Council can be seen by comparing these early figures with the statistics for 1931 after ten years of operation when the NCPW was at the height of its influence and popularity. Throughout the twenties, contributions, subscriptions to the News Bulletin, and the budget (which averaged $130,000 a year) all increased. At the close of its tenth year, Libby reported that expenditures for 1931 ($170,000) exceeded income ($165,000) by $5,000. Over half of its income (60%) still came from Quakers ($1 to $10) and subscriptions to the News Bulletin doubled to 20,000. The remaining money was raised through the sale of peace literature, speaker's fees and unsolicited contributions. The most impressive growth, however,

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[10]"Report of the NCPW," October 31, 1922, NCPW files.

NCLA Member Groups, 1921

Participating

American Association of University Women
American Farm Bureau Federation
American School Citizenship League
American Union Against Militarism
Association to Abolish War
D.C. Women's Council for Limitation of Armaments
Farmer's National Council
Fellowship of Reconciliation
Foreign Policy Association
Friends' Disarmament Council
Girl's Friendly Society of America
International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association
National Board of Farm Organizations
National Board of YMCA
National Congress of Mothers
Parent-Teacher Associations
National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs
National Education Association
National League of Women Voters
National Milk Producers Federation
National Women's Trade Union League
Society to Eliminate the Economic Causes of War
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Women's Committee for World Disarmament
Women's Christian Temperance Union
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
World Friendship Information Bureau

Cooperating

Central Conference of American Rabbis
Church Peace Union
Commission on International Justice and Good Will of the Federal Council of Churches
Council of Women for Home Missions
General Federation of Women's Clubs
Federal Council of Churches
Intercollegiate Liberal League
International Association of Machinists
National Committee on American-Japanese Relations
National Consumers League
National Council of Jewish Women
United Society of Christian Endeavor

was in the size of the staff. In 1931, it totaled fifty-two workers in six offices in the Midwest, West and, the most important, in Washington. Libby also noted other graphic statistics: a mailing list of 125,000 names, receipt of 36,000 letters and the mailing of 2,000,000 pieces of literature. Libby's salary during these ten years increased $500 to $4500 in 1931.[11]

From 1931 to 1936 the Council's income and financial activity declined slightly during the depression. In 1934, a representative year, the budget was set at $115,000 based on receipts ($100,000) from the usual sources that included individual contributions ranging from 50¢ to $11,000. Subscriptions to the new newsletter, Peace Action, remained at the 20,000 level of its predecessor while the mailing list dropped to 115,000 names. The staff made 2,030 speeches (Libby made 250) to over a half million people in forty states during the year and they distributed one and one-half million pieces of literature. Thus, during its first fifteen years, the NCPW increased its activity, contributions and budget and remained mostly debt free.[12]

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[11]"Report of the Executive Secretary of the NCPW," October 30, 1931, NCPW files.

[12]Peace Action 1 (November, 1934), 4-7, 13.

By 1939, however, the situation had changed considerably. In 1937-38, contributions dropped to the point of placing the Council $70,000 in debt.[13] In 1939 Libby was forced to restrict NCPW activity: the staff was pared to twelve in the only remaining office in Washington, the budget was cut to a meager $76,000 and 10 percent was cut from all salaries.[14] Libby sadly noted in his diary that for the last six months of 1939 only $18,600 in contributions could be counted on.[15] Although subscriptions to Peace Action remained at their pre-1937 level, Libby was forced to replace the June-July-August edition with a single issue because of "curtailed income."[16] Further complicating this grim financial picture, the Internal Revenue Service billed Libby for $11,000 in back taxes owed since the Council's tax-exempt status was lifted for "lobbying."

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[13]"Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting," January 18, 1939, NCPW files.

[14]"Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting," January 21, 1940, NCPW files.

[15]January 18, 1939, Libby Papers.

[16]Peace Action 5 (Summer 1939): 2.

Libby attributed declining revenues primarily to differences over his stand on neutrality.[17] As he aligned himself more and more with isolationism regular supporters withheld contributions because the NCPW was no longer a clearinghouse but a voice for a single cause. The extent of dissatisfaction with Libby was reflected by the 1939 mailing list which had lost nearly 100,000 names over the 1931 list. Numerous staff resignations were also blamed on the neutrality controversy.[18] It seemed quite likely that the general recession in 1937-38 also affected contributions to the NCPW since over half of them in any given year were from individuals.

During the twenty years under examination Libby frequently organized fund raising events to meet unexpected expenses. One example of this type of activity was the Peace Bond Drive of 1935-36 which had as its goal the raising of $1,000,000. The motives for the Drive were to erase a $30,000 debt and to augment Libby's "hopelessly inadequate" anti-war budget.[19] The Drive was launched with a great deal of fanfare including pictures of Libby selling bonds to a Senator

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[17] "Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting," January 18, 1939.

[18] It was now 32,000 names. "Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting," January 21, 1940.

[19] Peace Action 2 (September 1935): 5.

and a film star and dozens of press releases stressing the advantages of buying bonds.[20] Prominent people also offered their support: "a splendid idea" said Senator Gerald Nye and James T. Shotwell offered his approval and cooperation "at this critical time."[21] Fortunately for Libby, Washingtonian Mrs. Bancroft C. Davis contributed $50,000 to wipe out the 1935 debt because the Peace Bond Drive was a failure. By January, 1936, Libby noted that it had not received the backing he had hoped for and once the Drive had ended little mention was made of its success or failure in Peace Action.[22] According to the New York Times the Drive netted the NCPW a disappointing $50,000.[23]

IV

Libby listed the general principles which served as guidelines for the Council and its member organizations as: progressive world organization, worldwide reduction of armaments to "police status" and education for world peace.

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[20]Peace Action 2 (October 1935): 1; Peace Action 2 (November 1935): 15.

[21]Peace Action 2 (October 1935): 6.

[22]Peace Action 2 (January 1936): 1; Peace Action 3 (December 1936); Peace Action 3 (January 1937).

[23]New York Times, February 11, 1938.

The philosophy behind the NCPW's three-point program was based on Libby's personal philosophy. The purpose of Libby's life, and therefore, the NCPW's, was the creation of a "more secure, abundant, free life for the American people and for all the world. (Our) desire is for a world at peace--not because peace is good in itself, but because human welfare can advance only in the conditions of peace."[24] He fully realized that the NCPW was no panacea, but he believed it could contribute to the development of a peaceful world. Progress could be made by strengthening the machinery for peace and opposing preparation for war, which leads to international rivalries and, eventually, war itself. Thus, like the leaders of other peace societies, he urged his followers to join the World Court and encouraged them to rally public opinion to support the Court's decisions.

Libby had great faith in the "weight" of public opinion, no doubt sustained by popular support for the Washington Conference. At speaking engagements he was often faced with difficult questions concerning the ability of public opinion to compel adherence to a World Court decision. The rationale he most frequently used to defend his position was the analogy of the United States Supreme Court. "The founders of the

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[24]"The Program of the National Council for the Prevention of War," undated, NCPW files.

Republic," he argued, gave the Supreme Court "no force but public opinion to support its decisions."[25] "Wise men" did not need to make threats, or call for sanctions or boycotts, because of the tragic consequences that would result if decision makers had to back such threats with actions. On the surface his analogy was most appealing, but, as is usually the case, analogies can be dangerous. Certainly the weight of public and official opinion help legitimize the decisions of the American judicial system, especially the Supreme Court. Although the Executive is required to implement Court decisions, the foundation of this legitimacy is trust. Generally, the Supreme Court justices have been among the most respected, if not revered, individuals in the public eye. American tradition has given the law almost unquestioned authority. When this reverence for the law is added to the prestige of the nine justices, it forms an almost unbeatable combination. The Court has attained the status of an "institution" in this country, one that is trusted by the people to represent both the freedom of the individual and the limits of society.

The problem with Libby's Supreme Court analogy was its inapplicability to a world where "trust" was more often exemplified by alliance systems, economic

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[25]F. J. Libby, "My Theory of World Peace," Bulletin of the National Council for the Prevention of War, December 13, 1924, pp. 3-4.

rivalry and Machiavellian politics. Even in situations where trust had a modicum of tradition behind it, such as the Anglo-American heritage, suspicion often occurred, as it did with the heated arguments over the role British propaganda played in America's entrance into World War I.

Libby's fondness for the World Court rested on his belief in arbitration for the settlement of disputes. He frequently offered all the right reasons (lives wasted, dignity lost, etc.) to explain why this method was preferable to the use of force. But the basis of his belief went deeper than what was best for mankind in the 1920s. He often referred to the early years of his life, and in various ways suggested that "in Maine we had both a court and a town meeting to keep us out of war. The court dealt with our legal disputes and the town meeting with the rest." He enlarged on his home town experience to suggest that "the essential institutions" for peace--the court and the town meeting--"are those with which New Englanders are familiar. . . . The system worked."[26] This seems like obvious naivete, and perhaps it was. But for someone so convinced of the essential goodness and dignity of people, it was easy to understand why he believed such a system could work given half a chance. If trust could have replaced suspicion, then perhaps Libby would have been proven correct. But how could

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[26]Ibid., p. 2.

all suspicion and doubt be removed even among friendly nations, let alone antagonists? He never really suggested how suspicion could be eliminated beyond offering a few vague generalities about equality, trade and anti-imperialism. Even if suspicion could be resolved, Libby never recommended that the country's nationalistic desires should be forgotten. Protecting one's freedom to act--sovereignty--was essential to the United States, as the experiences with the League and disarmament had just demonstrated.

Libby himself had problems with questions of sovereignty. The "town meeting" of world affairs he referred to was the League of Nations. He was initially opposed to America's participation in the League because it was "so tied to the Versailles Treaty (which he also opposed) that it was more likely to cause war than prevent it," but by 1924 Libby favored the United States joining it.[27] His change of mind was based on his realization that the League was here to stay and its deliberations were crucial. "Important decisions are being made by the League," he argued, "America should have a part in making all such decisions, because they inevitably affect our future. The world is now a community, and the welfare of each nation is closely wrapped up with the decisions of the rest."[28] Despite his

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[27]Ibid., pp. 1, 3.

[28]Ibid., p. 3.

changed attitude, Libby took exception to America becoming a member of the League as it was constituted. Although his reservations had to do with unforeseen circumstances that may involve the United States in war, the basic question was one of sovereignty. He considered Article X (collective commitment) and Article XVI (sanctions) "coercive features" that were dangerous and impracticable. If the United States joined, it should do so with reservations that would "relieve us from every legal and moral obligation to go to war or to undertake any coercive economic measures that might lead to war." He also wanted the United States to be free of any "obligations under the Versailles Treaty."[29] Thus, he argued to preserve America's freedom of action, albeit for different reasons than, say, Borah or Senator Henry Cabot Lodge.

The next phase of Libby's outline for preventing war was the outlawry of war. He envisioned this step to follow the prerequisite establishment of the court and town meeting because "the honest outlawry of war demands a higher development of the will to peace and justice than has been observed among great nations in the past."[30] Presumably, this "higher development" would be the result of American participation in the World Court and the League of Nations. If this "higher

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

development" occurred then there would be "a general willingness on the part of nations to be just and by such an appreciation of others' problems as will lead to a friendly spirit of 'give and take.'" If it did not occur, the outlawry of war would be little more than "political chicanery" protecting injustice and oppression.[31]

Libby also believed that for war to be successfully outlawed and branded a crime, "jealous nationalism" and "national honor" must not be made exceptions. Nor could domestic questions "that are not exclusively domestic" be subject to "private treatment."[32] What he failed to come to grips with was the incompatibility of this statement with his own reservations concerning League membership for the United States. By advocating reservations to Article X and Article XVI, Libby was asking for the "private treatment" he claimed was inconsistent with the demands of a peaceful world. Furthermore, who was to determine the exact meaning of "exclusively domestic" questions: the United States, or Great Britain, or Germany or Russia. It is doubtful they could have arrived at a mutually agreeable definition. It is more doubtful that anyone of them could have accepted a definition offered by another, colored

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[31]Ibid.

[32]Ibid.

as it surely would have been by "jealous nationalism," "national honor" and each nation's unique biases, fears and frustrations.

Libby's conviction that peace machinery could be successfully established was supported by his belief that international relations were nothing more than extensions of very human problems. "The spirit that 'removes' our personal 'mountains,'" he wrote "will be similarly triumphant between nations."[33] The initial task was the re-indoctrination of school children with love and respect, not hate and war. "If the old style militant nationalism continues to be taught . . . there is no hope." All of us were taught, he suggested, the glorification of war which resulted in hatred--"sometimes it is called patriotism"--of England and love of France or resulted in the inability of North and South to write a mutually acceptable history. If goodwill replaced hate then international law could be expanded and developed to concern itself with the rights of man, not simply the rights of belligerents.[34] "Our realists," Libby wrote, "are going to discover some day to their astonishment that the 'practical' policy that will bring security with justice and peace, is the very policy of

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[33]Ibid., p. 5.

[34]Ibid., pp. 4, 5.

audacious friendliness functioning through appropriate machinery. We can climb to peace in no other way."[35]

While the peace machinery hopefully was being erected, Libby offered some interim suggestions to help the cause of peace. Not surprisingly, preparedness was thought to be the villain of the peace movement. Although the Washington Conference had just placed limits on armaments, by 1925 the military was again suggesting that preparing for war was the best way to secure peace. Libby argued that there was no such thing as an adequate military defense because what might be considered "adequate" against one nation, or two, was not adequate against the whole world. "National security from the rest is unobtainable . . . (but) cooperation with the rest is within our reach."[36] His argument rested on the belief that the growing interdependence of the nations in the 1920s--economically, financially and culturally--precluded isolated activity required by "hostile" armament programs. Despite the urging of militarists to arm and the isolationists to "keep away," Libby knew that through expanding American investments the United States was involved with the rest of the world. "Nothing can happen anywhere that does not

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[35]Ibid., p. 5.

[36]F. J. Libby memo, August, 1929, NCPW files.

affect our economic interests. . . . The causes of war . . . (include) economic disputes."[37] Furthermore, when those disputes arose, extensive military preparedness only increased the probability of resorting to armed conflict to resolve them. The chief problem with increasing a nation's capacity to fight was that it was not done in a vacuum. Other nations were preparing also. Thus, at a time of confrontation the only certainty was an expanded level of fighting among the antagonists. The ideal solution, of course, was not to let any situation reach the point of confrontation which required the use of force for its resolution. This was precisely why Libby advocated the development of peace machinery. It could be used to settle minor disputes before they could become major ones. But since that machinery had not yet developed, or America was not yet a participant, the risks of preparedness were even more perilous. Nations whose leaders had yet to discover the benefits of "audacious friendliness" were all too willing to resort to force to solve major disputes without ever having tried to solve them peaceably while they were still minor disputes.

Libby never objected to the right or necessity of a nation to have adequate defenses. But to him,

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[37]F. J. Libby, "Why A Peace Movement," December, 1926, NCPW files.

adequate meant that a nation maintained its armaments at the level of "police status." Although he never specifically elaborated on what he meant by that phrase, it seems clear that the amount of force adequate to maintain order--a police force--was considerably lower than the amount of force President Coolidge or the War Department believed was necessary to fight a war. Libby believed that the power behind such a police force was the power of world opinion, which, theoretically, "no nation (would dare) defy. . . . "[38]

Commensurate with Libby's opposition to preparedness was his desire for economic justice in the years following the war. He was critical of the reparations requirements of the Versailles Treaty because of the connection between war debts and reparations and because of the growing economic interdependence of the world's nations and the crucial role America's expanding investments played in it. Libby's suggestions for economic stability were founded on his faith in cooperative effort. Thus, to alleviate the inequities drawn up at Paris, he urged the calling of a conference on European reconstruction. Libby did not oppose either payment of reparations to injured nations or payment of Allied war debts to the United States. What he did

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[38]F. J. Libby, "My Theory of World Peace," p. 1.

oppose was the unrealistic amounts involved.[39] Continued insistence on payments of debts and reparations at their original levels would surely "destroy (the) peace in Europe." Thus Libby quite rightly suggested that "in the interest of world recovery," both should be reduced to reasonable levels. He argued that the United States must "contribute reasonably" to recovery, not by cancelling all debts owed, but by setting new, lower limits. But, he added, "definite and reasonable reduction to the countries that owe us money (would be made) on condition that they will make similar reasonable concessions for the common good."[40]

In 1924, and again in 1926, when echoes of Wilson's call for self-determination were still being heard, Libby questioned the continuing colonial policy of many European nations. He addressed himself not only to the oppressive status of the colonial relationship but to the antagonisms they produced. The exploited African people were "on the move" and would increasingly resist imperial policies. This would cause problems not only within a colonial empire, like the British system, but between imperial powers as well. As the

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[39]F. J. Libby, "After 'No More War Day' What," pp. 1-2, NCPW files.

[40]Ibid., p. 2.

"have not" colonies attempted to break imperial rule, they cared very little if their efforts caused tension between the powers. From their perspective such tension could only help their awkward position. Libby recognized that these potentially dangerous situations were threats to peace because the extension of European influence into Africa and elsewhere was simply a quest to renew the balance of power after expansion in Europe was no longer possible without war. Since the colonial relationship was in part an economic one, Libby hoped that the nations of Europe would release their colonies in favor of freely negotiated trade agreements. This would enable the colonial power to ensure itself of sufficient resources and a market for its goods, but without the international rivalry colonies so often produced. Libby believed that the resolution of these inequities, existing before the Versailles Treaty and as a result of it, would aid world peace not only economically, but by helping to reduce the tension that so often led to confrontation or war.[41]

V

The foundation upon which the peace machinery was to be erected was the re-education of the American people including peace activists. The substitution

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[41]Libby, "My Theory of World Peace"; Libby, "Why a Peace Movement."

of law for war could only succeed if hate could be erased. By 1925 those channels of communication already proven successful (the Bulletin, pamphlets, etc.) were being relied on even more heavily and Libby's speaking engagements increased by almost half. But new programs were needed if the effort was to succeed.

Under the direction of the NCPW's publicist, Florence Brewer Boeckel, two new avenues of education were developed. Although they were of equal importance, they aimed at different audiences. The first plan dealt with evaluating the historical reading material of the "grammar school" student. Libby strongly endorsed such an effort to help school administrators recognize what he believed was the teaching of "hate" through stereotyping the prejudices of an earlier day.

More than thirty elementary history texts were examined by the staff to determine, for example, what percentage of each was given to discussions of war and what percentage to discussions of peace. More specifically, they searched for examinations of peace-making efforts like the negotiations leading to Jay's treaty in 1794.[42] The survey results predictably demonstrated the emphasis given to war and violence in the nation's past. Libby believed that one of the reasons history

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[42]Libby, To End War, pp. 32-33.

texts were weighted to violence was the bias of the author who had received similar scholastic training. Apparently he gave little or no thought to the proposition that the texts were geared to youngsters who, for the most part, had little or no interest in the subject and were more enthusiastic about reading of the "excitement" of war than the inherent dullness of negotiations. Furthermore, history was but one subject taught by most elementary school teachers, whose sophistication and enthusiasm for discussing the nation's past was often considerably less than his own. But, then, awakening teacher-administrator awareness was the point of the program.

Hoping to correct this imbalance, the staff mailed the survey to the teaching members of the NCPW and to school administrators in selected areas. Libby hoped that awakening the attention of administrators would lead to changes in reading material. Furthermore, he assumed that the teachers in the NCPW would pressure their superiors to make the necessary changes. The response to the survey was more favorable than Libby had hoped for, and requests for copies from non-NCPW teachers was encouraging.

Implementation of the survey findings necessitated the drawing up of practical suggestions that could be followed to correct the situation. Under the

direction of Isabelle Kendig-Gill, who helped coordinate the survey, recommendations were written for governments to use to help promote peace. Based on proposals offered by a conference of educators, in which Ms. Kendig-Gill participated, her recommendations urged, among other things, the appointment of an educational expert to assist heads of state and an international textbook exchange. The plan's objective was the elimination of misunderstandings and distortions that exist in each country's own version of world affairs.[43]

The other "new" educational tool of the NCPW was the use of a traditional method of communication: the poster. Aware of the widespread use of the poster in America's past, Libby felt they had been particularly effective as a propaganda tool in selling the First World War to the public. His own limited experience with this method (the "No More War" window sticker) convinced Libby that the poster was an easy, inexpensive way to inform large segments of the general population of the NCPW program.

Although many posters would be used through the years, Libby was most pleased with the Council's initial offering in 1925. Based on a sermon delivered in Washington's National Cathedral the previous September, it was entitled "America First." Not to be confused with

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[43]Ibid., p. 34.

either the program or the organization that would later use that title, "America First" offered a series of spiritual, moral objectives to which the nation and her people should aspire. Two of the poster's urgings seemed most indicative of Libby's attitude: "America First, not in splendid isolation but in courageous cooperation . . . not flaunting her strength as a giant, but bending in helpfulness. . . . "[44]

Another effective educational tool was the press release.[45] Although Libby hoped the major daily newspapers would print the releases verbatim, it was the smaller papers, without large organizations, that published Libby's interpretation of a critical issue or an Administration policy. Frequently needing copy, these papers eagerly accepted Libby's news releases from Washington.[46]

Libby believed that for the educational campaign, or any Council effort, to be successful adequate

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[44]Libby, "My Theory of World Peace," p. 8, To End War, pp. 38-39. Other goals expressed in the poster were: "America First, not merely in science . . . but also in ideals, principles, character," and "not in pride, arrogance and disdain of other races . . . but in sympathy, love and understanding."

[45]"Details of Plans . . . "; F. J. Libby memo, May 11, 1927, NCPW files.

[46]F. J. Libby, "After 'No More War Day' What?" February, 1924, NCPW files.

information must reach NCPW members.[47] They had to be made aware of issues, bills in Congress or the significance of Presidential directives. Furthermore, they needed to know what was required of them in a particular campaign. Although Libby often used personal communications (telephone, telegraph, visits) in emergency situations, he relied mostly on letters from the Washington office under his name.[48]

If Libby needed members to write their Congressmen expressing peace sentiment on a particular bill, for example, the established procedure was for Libby or a staff person to first compose the letter which was then copied on letterhead stationery and mailed to members. If time or money were short, letters were sent instead to officials in the member groups who were asked to explain what was needed to their organizations.

Reinforcing these letters were constant reminders in the News Bulletin and Peace Action of what readers should know and what they should do. Libby repeatedly supplied such information as addresses of Congressmen and voting records on peace-related bills. Over the years Libby found members most responsive to his requests.

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[47]"Details of Plans . . . "; "Statement of Activities . . . "

[48]Libby diary, November 30, 1924, Libby Papers.

The effectiveness of the NCPW's educational campaign was measured not only by the favorable response of those concerned for peace, but by the mounting criticism directed toward Libby and the Council. Criticism of the NCPW covered the spectrum from the Administration's rational critique of Libby's objections to preparedness to the Navy League's irrational charges. But regardless of its source or intensity, Libby believed it to be indicative of the NCPW's influence and effectiveness. Little time is spent attacking a weak, ineffective organization.[49]

Rational criticism was almost always countered by equally rational rebuttal. But irrational attacks were difficult to defend against. Relying on innuendo and suspicion rather than evidence, the charges that the NCPW was "red" required more of Libby's time and energy than all others put together. He quickly determined that there was no adequate, single defense against that charge. Instead it necessitated continual denial and explanations of who the NCPW's member groups were. In many cases Libby found he was defending not only himself and the staff, but the individual member group as well. Unlike other charges against the NCPW that came and went, the "red" association began in the early

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[49]Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," p. 41.

1920s and continued unabated until the whole debate over the prevention of war was rendered moot by World War II.

"There is nothing 'red' about the peace movement . . . ," Libby wrote later. "It is easier to call names than to argue a great issue . . . (it is) just one more manifestation of the intolerance which military men are apt to show when their favorite institutions are threatened."[50] The "great issue" to which Libby referred was whether or not increased armaments bring national security or international insecurity. He suggested that name calling always seemed to increase whenever Congress was debating military appropriation requests and the NCPW was arguing for budget cuts.

Although Libby felt unsubstantiated attacks on the Council were the only way the military could hope to discredit peace activists, he believed there were deeper motives involved. Change may have been the only constant in human relations as far as Libby was concerned, but that was not the case for everyone. He recognized that the peace movement was simply the most recent "progressive movement" to be called "red." "The onward march of mankind continues but the attitude of the reactionaries toward every forward step in human progress remains

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[50]F. J. Libby, press release, 1928, NCPW files.

the same yesterday, today and forever."[51] Personally, Libby did not feel threatened by what he considered absurd charges, but nonetheless he understood the necessity of denial and defense that such charges demanded for the peace of mind it offered his supporters. The accusation of "red" association did cause frustration however, not because he took it seriously, but because the time wasted defending the peace movement was time away from discussion of the real issues, the "great issues," of the day.

Libby's defense of the NCPW was usually explanatory, frequently repetitive and aimed at the general charge of being "red," despite what specific allegations might arise. "The NCPW is a middle-of-the-road organization, neither radical (left) not reactionary (static). It is not pacifist (refusing to fight); it urges prevention of war in peace time, not opposition to war in war time."[52] Libby pointed to the wide range of groups composing the NCPW--like the Association to Abolish War, the National Education Association, the Women's Temperance Association or the Fellowship of Reconciliation--to support his characterization. That the Council

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[51]F. J. Libby, "Pacifists, Socialists and Reds," Machinists Monthly Journal (September 1928).

[52]"The Program of the National Council for the prevention of War," p. 2.

itself was not a pacifist organization was self-evident; Libby was the only one of pacifist beliefs on the staff.

Although some of the member groups and well-known individuals (the Association to Abolish War or Jane Addams, for example) were considered more "liberal" than others, Libby urged critics and supporters alike to assess them not in terms of their politics or individual goals, but in terms of their common desire for peace and the prevention of war. Furthermore, if one examined what kinds of people comprised these groups, the inevitable conclusion was that they represented every basic segment of society. In fact, Libby took pride in discussing the grass roots support for the Council; farmers, churchgoers, laborers and educators. And the "backbone of the American peace movement" was women. "This is true in no other country. . . . In the United States a dozen great women's organizations not only constitute a large part of the American peace movement but are also better informed on international affairs than any similar group of men."[53] Needless to say women were a primary target for NCPW opponents. Unfounded charges of ignorance and incompetence were constantly being made. Libby quickly found long defenses useless and instead recounted the civic and humanitarian contributions of, say, Jane Addams in hopes of satisfying the critics.

[53]F. J. Libby notes, undated, NCPW files.

Libby quite simply got used to the attacks and figured that it was inevitable that someone would "raise the bogy of 'communist menace,'" that "amazing 'communist plots' will be unearthed" or that the women of the movement were not in their proper "place."[54] Stoically, Libby wrote: "steadfastly, resolutely, undeceived by the propaganda of our foes and sticking together in our pursuit of peace regardless of efforts to divide us, our eyes upon our goal . . . we must go forward . . . year by year . . . until we know without . . . a doubt that we have put an end to war as an accepted method of settling nations' quarrels. . . . "[55] Before the Japanese invaded Manchuria, Libby would be given justification for believing that goal had been reached.

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[54]F. J. Libby, "The American Peace Movement: An Interpretation," Peace Action, June 1, 1928, p. 1.

[55]"Pacifists, Socialists and Reds."

CHAPTER 4

If the Washington Conference was looked upon with pride by the peace movement as indicative of its successes, it was merely prologue to the last half of the 1920s. Small accomplishments were always important to Frederick Libby, but meeting the very important challenges determined the real effectiveness of the NCPW. Although response to NCPW programs was favorable, the war scare with Mexico was the most difficult task yet faced by the peace movement. Peace sentiment would prove to be more influential than even Libby had believed. By the end of the 1920s Libby would see the realization of his dream for the outlawry of war. Success filled the peace movement with confidence. But the peace machinery--the "court" and "town meeting"--that Libby believed were prerequisites for the success of the outlawry of war had not been established.[1]

I

Unlike the objective of influencing negotiations at the Washington Conference, the Mexican war scare of

[1]See Chapter 3.

1927 offered the Council an opportunity to alter policy decisions Libby labeled as "hostile." The origins of the dispute lay in the Mexican government's attitude toward foreign owned subsoil resources and changes in the role of the Catholic Church in Mexico. Unfriendly policies toward either American companies or Mexican Catholics were certain to elicit a hostile response from Americans, particularly from those not satisfied with the existing boundaries between the two nations.

The crisis of 1927 began with the Mexican government's violation of the Bucareli Agreements, a series of executive agreements regarding the security of American property in Mexico. Prior to the signing of the agreements in 1923, Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes attempted to settle outstanding American claims against Mexico by withholding diplomatic recognition of the popularly elected Obregón government. The claims, through which American businessmen filed for compensation for expropriated property, had been left over from the Wilson administration which never did recognize Obregón. Obregón finally did receive recognition from Hughes and the Harding administration by agreeing to guarantee American property rights, particularly subsoil rights, and to the arbitration of the claims by special commissions. More than anything else, Hughes feared that future Mexican governments would not believe

themselves obligated by the Bucareli Agreements.[2] His successor at State, Frank B. Kellogg, did not have to wait long to see if Hughes had cause for worry.

While the claims commissions slowly deliberated the questions before them, the new Mexican government of Plutarco E. Calles decided it was not bound by the agreements of its predecessor. Thus, in December, 1925, Calles issued a new petroleum code limiting foreign ownership of oil properties purchased before 1917 to fifty years. The ultimate effect of the code would have been the nationalization of the petroleum industry. The expected hostile reaction to the new code by American investors quickly surfaced, receiving considerable support from the Hearst press.

Having just returned from Europe, Libby quickly briefed himself on what he believed was a grave crisis. He urged the peaceful settlement of the disputed claims by the existing commissions. But President Calvin Coolidge and Secretary Kellogg remained convinced of the continuing legality of the Bucareli Agreements and in late January, 1926 Kellogg issued a terse reply to Calles concerning "legally acquired" property rights. "The position of this government," argued Kellogg, "has

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[2]Samuel Flagg Bemis, The Latin American Policy of the United States: An Historical Interpretation (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1943), p. 217.

been and still is that the . . . land and petroleum laws . . . are plainly retroactive and confiscatory . . . upon property rights . . . legally acquired . . . under prior existing Mexican laws."[3]

The Administration's position was, of course, supported by American investors with something to lose, but support also came from an unanticipated source: Catholic Church groups in the United States. Their support of the Administration had less to do with sympathy for the problems of American investors than it did with new restrictions placed on the Catholic Church of Mexico.

The role of the church in the political, social and economic development of Mexico has been a long and controversial one. In the years following the First World War, contending political elements sought to redefine the position of the church in society. The new Mexican constitution legalized growing anti-clerical tendencies and restricted church activities ranging from where it could hold services, to the supremacy of secular education, to forbidding the church from holding investments or owning property.[4]

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[3]New York Times, January 21, 1926, p. 1.

[4]Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 201-03.

Throughout most of 1926, Libby found himself in a delicate position. This was not the first time, nor would it be the last time, that he challenged the claims of American investors, but in challenging church groups, like the Catholic Knights of Columbus, he found himself in the uncomfortable position of opposing those who traditionally supported his work for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

By January, 1927, American reaction to these changes in the Mexican government's policy was predictably indignant. Hostility toward Mexico spread rapidly. Oil companies demanded action, hopefully intervention, and the Hearst press capitalized on the horrified response of American Catholic groups to the repressive measures south of the border.

Complicating the already tense situation was Calles' refusal to aid the United States in preventing revolution in nearby Nicaragua. The United States had for some time suspected that Mexico was supplying Nicaraguan rebels with arms, but it was unable to secure an agreement preventing such activity. On January 10, 1927, shortly after President Coolidge made this charge in a message to Congress, Secretary of State Kellogg published a document purporting to show covert Bolshevik plans for Mexico. Kellogg, not too obliquely, suggested that the atheist Calles was

helping to further Russian aims.[5] For many Americans the document answered the dual questions of why Calles refused to help prevent revolution in Nicaragua and why he clamped down on the Catholic Church. A tense situation had clearly become a crisis and a slogan from an earlier day, "manifest destiny," was heard again.

Events moved so swiftly now that Frederick Libby felt the use of the Council's normal machinery would be too slow to prevent an American-Mexican war.

Although he was ready to take immediate steps to try to prevent a war, Libby believed this was precisely the kind of major dispute that should never have been allowed to develop. Steps should have been taken during the period of instability to resolve peacefully what was still a minor disagreement. Libby felt that aside from the lack of effective machinery to deal with major disputes, the greatest fear of the peace movement was that rapidly escalating events would lead to a crisis that decision makers would believe could only be settled by force.

Following a meeting of the executive board, Libby was placed in charge of an emergency campaign. He acted quickly to mobilize peace sentiment. Telegrams were sent to "hundreds of prominent people" around the

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[5]Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," pp. 43-44.

country asking for their support for arbitration rather than force to resolve the crisis. While he awaited the response, Libby began forming an ad hoc committee of notable people to act as the focal point for urging a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Arriving in New York, he asked for and received the aid of James G. McDonald in organizing the campaign. He also called on James T. Shotwell and Nicholas Murray Butler (President of Columbia University). Together they formed the "Committee on Arbitration with Mexico." Libby and the Committee drew up an appeal for arbitration for newspapers that would include the names of well-known people who supported such action. The response to Libby's telegram resulted in over four hundred signatures of support and the appeal was issued as a news release to more than 13,000 of the nation's newspapers which gave it prominent coverage.[6]

The initial Administration response to these appeals was silence, thus reaffirming Kellogg's previous position that the legality of American property rights was not subject to arbitration. Libby's next move was to recruit Joseph B. Chamberlain of the Columbia Law School to draw up a technically worded statement that this dispute between the United States and Mexico was indeed an issue that could, and should, be arbitrated.

[6]Ibid., p. 44; Libby, To End War, p. 56.

The statement was quickly circulated among selected political scientists and experts on international law. More than 100 of them signed the statement and it was forwarded to President Coolidge. By this time, the Federal Council of Churches joined the effort by urging support from its clergymen. Letters and petitions urging peace poured into Washington. Apparently more sensitive to anti-interventionists' peace sentiment than to the "threat" of Communism or the "rights" of oil companies, the Senate, on January 25, 1927, by a vote of 79-0, passed a resolution urging arbitration of the dispute. No longer able to disregard public opinion and now the sense of the Senate, President Coolidge agreed that the problem was subject to arbitration; that Mexico did have the right to expropriate property if compensation was made, and the crisis was over.

In the space of a few short weeks Libby had effectively mobilized massive peace sentiment opposing American intervention in Mexico. Some writers studying these events have debated the severity of the crisis.[7] But Libby's actions during the critical months before the Senate resolution indicate that he perceived the crisis as extremely volatile.

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[7]See for example, Bemis, The Latin American Policy of the United States, Cline, United States and Mexico and Robert Freeman Smith, The United States and Revolutionary Nationalism, 1916-1932 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

Libby's experience in organizing public opinion had been severely tested by the demands of time but the Council responded quickly and effectively. Although anti-interventionists feeling in the Senate helped, to Libby must go most of the credit for changing the Administration's hard-line policy on expropriated American property.[8]

Libby's optimism for the future of American-Mexican relations and his confidence in the Council's efforts received a boost when, on September 21, 1927, Coolidge named financier Dwight W. Morrow as America's new ambassador to Mexico. Following as it did so closely the Council's efforts to secure arbitration of the dispute, Libby felt that the Morrow appointment was indicative of a new policy and a new era of continually improving relations between the two nations.[9] His faith in Morrow was rewarded as the new ambassador set out to win the friendship of the Mexican people and the respect of the Calles government. Through his personal style of diplomacy, Morrow's respect for Mexico and its citizens soon became apparent and by November, 1927, the Mexican Supreme Court ruled in favor of American oil by

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[8]Kuusisto, p. 42. Cline, however, disagrees, p. 210.

[9]Libby, To End War, p. 59. Cline agreed on the importance of the appointment, pp. 210-12, as did Bemis, pp. 217-18.

validating the acts of previous Mexican governments. A short time later Calles issued a new code that in effect reaffirmed the Bucareli Agreements. Libby's satisfaction with the peaceful settlement of the crisis was second only to his confidence in the new attitude of the Coolidge administration toward future questions about oil properties in Mexico. It was now administrative policy to allow new disputes to be settled by Mexico's government and court system. To Libby, this new policy signified Washington's respect for Mexico and its people, a quality heretofore lacking in the official relationship of the two governments.

II

While Libby's emergency peace campaign was attempting to prevent a Mexican-American war, peace activists increasingly focused their attention on the activities of French Foreign Minister, Aristide Briand. Capable and politically experienced, Briand's proposal for the renunciation of war struck a responsive cord in the American peace movement. But, by the Spring of 1927 neither Coolidge nor Kellogg clearly understood what Briand wanted, thus they had yet to decide just how they would respond to Briand and the rapidly growing popular enthusiasm supporting his advocacy of outlawing war.

Although the intellectual origins of outlawing war predated Libby and peace activism during the inter-war years, disillusionment following World War I made the idea more attractive. The suggestion that war could be made illegal was particularly attractive to peace groups, like the NCPW, that sought untried solutions for dealing with the "forces of war." The earliest articulation of, and support for, the renunciation of war came, however, not in the impatient 1920s, but, in the pre-war days of genteel opposition to war. It was left, however, to Chicago lawyer and anti-war campaigner Salmon Levinson to coin the word "outlawry," that, after 1918, became the accepted way of referring to the whole idea of renouncing war. In 1921 Levinson founded the American Committee for the Outlawry of War. Despite a fairly comprehensive program, the committee focused its attention and activity on outlawing war.[10] In February, 1923, Senator Borah offered his own plan for renouncing war. Following the outline of the Levinson program, Borah's resolution included similar recommendations for international law and a world court.

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[10]The Committee's program suggested the delegalization (leading to the outlawry) of war, the codification of international law and the establishment of an independent world-wide court, not unlike the World Court but without its ties to the League of Nations. Robert H. Ferrell, Peace in Their Time: The Origins of the Kellogg-Briand Pact (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1969), pp. 33-35.

Across the Atlantic, Briand was also intrigued by this concept; but for different reasons. France's precariously weak position following the war led to an obsessive quest for security. The foundation of security rested in part on securing allies that could be called on when, not if, German militarism again threatened. Until now, France had only negotiated alliances with Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Poland. But Briand set out to conclude other agreements, particularly with England or America because of the substantial boost to French security they would provide.

The impetus for Briand's famous letter to the American people came from the suggestions and encouragement of two leaders of the Carnegie Endowment, Nicholas Murray Butler, President of the Endowment and James T. Shotwell, Director of the Endowment's Economics and History Division. On April 2, 1927, Briand wrote his statement to the American people calling for a Pact of Perpetual Friendship and "the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. . . ."[11] Briand's primary concern was still French security, not the outlawry of war, but that concept gave him another avenue which might lead to an alliance with the United States.[12]

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[11]Ibid., p. 71.

[12]Ibid., pp. 74-79, 263-65.

Libby, too, was drawn to the crusade to outlaw war. He first supported outlawry after talking with Levinson in 1922. The two had met, according to Libby, while Levinson was "peddling the idea from door to door among the peace organizations in Washington and New York."[13] Less than one year later the outlawry of war was a plank in the NCPW program and Libby was calling for a conference to "clarify our vision" on the subject because, he felt, experience has demonstrated "that we shall not drift into permanent peace. Leadership is necessary. . . . "[14] In 1924, Libby attempted to give some direction to the movement for outlawry by outlining the minimum requirements for its success. He, of course, advocated the establishment of his two prerequisites--the "court" and "town meeting"--before outlawing war could succeed.[15] Success also required a greater degree of commitment, "a higher development of the will to peace and justice than has been observed among great nations in the past."[16] Libby suffered no illusions about the difficulty in securing that "will to peace

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[13]Libby, To End War, p. 60.

[14]"A Call to Conference on the Outlawry of War," 1923, NCPW files.

[15]See above, Chapter 3.

[16]Libby, "My Theory of World Peace," p. 3.

and justice," but it stood no chance of developing at all without the illegality of war being clearly defined. "Until aggressive war has been branded a crime, and until the aggressor has been defined, the prevention of war will be haphazard, and the growth of an effective world opinion against war will be slow and uncertain."[17]

Libby first encountered French Foreign Minister Briand in 1926 while in Geneva to observe sessions of the League of Nations welcoming Germany as a member. As Briand addressed the delegates Libby observed the reaction of the German delegation which "had braced for the worst . . . when (Briand) began." Surprising those in attendance, Briand called for friendship, cooperation and peace through the League. "I can't describe the effect of Briand's eloquence," Libby wrote to the staff back home, "except to say that it transformed a despondent assembly into an assembly full of hope and courage."[18]

When Briand's letter to the American people calling for the renunciation of war was published in several newspapers on April 6, 1927, the reaction of

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Libby, To End War, pp. 47-49. In his diary, Libby referred to Briand as "heavy and lumbering in the flesh, but a humming bird in spirit," September 8, 1926.

peace activists was quick and predictable. The hope of outlawing war had always received near unanimous approval from the many peace groups (with widely divergent interests) operating during the interwar years.[19] Briand's letter was the first tangible advancement of the concept at that high level of statecraft since Levinson first began "peddling the idea" several years earlier. Libby's reaction was not unlike his contemporaries. It "crowded (Mexico) off our front page in the May News Bulletin," he wrote later, "it is the most significant proposal that has been made in the hundred years since Benjamin Rush proposed to England the disarmament of our border with Canada."[20] The NCPW endorsement of Briand's proposal was immediate and enthusiastic.

It was not until the end of April, 1927, when the New York Times published a letter to the editor from Nicholas Murray Butler supporting Briand, and followed with an editorial endorsing the foreign minister's suggestion, that the proposal began to draw

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[19]Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, pp. 102-06, Chapter 4, passim.

[20]Libby, To End War, p. 60. The Rush-Bagot Treaty of 1817, which originally disarmed the Great Lakes and eventually led to disarming the entire border, has been pointed to as a model for the peaceful arbitration of international disputes.

widespread attention.[21] As support grew, Coolidge felt no need to respond because Briand had ignored official diplomatic channels. In addition to the violation of diplomatic procedures by Briand and several Americans, Coolidge and Kellogg were suspicious of Briand's obsession with security. They worried that growing enthusiasm for the outlawry of war might pressure the Administration into precisely the type of European entanglement post-war administrations had hoped to avoid. They were convinced that peace activists, on whose support Briand was depending, were not aware of the potential trap of a military alliance that was hiding in Briand's recommendations.

Libby was one of those people who failed to see the entangling implications in Briand's proposal preferring instead to accept it at face value. He, therefore, directed his protestations not at Briand but at the Administration for its failure to respond positively, the niceties of diplomacy notwithstanding. Criticism within the peace movement of Administration inaction led to increased efforts to pressure official Washington into changing its noncommital position. Unlike the effort seen before the Washington Conference, no one peace group dominated the campaign on behalf of

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[21]Ferrell, Peace in Their Time, p. 75.

the renunciation of war. It was a simultaneous, if uncoordinated, effort without immediate success.

The first significant change in the otherwise static situation came when Briand approached America's ambassador to France Myron T. Herrick. This first "official" contact concerning the substance of Briand's suggestions contained in his published letter was greeted cautiously in Washington. The Administration was still wary of Briand's motives and Libby was again frustrated at Washington's unwillingness, as he saw it, to cooperate in such a "divine purpose."[22] But as word spread of official contact between the United States and France, societies of the peace movement stepped up their activity to pressure Washington into a favorable response. The Administration and the Congress were finding it increasingly difficult "bucking the flood of petitions and letters which beseeched votes for a treaty against (what was considered) international sin."[23]

Temporary unanimity in the peace movement was apparently paying off, because by the Fall of 1927, both Coolidge and Kellogg concluded that "something" would have to be done to "mollify the American peace movement."

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[22]Ibid., pp. 89-90; Libby, To End War, pp. 60, 65.

[23]Osgood, Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations, pp. 349-50.

The only alternative was a substitute measure "of some sort."[24] By December, 1927, that substitute turned out to be Kellogg's counter-proposal for a multilateral, rather than a bilateral, treaty outlawing war. Both Kellogg and Briand were aware that a multilateral agreement was not a two-power alliance, and a two-power alliance was precisely what Briand wanted and what Kellogg hoped to avoid.

As Briand pondered his next move, word of Kellogg's counter-proposal reached the peace movement. The response was overwhelmingly favorable. The consensus seemed to be that if an agreement to outlaw war between two nations was good, then an agreement among many nations would have to be better.[25] Libby, his contemporaries and Secretary Kellogg now awaited Briand's reaction to the new proposal.

After several months of diplomatic haggling, Briand realizing he had lost to world opinion, acquiesced to Kellogg's counter-proposal. On August 27, 1928, The Pact of Paris was signed by the representatives of fifteen nations at the Quai d'Orsay Palace. The heart of the treaty was Article I stating that the signatories "condemn recourse to war for the solution to international

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[24]Ferrell, Peace in Their Time, p. 129.

[25]F. J. Libby Notes, 1927, NCPW files.

controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy. . . . " Article II stated that only "pacific means" would be used for the settlement of international disputes.[26]

American reaction to the Pact was overwhelmingly favorable. The language of the agreement, simple and straight forward when compared with most "official" documents, was clearly understood by even the most unsophisticated spectator. Those in the peace movement were particularly pleased because of the promise that such an agreement held. The "surrender of the historic right of sovereign nations to wage war at will was extremely serious business," Libby concluded.[27] The fact that such a "historic right" had been freely given up seemed to indicate a degree of commitment to seriously alter the way in which nations had always interacted. Libby wanted to believe that the signatories of the Pact had finally developed that "will to peace and justice" missing in the past. He hoped that peace would quickly become the "habit" that war had always been. Only when war became unthinkable and "peace between nations is

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[26]A copy of the Pact is in Ferrell, Peace in Their Time, pp. 266-69.

[27]Libby, To End War, p. 60.

taken for granted . . . will the Kellogg-Briand Pact have fully accomplished its purpose."[28]

With the memory of what happened to the Versailles Treaty when it reached the Senate for ratification still fresh in his mind, Libby was not about to see a repeat performance with this important document. A special NCPW broadside carried pictures of the signing ceremony followed by interpretations of the need for the Pact.[29] Libby directed members of the Council to publicize the treaty and asked the NEA to try and have it incorporated in school curricula alongside the Constitution. He even convinced the Post Office Department to display posters about the Pact in their outlets across the country.[30] He also began coordinating a letter writing and petition signing drive among members of the Council in support of ratification.

The campaign for ratification began almost immediately after the signing of the treaty in August, but the bulk of the effort had to await the result of the November presidential/congressional elections.

Once the elections were over, the peace movement began their nonstop campaign. Virtually every peace

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[28]Ibid., p. 62.

[29]September, 1928, NCPW files.

[30]Libby, To End War, p. 64.

society, regardless of size or scope, joined the effort, which was nothing short of "herculean," like a "grand alliance" pouring "salvos of resolutions, letters and telegrams" into the capital. "No Senator in Washington escaped the imperious request of these organizations: that the anti-war treaty receive promptly and without reservation the Senate's advise and consent for ratification."[31] At the end of November, 1928, the foreign policy advisor of the NCPW staff, Laura Puffer Morgan, wrote to her friend and fellow peace advocate Jane Addams that the State Department was "completely swamped with our letters and petitions. . . . There is no doubt that our methods are effective."[32] A few days later Kellogg, in a letter to Borah, confirmed what Ms. Morgan believed. "I am sure you will be interested to know," the Secretary wrote, "that a conservative estimate would indicate that persons who have sought to express themselves through letters and resolutions . . . exceed 50,000 in number, and . . . the volume of such communications, at present about 300 daily, seems to be increasing rather than diminishing."[33]

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[31]Ferrell, Peace in Their Time, pp. 232-37.

[32]November 30, 1928, NCPW files.

[33]December 4, 1928, quoted in Ferrell, Peace in Their Time, p. 238.

The net effect of this massive effort was the overwhelming ratification of the Pact of Paris by the United States Senate. The vote was 85 to 1, the magnitude of which "fairly represented" the popularity of the treaty "in the nation as a whole."[34]

III

Once the euphoria of the moment passed, how did Libby assess the Pact of Paris and its chances for success? Generally, he was enthusiastic and optimistic. "We shall support our government in wholehearted observance of its pledge to seek the settlement of all disputes by peaceful means. That way, and not in mounting armaments, lies America's great future."[35] His optimism was also supported by the election to the presidency of Herbert Hoover, a Quaker. That combination--the Pact outlawing war and a Quaker president who supported it--"filled the peace movement with great hope" that in the future, nations of the world would conduct foreign policy based on a new set of priorities in which the use of force was an unacceptable alternative.[36]

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[34]Osgood, Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations, p. 348.

[35]Press Release, October, 1929, NCPW files.

[36]Libby, To End War, pp. 65-66. In terms of significance, Libby equated ratification of the treaty with only one dissenting vote to Hoover's capturing 40 of 48 states in his election.

Some of those who have studied and written of the circumstances surrounding the Kellogg-Briand Pact have been critical of the peace movement and the "false sense of isolated security" brought on largely by an "appallingly naive" understanding of international politics.[37] No quarrel can be made with the argument that the treaty produced a false sense of security not only in America but in Europe as well. The same criticism cannot be made against Libby, unless one equates support of the Pact itself as naive. He was quick to realize that many people, American and European, saw the Pact as a panacea. What was worse was his realization that some of outlawry's most knowledgeable and hard-working supporters, like Levinson and Borah, saw the Pact as the final act of some diplomatic play out of which new attitudes, actions and priorities would automatically come. Criticism of these people is deserved. But Libby, from the outset, "warned that . . . the pact was to be considered the initial step only--a step which in itself meant nothing unless implemented by membership in the World Court," membership in the League and disarmament (emphasis added).[38]

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[37]For example, see Osgood, Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations, pp. 346-50 and Ferrell, Peace in Their Time, pp. 221-39, 263-65.

[38]Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," p. 46.

Years earlier Libby had made his position on outlawry quite clear. It was to be only one part of his three-part program that would help change, but not automatically, the attitudes, actions and priorities of decision makers. At that time, Libby saw the "court" and "town meeting" as necessary prerequisites to the success of outlawing war.[39] But years of hard work had failed to gain American membership on the World Court or in the League of Nations by the time Briand's letter to the American people was published in April, 1927. To Libby, outlawing war was to be the most difficult of the three steps and he saw little chance of it happening until America's leaders changed their position on the Court and the League. But when it did happen he eagerly supported the Pact and worked for its acceptance and ratification.

All Libby did was to rearrange the three steps to take advantage, as he always did, of rapidly changing circumstances. Rather than meaning less now that outlawry was a reality, they meant more if outlawry was to succeed. Preparing for a round table discussion shortly after President Hoover had proclaimed the Pact in force at a White House ceremony in July, 1929, Libby stressed the new importance of the "court" and "town meeting." "The League of Nations supplements the Pact," he argued,

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[39]See Chapter 3.

"by providing machinery for carrying out the pledge. . . . " He went on to suggest that in light of the pledge of Article II to use "pacific means" to settle international disputes, joining the World Court "is obviously the next step."[40] His awareness of the inherent dangers of over-reliance on the Pact alone seems clear.

Libby does deserve criticism, however, for his uncharacteristic lack of perception in evaluating the effectiveness of the second article of the Pact requiring "a pacific means" for settling disputes. Article I posed no real problem because saying that war was bad was quite simple. But Article II required that only "pacific means" (like arbitration) be used to settle disputes. The problem was that Kellogg clearly exempted the United States from compliance with this requirement in situations where the "inalienable right of self-defense" forced America to do otherwise. During the ratification procedure the Senate added to Kellogg's exception by exempting all areas "covered" by the Monroe Doctrine. Diluting Article II even more, Britain and France each offered special reasons why exceptions had to be made for them also. The British held there were certain areas of the world that were of "special and vital interest"

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[40]Notes for round table discussion August, 1929, NCPW files.

to Britain's security (read: The Empire). The French agreed, no doubt with the ever-present threat of German militarism on their minds, that Article II did not apply to any commitments already made with individual countries or the League of Nations. Thus the validity of those French treaties with Belgium, Poland and Czechoslovakia was no longer in doubt.

Even in the face of this kind of diplomatic doubletalk, Libby could argue, in August of 1929, that "Article II of the Pact leaves no loopholes for the age-old excuse of counting every war as 'defensive' for it pledges the signatories to settle every dispute by peaceful means" (emphasis is Libby's).[41] Exactly what Libby was thinking when those words were written is not known. Since the exceptions were all articulated prior to the Pact officially being declared in force, and, therefore, before Libby wrote his August statement, it is logical to conclude that Libby was aware of the British, French and American positions. The only reference he made to them was forty years later. At that time he discussed the questions raised by the United States and Great Britain only as contributing to the "prolonged discussions" that took place before Kellogg's counter-proposal of a multilateral treaty finally became a reality.

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[41]Ibid., pp. 1-2.

The question that remains is how Libby's acute perception allowed him to worry about the future of the Pact without support of the World Court and the League and at the same time, fail to recognize the implications of American, British and French actions? One choice might have been that he chose to ignore those exceptions and hoped that a situation would not occur where one of those nations would exempt themselves from the Pact. A more satisfying explanation was that he believed that membership on the World Court (the "next step") and membership in the League ("providing the machinery for carrying out the pledge") would eliminate the exceptions because of the credibility and respectability those organizations would give the Pact. There is no direct evidence to substantiate this conclusion, but it is a logical one based on what we know of Libby and his faith not only in the Court, the League and outlawry, but his faith in mankind's ability and willingness to change the way they have habitually done things.

IV

It seems appropriate at this juncture in the narrative to draw a few basic conclusions about the peace movement and Frederick Libby. If Robert Ferrell's assessment is correct, and I believe it is, that the Kellogg-Briand Pact was the "apogee of success" for the

peace movement, the years following the Japanese invasion of Manchuria would most certainly be judged disappointing failures.[42]

The conservative peace groups, like the Carnegie Endowment, would continue to oppose war and plod along. Not satisfied simply with opposing war, the radical peace groups sought to develop a new system of peace. The leader of these impatient societies was the NCPW and Frederick Libby. The leaders of both types of groups were willing to work with Libby despite differences over tactics and philosophy. During this first decade of the interwar years, attaining their common goals was more important than outlook. At this time, differences in outlook among one set of peace leaders did not seem irresponsible or threatening to the others. Thus, cooperation within the movement was frequent and widespread.

The Council and Libby "grew up" during the 1920s. Libby's satisfaction with the peace movement's work in the 1920s was reflected by his own words in To End War about the changed attitudes following the Kellogg-Briand Pact: "Patriotism would no longer be identified with military action alone but would henceforth be associated

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[42]Ferrell, Peace in Their Time, p. 264.

equally with loyalty to our pledged word to settle our disputes only by pacific means."[43]

The NCPW had made a success of the Washington Conference, contributed to the success of the Pact of Paris, led the fight to prevent war with Mexico, opposed the "forces of war," and whenever necessary, "laid down a barrage of peace propaganda the like of which has seldom been seen in the United States."[44] By 1930, the NCPW, thanks mostly to Libby's untiring efforts, was no longer the ad hoc gathering it was at the Washington Conference but a "seasoned pressure group well qualified" to meet the demands of the future.[45]

Libby's importance in the peace movement during the twenties was assessed by James T. Shotwell of the Carnegie Endowment. In 1930, he praised Libby for his knowledge of the "situation in Washington" and offered his thanks to Libby: "let me . . . express my sense of deep obligation to you for all that you have done. . . . Your organization is no misnomer, for it is genuinely and fearlessly working for the prevention of war."[46]

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[43]Libby, To End War, p. 63.

[44]Ferrell, Peace in Their Time, p. 28.

[45]Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," p. 49.

[46]Letter from James T. Shotwell to Libby, April 5, 1930, NCPW files.

CHAPTER 5

The optimism about the future of international affairs that led the peace movement into the 1930s was to be short-lived. The Japanese invasion of Manchuria severely tested the foundation of that optimism, which was believed to be on solid ground with the Washington Conference treaties and the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Supported by these documents, the result of international gatherings held almost a decade apart, Frederick Libby was confident that, working within the framework of the League of Nations, disputes could be successfully, and peacefully, resolved. If the "Mukden Incident" did not destroy the confidence and optimism of peace activists, it certainly gave them a severe jolt.

I

On the night of September 18, 1931, Japanese troops attacked, and in a few hours captured, the Manchurian village of Mukden. The rationale for such action, at least the version offered initially by the Japanese, was the offensive actions of elements of the Chinese army. Supposedly, companies of Chinese soldiers

had blown up sections of the Japanese-owned South Manchuria Railway which ran close to Mukden. In defense of their holdings, Japanese troops retaliated and drove the "provocators" away. But within a few days the Japanese occupied other towns a considerable distance from the railway tracks at Mukden. Without letting newsmen verify their story by seeing the alleged damaged sections of track, the Japanese army tried to explain how an express train carrying reinforcements to the scene had bridged the "gaps" in the track. In fact, evidence later presented at the Tokyo War Crimes Trials in 1946 established that the entire incident had been fabricated by the Japanese military. Planned and executed without the approval of the civilian government, the incident was only one part of an elaborate military scheme to conquer all of Manchuria. The military argued that Japan's vital economic and political interests necessitated the Manchurian action. Only through independent policies, like the seizure of Manchuria, would Japan be able to meet her future economic needs and fulfill certain imperial desires. Whatever the Japanese intentions might have been, the whole episode posed a serious threat to the validity of the Nine-Power Treaty of the Washington Conference and challenged the moral principles of the Kellogg-Briand Pact.[1]

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[1]The Nine-Power Treaty of February 6, 1922, pledged its signatories, the United States, Great Britain,

Libby's initial reaction to the Japanese attack was one of fear that America might somehow be drawn into the conflict.[2] The international reaction to the news was mixed. The most impassioned plea came, needless to say, from the Chinese. With an unsettled domestic political situation complicating the problem, China called on the League of Nations to help under Article II which stated that any threat to peace was the concern of all the members. China also called upon the United States, as initiators of the multilateral Pact to outlaw war, to ensure that the crisis would be resolved peacefully. The American reaction, as well as the British, was cautious and questioning. What concerned both nations more than military events in Manchuria was the worsening economic situation at home. The outcome of Britain's abandonment of the gold standard was watched with a more critical eye by observers in both countries than the outcome of events at Mukden. Whatever attitudes were adopted, or whatever actions were taken, would be influenced by the world's disastrous economic plight.

Japan, France, Italy, Portugal, Belgium and the Netherlands to guaranteeing the territorial integrity of China in an effort to let China "develop and maintain . . . herself."

[2]F. J. Libby, "My Plan for Peace," March 6, 1932, p. 2, NCPW files.

The "Great Depression" began, of course, with the "Great Crash" of the stock market in October and November of 1929. The bull market of 1929 peaked in September when the index of industrial stocks hit 452. By the time the market crashed in November, the index read 224; and when it collapsed in July, 1932, it read 58. Bank failures hit almost 2300 by 1932, up from 491 in the prosperity of 1928. Unemployment rose from five million one year after the crash to more than twelve million by the end of 1932. The value of America's foreign trade, which in 1929 was $10 billion, fell to $3 billion in 1932. But the economic woes were hardly confined to America. As Libby noted in October, 1930, before the Depression had reached its worst stage,

> The present economic crisis is a world problem, not a national problem, and can be dealt with only by the world as a whole. . . . Neither we nor any other nation can prosper alone because we cannot sell unless they can buy.[3]

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[3]F. J. Libby Statement, October 14, 1930, NCPW files. Libby had little trouble integrating the aims of the NCPW with the dismal economic situation. For example, in a speech in Denver on March 13, 1933 (on May 10 the speech was printed in the Congressional Record), Libby spoke of disarmament: "There is no argument against the drastic reduction of the world's armaments by international agreement. Four thousand million dollars a year is too much for the world to be spending on what it vainly calls 'national defense.' Armaments, like tariffs, are competitive. We build; they build. No one can win this race any more than one can win a race in tariffs. And it has always led to war." Reprint of the Congressional Record, NCPW files.

On a more personal level, Libby wrote later that peace groups were "not spared by the Great

There were a few lighter almost comic touches to the despair. Babe Ruth's salary was cut by $10,000, and the Empire State Building quit running elevators from the 42nd to the 67th floors, all of which were unoccupied. But for each of these events there were more serious episodes that resulted in tragedy and fear. The most famous, or infamous, was the plight of the Bonus Experitionary Force. In June of 1932 thousands of World War I veterans converged on Washington to march in favor of a bill before the House that, if passed by Congress would have allowed the veterans to collect $2 1/2 billion in bonus money that originally was not due to be paid until 1945. The House passed the bill and sent it to the Senate. With fifteen to twenty thousand veterans tensely awaiting the outcome, the Senate voted down the bonus and tension turned to frustration. Many headed home, but others remained, and "to the tired, harrassed President in the White House, the Bonus Army was a hateful, daily reminder of the ferment of dissatisfaction, bitterness and distrust that was abroad in the nation."[4] Hoover eventually ordered the army to clear the marchers.

Depression" and he complained of the problems of meeting NCPW expenses. Libby, To End War, pp. 94-99.

[4]Walter Johnson, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue: Presidents and the People Since 1929 (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1960), p. 4.

He later told a press conference that force was required because the marchers were mostly Communists. General Douglas MacArthur, who led the troops, supported his Commander-in-Chief by suggesting that the veterans were "animated by the essence of revolution." If such activity had been allowed to continue, he added, "the institutions of our government would have been severely threatened."[5]

In this bleak atmosphere it is no surprise that news of the events in Manchuria were greeted with caution. Hoover and Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson "had no desire to assume the responsibilities of world leadership and Hoover, in particular, feared an effort by the League Council to pass the problem off on the United States."[6] Like the United States, Great Britain and the other signatories of the Nine-Power Treaty "took a timid attitude toward the crisis, and though timidity might well have appeared had there been no economic troubles, it is certain that the Depression restrained

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[5]Quoted in Ibid., p. 5, and William E. Leuchtenburg, The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-1932 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 263.

[6]Warren I. Cohen, America's Response to China: An Interpretive History of Sino-American Relations (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1971), p. 128.

all thought of drastic action."[7] But the existence of timidity did not preclude concern. Stimson saw Japanese actions in Manchuria as a threat not only to the peace, but to the validity of the Nine-Power commitment to a sovereign China and to America's prestige through the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Nonetheless, Stimson refused to invoke the Pact of Paris.

The reaction of the peace movement to events in Asia was not surprising. Although concerned about the economic crisis, peace groups interpreted Japanese actions as a direct violation of the Pact of Paris. "Japan," Libby wrote, was guilty of doing precisely what other nations have done "since the beginning of history."[8] The initial response of the peace movement was for the United States to urge Japan to withdraw. It was hoped that America would send an investigating team to Asia to assess the validity of Japan's version of what happened and report to the League. But Stimson, remaining cautious, refused this action also. "The initial mistake," Libby argued, "for which our government was partly responsible (was) in not sending

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[7]Robert H. Ferrell, American Diplomacy in the Great Depression: Hoover-Stimson Foreign Policy, 1929-1933 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 17.

[8]Libby, "My Plan for Peace," p. 2.

immediately a committee of investigation to the region (as an arbitrator/investigator, not a military participant). . . . The reports, . . . in order that the League may have authoritative information upon which to act, are . . . essential to the successful functioning of the League."[9]

Those in the peace movement remained unsatisfied with the Administration's negative response until word reached the United States that on October 8, the Japanese had bombed the city of Chinchow. Since Chinchow was over one hundred miles from the South Manchuria Railway at Mukden, there seemed to be no doubt about either the Japanese version of the original incident, or their ultimate intentions for Manchuria. Stimson, worried about the future of Manchuria, convinced Hoover of the seriousness of the situation. Three days later Hoover, in an unprecedented move, instructed Prentiss B. Gilbert, America's observer at Geneva, to sit with the League's Council for discussions of the Manchurian problem relating to the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Libby and others in the peace movement were pleased with this new American cooperation with Geneva.[10]

As the situation in Manchuria worsened, one issue that came before the League was the possible imposition of economic or diplomatic sanctions should

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[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid., pp. 1-2.

less militant efforts fail. Some peace activists, like Dorothy Detzer or Kirby Page, favored economic or diplomatic sanctions but Libby did not. He felt sanctions of any type would lead to war. He also argued that the United States should neither lead nor follow the League in the implementation of a proposed economic boycott. Any such proposal was "impracticable" for "Congress, and particularly the Senate, is not going to offer the League of Nations the use of our navy for the enforcement of any economic restrictions. . . . "[11] Libby also feared that a debate over sanctions would open up old wounds and politically divide the country. "The old bitter struggle would start again," he warned, "in Congress and in the country at large and the war would be over before agreement would be reached."[12]

Libby's primary objection to all types of sanctions was, of course, that they eventually lead to war. In the circumstances surrounding the Manchurian situation, Libby offered additional reasons supporting his contention that an economic boycott was ill advised, by favoring a group he seldom had anything but criticism for. He referred to this group as "general business interests." He was not discussing munitions makers and others who manufactured the tools of war, who always were targets for Libby, but those business interests

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[11] Ibid., p. 3.

[12] Ibid.

"on the Pacific Coast . . . (and) throughout the country" that traded with Japan.[13] In other words, those business groups that Libby has constantly been critical of for their over-zealous devotion to profits, secure markets and sources of raw materials to the detriment of cooperative international relations, were now receiving his support.

Libby's rationale for supporting "general business interests" was the pathetic state of the American economy. So bad was the general business climate that boycotting Japan would be a needles burden for business to bear. Libby envisioned business groups confronting Congress and demanding: "'Are you not aware that we are suffering from a great depression now? For God's sake don't do anything to make it worse than it is.'" Because of the dire economic situation, Libby believed that business interests would never come out in favor of a boycott.[14]

The obvious question that occurs at this point is why Libby was suddenly so concerned with the plight of American business. Taking into consideration what we know about Libby's background, his assumptions and convictions, it is quite feasible that his primary concern (second, of course, to peace) was the desperate economic situation in America and the world and the

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[13]Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[14]Ibid.

disastrous effect it had on mankind. We know, for example, that he blamed the Manchurian attack and the rise of Adolf Hitler, in part, on the Depression. The desperate state of the world's economy, "forced" Japan to find a secure supply of raw materials while in Germany, Hitler promised to restore order and stability to a country racked by inflation.[15] The worse the Depression got, the worse the plight for the average American, or German, or Japanese. Thus, perhaps, to strengthen his stand against sanctions he placed himself in a position of supporting a group he felt was automatically opposed to the boycott and, at the same time, hoping to help the average citizen who he thought would be hurt by the imposition of sanctions. But he gravitated to what he believed were interests that would automatically, regardless of the situation, align themselves against a boycott. By enlisting business to his cause, Libby hoped to lend greater credibility to his argument against sanctions. Of these two elements, concern for human welfare and increased credibility for his position, the latter led to Libby's rather unusual advocacy of the business community.

At any rate, Libby's motives notwithstanding, the support needed in America for sanctions to become a reality would have caused political division within

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[15]Statement of October 14, 1930.

the peace movement. The lingering memory of the horror of the Great War, the desire to avoid European political entanglement and, most importantly, the Depression made creating the proper atmosphere for participating in sanctions difficult. The only way such an effort could be sustained, Libby wrote, was to launch, a "campaign of hate . . . sufficiently vigorous and continuous to divert the majority of our voters from . . . nearby interests." He went on to describe the need for atrocity stories of such magnitude that their constant repetition would lead to hatred for the "enemy." It was clear to Libby that the "psychology necessary to an economic boycott is the psychology of war. The methods of securing a boycott are the same methods that lead to war." In this highly charged and inflamed atmosphere such hatred could "bring us within an inch of war." What Libby feared most was that such an emotional state would be manipulated by the "jingo press" (meaning Hearst) and lead America into an unwanted and needless war.[16]

Libby hoped that sanctions would not be imposed on Japan and refused to accept the idea that peace could result from such coercive measures. "I cannot believe," he wrote, "that . . . peace . . . is going to rest upon the methods or psychology of war. . . . It must rest on

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[16]Libby, "My Plan for Peace," pp. 3-4.

the methods and psychology of peace."[17] On December 10, 1931, his worst fears were relieved somewhat when the League Council adopted a resolution establishing a commission to investigate the circumstances surrounding the Mukden incident. Chaired by the Earl of Lytton, the commission soon reported that despite China's uncertain political climate and Japan's reasonably legitimate concerns about Manchuria, there existed no justification for Japanese actions. The commission recommended the re-establishment of Chinese authority over Manchuria.

The United States, at the beginning of 1932, had yet to take any official action regarding events in Asia. Although America had participated in the League Council's discussions and had even sent a representative to the Lytton Commission, Libby still worried that Stimson might initiate a potentially disastrous policy. Finally, on January 7, 1932, Stimson announced the official American position regarding Manchuria: the Hoover-Stimson Doctrine. Hoping for the support of other governments, Stimson incorporated in the Doctrine a "universally accepted" treaty. Thus, the substance of the American position was that the United States "does not intend to recognize any situation, treaty,

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[17]Ibid., p. 4.

or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the covenants and obligations of the Pact of Paris."[18]

Stimson's policy of nonrecognition, reminiscent of a similar statement issued by Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan in 1915, was first suggested the previous November by President Hoover. The Doctrine, highly moral in tone, was a logical policy given Stimson's belief that the foundation of America's foreign policy was the Washington Conference treaties and the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Quite understandably, Stimson believed public opinion would automatically align against aggressors like Japan. After all, the Paris Pact had received virtually unanimous support, thus, a policy of nonrecognition would demonstrate the moral indignation of the world and Japan would be "forced" to settle her grievances peacefully. Although the Doctrine had the advantage of requiring the United States to do nothing whether the Japanese accepted the pronouncement or not, it still needed the support of other signatories of the Kellogg-Briand Pact to have the weight of public opinion. But support was not forthcoming, most

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[18]Quoted in Dorothy Borg, The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-1938: From the Manchurian Incident through the Initial Stage of the Undeclared Sino-Japanese War (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), p. 9.

importantly not from Britain and France. Britain was worried about the future of trade with Manchuria and Japan, and London was justifiably concerned about the potential Japanese threat to other imperial holdings like Hong Kong. The French, meanwhile, had similar concerns for Indochina and hoped that Japan would keep well to the North on the Asian mainland. Other nations, following the Anglo-French lead, also refused support.

Undaunted by Europe's failure to join in America's moral condemnation of Japan, Stimson turned this time to the Nine-Power Treaty to enlist support against the aggressor. In his famous open letter to Senator Borah published February 23, 1932, Stimson restated the principle agreed to in the Nine-Power Treaty and on that basis appealed to its signatories to endorse nonrecognition. Furthermore, the letter contained a lightly concealed threat suggesting that continued Japanese actions in violation of China's integrity would result in termination of America's commitments by the Nine-Power Treaty leading, possibly, to the fortification of Guam and the Phillippines. Independently, Britain and France were no more willing to support Stimson this time. But, this time at least, support was granted by the League of Nations. On March 11, 1932, the Assembly voted unanimously for a resolution supporting non-recognition. Not entirely convinced of the League's

willingness to back the resolution with action, Stimson still "had an abiding faith in the ability of the United States and Great Britain to solve many of the problems which threatened the stability of the world, if they would only work together."[19]

The notion of England and America working together pleased Libby. He welcomed the Hoover-Stimson Doctrine and believed it would prove "more fruitful than the boycott."[20] "The great merit of the (Hoover-) Stimson Doctrine is that it condemns without coercing, except in a negative (way) . . . it was a bold step."[21] Thus, the kind of diplomatic action against aggressors that Libby had been advocating for years had finally been taken. What made it possible, of course, was the existence of the Kellogg-Briand Pact. But he realized that America's unilateral action, no matter how "bold," was inadequate.[22] Nonrecognition would be ineffective without support from fellow Pact members. Libby nervously awaited the response of Europe and England in particular. He had been disappointed twice and was,

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[19]Ibid., pp. 9, 16.

[20]Libby, "My Plan for Peace," p. 4.

[21]F. J. Libby notes, February, 1932, NCPW files.

[22]F. J. Libby notes, 1933, NCPW files.

therefore, apprehensive, but the tension was lessoned by the League's endorsement of nonrecognition on March 11. Although Japan was now "morally isolated," Libby cautioned the peace movement that even though a policy of nonrecognition required patience, a military response would have required more patience and would have been very "costly in human life and ruinous to an impoverished world."[23] Libby applauded the moral isolation of Japan because she was the aggressor who had violated the peace, and he was willing to act with patience in the hope that the Hoover-Stimson policy, strengthened as it was by League support, would be a "warning . . . to all nations in the future . . . that there is nothing to be gained . . . " by conquest.[24] But despite this hope, Japan's continued aggression and the establishment, in March, 1932, of the puppet state of Manchukuo left Libby disturbed. Later he wrote that Japan's continued actions should be "clear warning" to the British and French that they would need stronger policies than nonrecognition should Hitler decide to duplicate Japan's Manchurian adventure in Europe.[25] Libby's notes were

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[23]Libby notes, February, 1932.

[24]Libby, "My Plan for Peace," p. 4.

[25]Libby notes, 1933.

carefully worded so that the "clear warning" was aimed at Britain and France and not the United States. He had yet to acknowledge that the euphoria and accomplishments of the 1920s had ended. Nonetheless, his careful phraseology brought to mind that the NCPW's goal in 1931-32 was "the goal with which we started, prevention of a second world war and, if we failed in that, prevention of America's involvement in such a war."[26] "No injustice that China could conceivably suffer," he wrote in the NCPW's revamped newsletter, Peace Action, "would compare with the injustice of our embarking on another world war."[27]

II

In the Spring of 1932, the realization that the peace machinery had failed to resolve its first serious international crisis disheartened many in the peace movement, including Frederick Libby. Since prospects for the future were none too bright considering the Depression, the situation in Asia and the increasing influence of Hitler in Germany, Libby began to re-evaluate the effectiveness of some of the NCPW tactics.

It became obvious after the establishment of Manchukuo that words alone were incapable of halting

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[26]Libby, To End War, p. 79.

[27]Peace Action 1 (December 1934-January 1935).

Japanese aggression. As members of the Interorganization Council on Disarmament (the forerunner of the National Peace Conference), Libby and the officers of other peace groups like the WIL and the League of Nations Association tried to find an acceptable way of discouraging aggression without risking American involvement in war. Libby believed that coercive measures like boycotts were not the answer since they increased the risk of war and were accompanied by heightened emotional antagonism toward the aggressor.[28] Attempting to arrive at an acceptable compromise, Nicholas Murray Butler, chairman of the Committee on Economic Sanctions, offered a new plan. He argued that traditional forms of neutrality had been outdated by the Kellogg Pact and that any nation guilty of aggression must be opposed by the Pact's signatories who should jointly invoke an arms embargo against the violator.[29] Libby later expressed his conviction that arms trafficking drew America into the Great War and thus, he thought that an arms embargo "in full cooperation" with other nations "might be an effective deterrent" to

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[28]Libby, "My Plan for Peace," pp. 3-4.

[29]Robert A. Divine, The Illusion of Neutrality (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), p. 20.

aggression.[30] As radical peace activists turned inward, mandatory embargoes would have greater appeal, but in 1932, Libby still saw the nonrecognition doctrine as the "more fruitful" of the methods suggested for opposing aggression.[31]

Another area under re-evaluation was the Council's efforts at mass education which had been refined continually until a sympathetic response from public opinion was usually assured. However, favorable public support did not guarantee effective political action or influence. "The key to the Council's influence . . . (was) in its ability to translate sympathetic public opinion into wholesale political pressure."[32] But Libby was unconvinced, in the Spring of 1932, that such pressure could be organized. In his annual report at the end of 1931, Libby was beginning to realize that current efforts, particularly in light of Manchuria, were not enough. "We must develop political power," he argued, because NCPW efforts to educate the people would not be effective "without corresponding political action." It was decided,

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[30]F. J. Libby, letter to Peace magazine, March 15, 1934, NCPW files.

[31]Libby, "My Plan for Peace," p. 5.

[32]Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," p. 81.

therefore, that a "political machine" was needed to "channel public sentiment into active support" for the major issues of the day.[33]

The NCPW's fledgling effort at direct political influence began almost immediately. The year 1932 was a presidential election year and both conventions were to be held that summer in Chicago a few days apart. In May, the Council's policy committee met to formulate strategy for the major parties' upcoming conventions.

The "Chicago Plan," as it was called, advocated two strategies: one outside the convention for the benefit of attracting public attention, and the other inside the convention hall to influence party policy. There were to be two massive automobile parades, complete with colorful banners and flags proclaiming the advantage of peace, preceding each convention.[34] To publicize the beginning of the "plan" Jeannette Rankin, former Congresswoman and now head of the NCPW's Legislative Department, left Washington by car with great fanfare and a lavish sendoff all arranged for the benefit of press photographers who were, of course,

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[33]Libby, To End War, pp. 82, 91; Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," pp. 81-82; "Annual Report of the Executive Secretary of the NCPW," October, 1931.

[34]Minutes of the Policy Committee, May 20, 1932, NCPW files.

informed ahead of time. Both parades came off as scheduled, led by no less a celebrity than Chicago's own Jane Addams.

The more important part of the "Chicago Plan" was aimed at the two major parties and their individual delegates. The strategy developed called for peace workers to quietly approach delegates, hand them copies of the NCPW's peace plank and be prepared to discuss the need of delegate support. The peace plank emphasized the regular goals of the NCPW. Foremost, of course, was disarmament, followed by membership on the World Court, membership in the League and adherence to the Kellogg-Briand Pact. While this was going on, representatives of the Council would be testifying before the resolutions committee and the platform committee hoping to have their suggestions incorporated into the convention either by resolution or as part of the party's platform.[35] For both conventions, Jane Addams was called upon to lead off testimony before the resolutions committee. In addition to activity at the two conventions, the Council also drew up plans for the five-day (June 20-25) layoff between them. The gap was to be filled by a conference on political

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[35]Ibid.

strategy for members of the peace movement so that workers, resources and plans might be pooled to avoid any wasteful duplication.[36]

Although a report of the policy committee written by Libby in the Fall reported that all plans drawn up the previous Spring had been successfully carried out, tangible results were something else.[37] They had hoped to have a real impact inside the convention, not outside where enthusiastic public response to their publicity gimmicks was all but assured. For it was inside that the real decisions were made that could affect war and peace. Unfortunately though, the NCPW stimulated only modest interest among the delegates. "The Council could be ignored with impunity, since it represented only a small, insignificant group of idealists," Kuusisto wrote.[38] Although Libby was aware that the NCPW did not command much attention, he felt they had only begun to try and affect the political process. Furthermore, he felt the Council was less than effective because of the ever-pressing economic crisis. Reflecting on the campaign of Democratic

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[36]Ibid.

[37]"Report of the Policy Committee," October 25, 1932, NCPW files.

[38]Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," p. 83.

presidential contender Franklin D. Roosevelt, Libby wrote that FDR spent almost no time on foreign policy simply because of the Depression. In fact, for the same reason, most people did not even consider foreign policy matters when voting. Libby concluded that the NCPW must try and reach people outside that "relatively small section of our population that is interested in foreign affairs."[39]

In order to overcome the twin disadvantages of insignificantness and the Depression, Libby proposed the formation of local units, at the grass roots, to "engage in a systematic . . . door-to-door, face-to-face campaign."[40] The primary thrust of local efforts was directed towards sending a steady stream of letters and petitions to Congress on behalf of peace legislation and the election of peace-minded candidates to national office. The NCPW refused blanket endorsement of any political party preferring instead to support individual candidates based on their positions on peace issues.[41]

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[39]Memo by F. J. Libby, November 11, 1932, NCPW files.

[40]Ibid.; Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," pp. 83-84.

[41]"Minutes of the Policy Committee," April 20, 1932; Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," p. 89.

Direct lobbying proved to be another necessary tactic. Useful at both the local and national level, lobbyists sought out Congressmen and their staffs at home and in Washington whenever the situation warranted. For the most part, lobbying efforts were directed towards legislation under consideration on the floor or in committee. Frequently the NCPW drew up its own legislation, or its own version of existing legislation, for presentation by sympathetic members of Congress. Occasionally, the Council presented evidence before investigatory committees dealing with peace-related issues. In any case, by the end of 1934, the NCPW's "political machine," which lacked sophistication in Chicago two years earlier, "succeeded through its insight into political techniques in attaining sufficient influence to place it in the mainstream of the nation's foreign policy determination. . . . "[42]

III

One of the first attempts by the NCPW to influence the course of investigatory proceedings occurred during the inquiry into the munitions industry and the role it played, if any, in America's entrance into World War I. The investigations, which lasted from September, 1934, until June, 1936, would, Libby hoped, so discredit

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[42]Ibid., p. 102.

militaristic thinking that a peace philosophy, heretofore looked down upon, would have a chance for wider acceptance. Since the available peace machinery had failed to resolve the Manchurian crisis, Libby feared that the United States might be drawn into a coercive effort to help China. But he believed that an investigation would arouse enough public indignation over American participation in the last war that policy makers would be forced to regard cooperative sanctions in Asia as an unacceptable alternative.

The inquiry, officially known as the Senate Special Committee Investigating the Munitions Industry, had a rather unusual beginning. Since the end of the war rumors had been circulating, particularly in the peace movement, alluding to the influence munitions makers had on the conduct of the nation's foreign policy. The rumors also suggested that the munitions makers, along with the manufacturers of other tools of war, profited enormously from American participation in World War I. As the stability of the postwar era began to disintegrate with the Depression, the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and the rise of Hitler, people wondered if another war was on the horizon and in their fervent hope to avoid another holocaust, listened more carefully to the rumors about the munitions industry. The call to control arms manufacturers was no longer

coming only from the peace movement; it was gaining more and more attention. "The reason? It came at precisely the right historic moment, when people were willing to hear such odd gospel."[43]

What helped tip the balance at that "historic moment" was the appearance of two books in the Spring of 1934: Iron, Blood and Profits; An Exposure of the World-Wide Munitions Racket by George Seldes and Merchants of Death, A Study of the International Armaments Industry by Helmut C. Engelbrecht and Frank C. Hanighen.[44] Journalist Seldes, outlining the activities of the manufacturers during and after World War I, argued that "No reason for war remains except sudden profits for . . . the munitions racket."[45] The more influential of the two books, if only because it was a best seller and Book-of-the-Month-Club selection (April, 1934) and, therefore, enjoyed a wider audience, was Merchants of Death. The book purported to be a scholarly, documented

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[43]John E. Wiltz, In Search of Peace: The Senate Munitions Inquiry, 1934-1936 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963), p. 3.

[44]George Seldes, Iron, Blood and Profits; An Exposure of the World-Wide Munitions Racket (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1934); Helmut C. Engelbrecht and Frank C. Hanighen, Merchants of Death, A Study of the International Armaments Industry (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1934).

[45]Seldes, Iron, Blood and Profits, p. 326; Quoted in Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, p. 166.

analysis of the industry, demonstrating a ruthless campaign to promote war for profits.

These two books led the field in helping to establish a "mood" in America by 1934. The reality of the Depression, the worsening situation in Manchuria and Germany, numerous other books and articles, newspaper and magazine stories, a Senate resolution to investigate manufacturers, and even President Roosevelt's statement that "the private and uncontrolled manufacture of arms and munitions . . . has become a serious source of international discord and strife," all helped to establish this "mood."[46] As John E. Wiltz wrote: "Who could blame the people in the mid-thirties for taking seriously this heady business about the merchants of death."[47]

The real push for a congressional investigation of the arms industry came from Dorothy Detzer, executive secretary of the American branch of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Like many others in the 1920s and 1930s for whom the pursuit of peace was both vocation and avocation, Ms. Detzer's life was profoundly altered by World War I. She had worked with Jane Addams

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[46]See, for example, "Arms and Men," Fortune 9 (March 1934): 53; the Roosevelt quote is from Wiltz, p. 23.

[47]Wiltz, In Search of Peace, p. 23.

and, like her colleague, Frederick Libby, helped with Friend's reconstruction in France. After another stint of reconstruction work in Russia, she returned to the United States determined to dedicate herself to the cause of peace. In describing Dorothy Detzer's ability, Charles Chatfield wrote that she was "aggressive but diplomatic, possessing stern principles and savoir-faire, backed by a vociferous segment of public opinion and wise in the ways of committees and pressure groups."[48]

In May, 1933, at its annual convention, the WILPF reiterating a resolution passed a year earlier, called on the Senate to begin an investigation of the private munitions trade. Having failed to receive senatorial help in 1932, Detzer began as she had before, with Nebraska Senator George W. Norris. After crossing virtually every Senator off the list, Norris finally told Detzer that her sponsor for the inquiry ought to be North Dakota's Gerald P. Nye. Nye, who did not have to face re-election for four years, was sympathetic to Detzer's desire to investigate the munitions makers. Although he had refused Detzer once before, Norris' endorsement changed his mind and he agreed to help.[49]

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[48]Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, pp. 159-60.

[49]Wiltz, In Search of Peace, p. 25.

Nye had little or no knowledge of the industry he investigated. But, as a Midwesterner and an ardent admirer of Progressive Robert M. LaFollette, he inherited a set of prejudices about Eastern financiers and manufacturers and about American involvement in World War I. He approached his task with a sense of duty.

On February 8, 1934, Nye introduced his resolution for an investigation before the Senate. It is conceivable that his resolution would have died in committee had it not been for the right "historic moment." It was at this time that Merchants of Death and Iron, Blood and Profits were gaining popularity. Capitalizing on popular momentum, Detzer, having already convinced Norris and Nye of the necessity of an investigation, attempted to persuade Secretary of State Cordell Hull. She succeeded and Hull publicly endorsed the inquiry.[50] On April 12, the Senate accepted the idea and a few days later Vice President John Nance Garner (directed by the resolution to appoint the members of the Committee) announced the names of the Senators that would lead the inquiry. Nye, a Republican, would chair the committee. He would be assisted by Democrats Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri,

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[50]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 64-66; Lawrence S. Wittner, Rebels Against War: The American Peace Movement, 1941-1960 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 10-11; Wiltz, In Search of Peace, pp. 24-25, 32.

James P. Pope of Idaho, Homer T. Bone of Washington and Walter F. George of Georgia, and by Republicans W. Warren Barbour of New Jersey and Arthur H. Vandenberg of Michigan.[51] Clark, Vandenberg and Bone shared Nye's isolationist views, while Barbour and George were considered more moderate. Senator Pope was the only collective security advocate on the panel.

Libby had supported Detzer's effort to organize an inquiry as early as 1932. The NCPW offered help and encouraged her in late 1933, when she finally won over Norris. Libby was pleased both by the "excellent bipartisan committee" named by the Vice President and when his and Detzer's "competent and trusted friend" Stephen Raushenbush was named chief investigator.[52] Raushenbush was a Wilsonian liberal who believed in the ruthlessness of the munitions makers. He and his assistant, a young lawyer named Alger Hiss, began to search for evidence with the aid of the WILPF and the NCPW.

The Nye committee held hearings from September, 1934, until January, 1936. When the committee issued its report in June, 1936, its "revelations" proved

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[51]Before the hearings began, Senator George replaced the originally named Morris Shepard of Texas.

[52]Libby, To End War, p. 103.

"as spectacular and as thorough (an) indictment of munitions profits as the peace groups had hoped."[53] People, both in and out of the peace movement, who believed in "devil theories" about war were satisfied that the truth had finally come out. Among its conclusions the committee agreed that private companies had profited excessively both during and after World War I. The report further charged that manufacturers were encouraged to sell munitions to foreign governments by the War Department. The ultimate charge, however, was that munitions makers conspired to ensure America's participation in the Great War. The report also offered a few recommendations for the future. Arguing that wars could be avoided if munitions traffic was regulated, the committee endorsed legislation controlling the sale of arms and recommended the nationalization of munitions manufacturing. A minority report accompanied the majority report, in which Vandenberg, Barbour and George dissented in the committee's ultimate conclusion of the munitions makers culpability for the war and opposed the nationalization of the munitions industry.

Peace groups, Libby and the NCPW included, were pleased with the committee's report. "It was an opportunity that was not likely to come again," Libby wrote

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[53]Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," p. 109.

later, "how to make the best use of the revelations . . . became . . . the concern of the whole peace movement."[54] Although the report was full of unproved accusations, Libby began at once to exploit the committee's findings.[55] Workers "chose from the rich mass of materials the juiciest bits" of testimony to publicize.[56] Libby and the staff integrated highlights of the findings into their speeches and Libby ordered the printing of a pamphlet entitled "Munitions Makers' Plight" from a Florence Boeckel article. "Now it can be Proved" was one of the earliest of Libby's pamphlets that allegedly proved, through the use of testimony, the charges that for so long had been leveled against munition makers. Another member of the staff, Paul Harris, wrote a one-hour play, "Repeat Hearing," based on actual testimony and NCPW literature encouraged its production by "prominent citizens" (who would portray the Senators and the munitions makers) in each community. The scripts were offered in Peace Action along with descriptions of how to build scenery depicting the hearing room and instructions for tailoring the dialogue for two to

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[54]Libby, To End War, p. 105.

[55]Wiltz, In Search of Peace, p. 149.

[56]Libby, To End War, p. 105.

twenty-one actors. It was usually staged by local peace societies in cooperation with chapters of national groups like the WIL.

Although the munitions inquiry provided "a great deal of material that was useful to (the NCPW) in exposing the activities of the munitions industry," Libby failed to see the loopholes in the half-truths of the report.[57] Instead of examining the material for hard evidence of ruthlessness or conspiracy, he uncritically accepted it. But, then, he was not alone in his miscalculation. Others, like Dorothy Detzer, also accepted it without question for it confirmed what they had always "known" to be fact. The so-called "connections" between those who manufactured munitions and the causes of war (a simple solution to a complex problem) is usually accepted most quickly by those who cannot think, or refuse to think. Its real attractiveness is that it requires little or no mental effort on the part of its advocates. The sad part, of course, is that neither Libby nor Detzer were as unsophisticated as their advocacy of the inquiry would indicate. For his part, Libby repeatedly demonstrated sophisticated mental gymnastics, particularly regarding pacifism and the realities of international politics.[58]

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[57]Ibid., p. 112.

[58]See, for example, "Answers to Hard Questions" discussed in Chapter 1.

At the beginning of the munitions committee investigation, Libby hoped that it would help discredit militarism to such an extent that a peace philosophy could become widely acceptable. Although a different philosophy had by 1936 become more acceptable, it was not entirely the result of Nye's inquiry. A philosophy of peace, or, more correctly, a fear of war, was more likely the result of events in Ethiopia, the Rhineland and Spain.

Based on the successful experiences of the peace movement in the 1920s, Libby was understandably optimistic as the 1930s began. It seemed, perhaps for the first time, that a truly peaceful world was a distinct possibility. But the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and the League's failure to resolve the crisis shattered that hope. Although he still advocated international cooperation for peace, the League's call for cooperative sanctions against Japan convinced Libby that the world was headed for war. As a result he directed his attention toward efforts designed to keep America out of war. The flexibility and adaptability that had helped place Libby in a position of leadership in the peace movement was superseded by his absolute fear of war. Working with Dorothy Detzer he concentrated his efforts on securing an investigation of the munitions industry. Libby believed that the conclusions of such

an investigation would prove the industry's responsibility for America's involvement in the Great War and would, therefore, act as a constraint on policy makers. In the twenties Libby worked to expand and further administration policies leading to peace, but now he was working to obstruct policies he believed were leading America down the road to war. From this point, Libby's advocacy of mandatory neutrality was a most logical step.

CHAPTER 6

While the Nye Committee investigated the munitions manufacturers, with the approval of the Roosevelt Administration and the peace movement, the international order continued to disintegrate. Just as people were beginning to accept the League of Nation's inability to deal with the Manchurian crisis, Italy and Ethiopia began fighting, Hitler re-occupied the Rhineland and civil war broke out in Spain. Add to this disastrous European situation a full-fledged Sino-Japanese war in the midst of world-wide depression and it seemed that America would be unwillingly drawn into a war somewhere. In this volatile atmosphere frightened Americans, in and out of the peace movement, sought isolation from involvement in events that seemed certain to lead to a second holocaust in less than a generation.

I

In this grim economic and political setting of the mid-1930s, people like Frederick Libby who feared that the collective action policies of the League would

lead to war, were encouraged by the actions of a few members of Congress. Within a few days of each other, in early April, 1935, Representatives Maury Maverick of Texas and Frank Kloeb of Ohio and Senators Gerald Nye of North Dakota and Bennett C. Clark of Missouri introduced resolutions in their respective houses on behalf of neutrality legislation. In substance, these measures called for a prohibition on loans to belligerents, a ban on travel by American citizens into war zones or on belligerent ships, and an embargo on all arms and contraband (war) materials. The ban on loans was to be applied automatically in the event of a declaration of war.

The intention of these resolutions seemed clearly to be the isolation of America from all European or Asian wars because adherence to the traditional concept of neutral rights in the 1914-1917 period wars, some people felt, a primary cause of America's involvement in Europe's war. Since the United States first became a unified nation in 1787, American neutrality has generally referred to remaining separate from wars among other nations. The most recent example of American neutrality was the "Great War" during which complete impartiality regarding the belligerents was impossible. By the Spring of 1915, Germany's new tool of war, the submarine, was beginning to prove its worth with devastating

effectiveness. Americans were being killed by this unconventional weapon while traveling under conditions in which they would normally be protected as neutrals. The Wilson Administration challenged Germany's use of the submarine as not within the rules of traditional naval warfare. Germany's response was to ignore both American protests and the rules of traditional warfare because military considerations dictated otherwise. So, the United States, with common heritage and interests, soon joined Britain in war against Germany.

Now, almost two decades later, the Nye Committee's search for culpability and the introduction of neutrality legislation in Congress was symptomatic of the belief that the "mistake" of intervention could be prevented from happening again.

The peace societies generally reacted favorably to the introduction of neutrality legislation in the House and Senate. Libby's support for neutrality in the Spring of 1935, when the resolutions were offered, was in marked contrast to his position only a few months earlier when the NCPW drew up its "Program for 1935" in the fall of 1934. At that time Libby articulated the Council's position regarding what he called the "Illusions of Neutrality." "We believe," he wrote, "that war in which the major powers are involved is doomed . . . because trading with belligerents leads

to the sinking of our ships and eventually to war."[1] Placing no faith in neutrality as a viable policy, Libby went on to suggest an alternative: "Our nation will best serve itself and the cause of peace, not by seeking neutrality in war but by cooperation for the prevention of war."[2] What he hoped to avoid was a repetition of the problems of neutral trading that "led" America to war seven years earlier.

By the Spring of 1935, Libby's position had changed; he now advocated support for a policy of neutrality and the adoption of neutrality legislation.[3] What brought about the change? By mid-1935 the already tense political situations in Asia and Africa were worsening. Japan was demanding naval parity with the United States and an end to the Five-Power Treaty of 1922. In Ethiopia, King Haile Selassie was asking Washington for help in securing Italy's observance of the Kellogg-Briand Pact and called on the League to invoke sanctions against Italy. In both situations Libby believed that war, particularly in Africa, was

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[1]"NCPW Program for 1935," NCPW files.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Libby notes, Summer, 1935, NCPW file; Peace Action 1 (May 1935): 1; Libby, "We Have Just Two Wars to Prevent," Peace Action (July 1935): 3-4; Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, p. 134; Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 92-93.

almost inevitable. "Not a single member of the League," he wrote later, "showed any intention of going to war in defense of Ethiopia."[4] In Asia and Africa, the only way war could be prevented was through cooperative coercive actions that Libby could not support. Convinced they were no longer able to prevent war, groups like the NCPW and the WILPF turned to insulating America from them.[5]

Although the peace movement welcomed the Nye-Maverick resolutions, an unexpected split developed over how neutrality should be implemented. The argument focused on whether or not embargoes on war materiél or loans should be mandatory at the beginning of a war or should be invoked at the discretion of the president and, presumedly, only applied to the belligerent he labeled the aggressor. Those favoring mandatory application argued that it was real neutrality because it kept the United States from taking sides intentionally or unintentionally. Those favoring discretion, on the other hand, argued that mandatory application prevented the flexibility needed to meet unforeseen circumstances.

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[4]Libby, To End War, p. 120; Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, p. 236.

[5]Warren I. Cohen, "The Role of Private Groups in the United States," in Pearl Harbor as History: Japanese-American Relations, 1931-1941, eds. Dorothy Borg and Shumpei Okamoto (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), p. 431.

This disagreement was not always the case, however. In 1929 and again in 1931, the peace movement supported legislation for discretionary embargoes.[6] In both cases, the peace movement saw these bills as indicative of "American cooperation to prevent war."[7] Even Libby, as late as March, 1934, advocated discretionary embargoes. Referring to a bill before Congress, Libby argued that "an embargo (imposed against the aggressor nation only) would . . . serve as a deterrent to getting into war and, in full cooperation with other nations, might be an effective deterrent to nations aggressively inclined."[8] But he switched from concerted action to neutrality once the likelihood of preventing another war had passed. Libby now supported mandatory embargoes as the most effective way to implement neutrality. "We support wholeheartedly (the) neutrality" of the Maverick resolution, he wrote, "unable to prevent war in Europe for

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[6]Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, p. 232. In 1929 Senator Arthur Capper and Congressman Hamilton Fish introduced the embargo legislation. In 1931, it was Senator Borah.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Libby, Letter to Peace magazine, March 15, 1934, NCPW files. The resolution Libby referred to was introduced by Representative Samuel D. McReynolds of Tennessee and later amended by Senator Hiram W. Johnson of California.

the time being, . . . neutrality is the . . . answer."[9] The split over implementation of embargoes developed along conservative and radical lines. Thus, the older, more genteel groups like the Carnegie Endowment and the League of Nations Association supported discretionary embargoes. Eventually, they urged repeal in favor of a policy of collective security which suggested that neutrals might be able to stop war through the collective, selective use of diplomatic and economic sanctions against aggressors. On the other hand, it was the impatient, new peace groups, like the NCPW and the WILPF, that argued for mandatory embargoes.[10] In fact, by 1937, the debate would no longer be discretionary versus mandatory powers, but would be strict isolation from the aggressors versus collective action to curb the aggressors.

In any case, no sooner had the neutrality resolutions of April, 1935 been referred to the appropriate committees than the NCPW "launched an active (coordinated)

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[9]Libby, "We Have Just Two Wars to Prevent," p. 3.

[10]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 92-94; Ferrell, "The Peace Movement," pp. 104-05; Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, pp. 132-36; Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, pp. 230-36.

campaign to secure enactment of (the) legislation."[11] Libby and the NCPW staff planned and organized most of the campaign which included many of the activities that had proven successful in the past. Affiliates of the Council were urged to direct their memberships to write congressmen and senators, local officials and newspapers to increase local awareness of neutrality legislation. He also informed Peace Action readers of Congressional bill numbers and when they were likely to be considered in committee or on the floor. Libby felt that most people wanted to avoid another war and the simplest way to enlist their support was to make them aware of what was happening in Washington. Many people responded, and the usual torrent of telegrams and petitions poured into the capital. Libby also organized a series of radio broadcasts. Covering part of New England and the mid-Atlantic states, the twice weekly programs featured prominent people speaking on issues affecting world peace. The fifteen-minute talks, highlighted by people like Jeannette Rankin and Maury Maverick, focused primarily on the need for neutrality laws. Libby, Rankin, Detzer and Congressman Maverick lobbied heavily to pressure Representative Samuel D. McReynolds, Chairman

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[11]Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, pp. 163-67; Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, pp. 236-37; Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, p. 94.

of the House Armed Services Committee, into scheduling hearings on the house version of the neutrality bills. As a result of NCPW efforts the hearings were scheduled.[12]

Held during June and July of 1935, the Armed Services Committee heard only three witnesses: Kloeb and Maverick, the congressmen who wrote the house bills, and Amherst College professor Phillips Bradley, who "presented and defended in an effective manner" the views of the Council.[13] Bradley spoke not as a representative of the NCPW but as a member of the National Peace Conference. The NPC was meant to be a coordinating organization, not unlike the NCPW, but was comprised of peace group officers. It never became the efficient machine that the NCPW was, but, nonetheless, it counted among its almost forty members officials of most of the conservative and radical peace groups. The NPC was the arena in which the isolationists (NCPW, WILPF) fought the collective security advocates (Carnegie, League of Nations Association) in the late 1930s. But in the Summer of 1935, the NPC remained unified enough to lobby in favor of the bills and pressure the House into scheduling hearings. During his testimony,

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[12]Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, p. 137; Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, pp. 236-37; Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 95-96.

[13]Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, p. 137.

Bradley offered to the committee a resolution adopted by the NPC attesting to its position on the proposed legislation: "The neutrality policy of the United States should be revised in order that the risk of entanglement in foreign wars may be reduced and in order that the United States may not obstruct the world community in its efforts to maintain peace."[14] The ambiguity of this statement was such that no matter what an individual's position was, it could be read into that phraseology. But to Libby, the statement was not ambiguous; it represented a unified policy "to which all members" could subscribe.[15] It seems clear that the peace movement's support for neutrality legislation was hardly in keeping with its traditional desire for international cooperation for peace.

By the time the hearings concluded, popular awareness of the neutrality legislation under consideration had increased considerably and the demand for action by Congress grew.[16] The problem, however, was to get the legislation on the floor of the House and

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[14] Peace Action 2 (August 1935): 8, and quoted in Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, pp. 137-38; and Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, p. 94.

[15] Peace Action 2 (August 1935): 8.

[16] Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 95-96.

Senate for a vote. President Roosevelt and particularly Secretary of State Hull had been pressuring both McReynolds and Senator Key Pittman of Nevada (Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee) to delay the neutrality bills from leaving their committees before the August recess.[17] Hull's aim was to force the neutrality legislation to be reintroduced in the 1936 congressional session when, he hoped, the bills would more closely reflect Administration thinking.

Both Roosevelt and Hull favored neutrality legislation but hoped for bills quite different from those introduced in the Spring of 1935. They hoped for a discretionary policy which would allow the President to consider the circumstances before deciding whether or not to invoke neutrality. Roosevelt wanted to retain control of this aspect of foreign policy; he disliked any legislation that included mandatory or impartial features.[18] Thus, when it looked as if the bills might receive favorable treatment, Hull went to work to delay them.

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[17]For a detailed discussion of the 1935 neutrality debate see Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 97-121 and, for a less detailed account, but with greater emphasis on the NCPW and the peace movement, see Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, pp. 134-50.

[18]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 53-56, 90-92, 98-103, 134-35.

When Representative McReynolds favorably reported the Maverick-Kloeb bills out of committee on July 3, Hull immediately extracted a promise from the Congressman not to allow them to come to a vote in the House. Hull then focused his attention on Pittman and the Senate. Since the Nye-Clark bills had already reached the Senate floor, Hull persuaded Pittman to have them returned to committee "for further study." The Senate agreed to return the bills to committee, but Nye quickly began to organize isolationist supporters to force a vote.[19] Nye and a few other senators began speaking daily to arouse support for the legislation and compel the Foreign Relations Committee to act. While the committee seriously considered what to do, Hull decided it was time for State to make its formal recommendations to the President. Not unlike the peace movement, the State Department was divided over discretionary/mandatory embargoes. But the report that finally went to Roosevelt reflected Hull's desire for flexibility and the President supported it.

Meanwhile, frustration with Administration tactics was beginning to show. Fearful that Congress might adjourn without action on the legislation, Libby pleaded with his readership: "Have you written (to Congress)

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[19]Ibid., pp. 97-101.

as we urged you to do a month ago . . . ?"[20] Letters, telegrams and petitions in support of neutrality still arrived at the Capitol, but with the congressional session grinding to a close, more help was needed. When word reached Washington that British and French attempts to arbitrate the Italian-Ethiopian dispute had been rejected by Mussolini, making war seem imminent, the isolationist senators were now determined to act even if the Administration was not. Under the leadership of Senator Bone, a small group threatened to filibuster until neutrality was voted on by the full Senate. As the filibuster began, word reached Pittman that Roosevelt would no longer fight for discretionary powers. Pittman immediately went to the floor and reported the bill approved by the Foreign Relations Committee. Its primary feature was an impartial arms embargo and on August 21, the bill passed and was sent to the House.

Libby and the NCPW staff were relieved at the outcome of the Senate's action but realized that it still must pass the House. Fortunately, Jeannette Rankin and Warren D. Mullin, labor secretary of the NCPW, had been working diligently not only to gather support for the House bills, but support for House action before adjournment. In fact, Rankin personally

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[20]Peace Action 2 (August 1935): 1.

wrote letters to over 175 congressmen asking for their support. Encouraged by the favorable response, she and Mullin began lobbying at the door of the House chamber and received even more support.[21] Shortly before the Armed Services Committee was to consider the measure as passed by the Senate, Libby learned that Roosevelt had agreed to the mandatory requirement with the stipulation that the law would have a six-month expiration date. Apparently worried about the uncertain future of needed domestic legislation before the House should he decide to kill neutrality, Roosevelt agreed to the compromise (a mandatory requirement in return for a time-limit) out of political necessity and the belief that not enough would happen in six months to seriously alter his control of foreign policy.[22] On August 23, the House passed the neutrality resolution and two days later the Senate passed the House version containing both mandatory embargoes and the time limit. President Roosevelt signed the measure into law on August 31, 1935.

Basically, the Neutrality Law of 1935 required that the president declare that hostilities existed at

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[21]Warren D. Mullin, "The Neutrality Victory," Peace Action 2 (September 1935): 6-7; Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, p. 237; Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, pp. 141-45.

[22]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 113-14; 120-21.

the outbreak of a war. By so declaring, the President automatically invoked an embargo on the export of arms and munitions to any belligerent and a ban on the shipment of munitions via American ships. The President was also given discretionary powers in a few specific areas. He could, if he chose, issue warnings to American citizens traveling on belligerent ships that they did so at their own risk, and he could decide what items should be included on the embargo list. The law was to expire in six months, on February 29, 1936.

The most enthusiastic reception for the Neutrality Law came from the peace movement. Libby was pleased that their efforts had paid off.[23] Despite the fact that most of their work was not obvious to the casual observer, the "role of the Council in . . . the Congressional struggle was substantial."[24] While it was clear that the people sympathized with the intent of the neutrality legislation once they had become aware of it, it is equally clear that the enormous quantity of telegrams and letters would not have been sent to Washington without an organized effort. Senator Nye, in a Senate speech shortly before passage of the bill,

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[23]Peace Action 2 (September 1935): 1; (October 1935): 1; and (November 1935): 1, 4.

[24]Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, p. 147.

confirmed that the number of "telegrams and other communications" received by Congress made clear the public demand for "strong legislation."[25] In fact, the heaviest mail deliveries of the entire campaign came between August 20 and 24, the most crucial time of the whole episode. Senator Nye also confirmed the influence of the peace movement's lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill. In a letter to Jeannette Rankin, Nye congratulated her for the hard work she put in over several months. "Your work," he wrote, "has been so . . . productive of results that one would be foolish to discount the very large hand you have had in (our) success."[26]

Before Libby could enjoy the fruits of victory and begin a new campaign for permanent legislation, disenchantment among some of the NCPW's affiliated groups had to be dealt with. The disagreement surfaced at the annual Fall meeting of the NCPW attended by representatives of the member groups and the Council staff. It focused on the executive committee's (meaning Libby's) new stand favoring mandatory neutrality. Critics of the new policy, like Paul Harris and Laura Puffer Morgan, labeled it isolationist and not in keeping with the NCPW's advocacy of international

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[25]Quoted in Ibid.

[26]Ibid., pp. 147-48.

cooperation.[27] Libby responded that the choice was not isolation or cooperation but the foundation upon which cooperation would take place. That foundation, without neutrality, would surely draw America into war, Libby reminded the delegates. But with neutrality, the United States was merely observing strict impartiality so that it could not again by led into war by trading with belligerents. Thus, neutrality laws forced the United States to peacefully deal with wars by preventing the government from taking actions that would lead to involvement.[28] Ms. Morgan, however, saw the problem in different terms. She urged Libby to begin a campaign to educate the American people about the differences between war as an instrument of policy and military actions taken to curb the aggressor. She also urged the NCPW's support for discretionary powers for the President when the next neutrality debate began.[29] The members of the Council failed to resolve their differences before adjournment, but Libby, reporting on the annual meeting in Peace Action, tried to do so. "We have taken a

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[27]"Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the NCPW," October 16-18, 1935, NCPW files; Also see Peace Action 2 (November 1935): 3-4.

[28]Ibid.; Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, pp. 150-52.

[29]Ibid.

middle ground," he wrote, "we support the isolationists in avoiding Europe's wars but we take the position that we must cooperate in world organization on a peace basis for prevention of those wars."[30] What he suggested, then, was neither isolation nor collective security, but collective cooperation. In other words, Libby wanted cooperation without resorting to force and he believed that America's neutrality laws forced the United States to play it only that way. But Libby's reasoning did not settle the dispute, it would surface again when the next neutrality debate began.[31]

II

In the early morning of October 3, 1935, Italian troops attacked Ethiopia, and Mussolini's dream of another Roman empire brought the world a step closer to a second global war. Although neither side issued a formal declaration of war, reports to the State Department convinced President Roosevelt that it was time to act under the Neutrality Law of 1935. Through Secretary of State Hull, Roosevelt declared that a state of hostilities existed in East Africa which automatically activated the mandatory features of the law and the

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[30] Peace Action 2 (November 1935): 4.

[31] Ibid.

impartial arms embargo took effect. Roosevelt also issued a warning to Americans not to travel on belligerent ships. On October 7, the League of Nations Council branded Italy the aggressor and declared her in violation of the covenant. By so doing, the League now had the authority to use economic sanctions to halt Italy's actions. A committee was established to make recommendations and by mid-October it urged adoption of specific economic sanctions that included an arms embargo, a ban on loans and credit, no further importation of Italian goods and an embargo on certain raw materials that members could control, but not on important strategic necessities like oil and iron that were available from non-League members. The United States, not a League member, refused to adhere to the sanctions. But, Roosevelt's use of the impartial embargo from the Neutrality Law, actually gave tacit support to the League. By invoking the arms embargo and issuing the warning against travel, the American policy hurt Italy, the aggressor, more than Ethiopia who imported almost nothing from America and had no navy to threaten Italian ships carrying American passengers.

The reaction of the American peace movement to the Administration's policy was generally favorable.[32]

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[32]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, p. 130.

But peace advocates were quickly discouraged when trade in strategic goods, particularly oil, increased dramatically during October.[33] Nor were they optimistic when Roosevelt's plea of October 30 calling for pre-war limits on the export of oil and strategic goods was roundly ignored. It seemed as though the League's effort at curbing the aggressor was failing. This was confirmed when England and France attempted to by-pass League machinery by offering Italy almost one-half of Ethiopia's territory to end the war. To American neutrality advocates there seemed no hope that collective pressure would halt aggression. The actions of American oil exporters and the Anglo-French offer to mollify Italy convinced Libby that the 1935 Neutrality Act had its limitations. "It was evident that the 1936 legislation would have to be stricter and more comprehensive in its provisions."[34] Libby's call for including oil and strategic goods on the embargo list was not advocacy of sanctions against Italy in the present crisis but aimed at tightening the new legislation. Had such goods been included in the original Neutrality Law the question of penalizing Italy by withholding oil would never have occurred.

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[33]Ibid. Oil exports were 1 1/2 times greater in October; 3 times greater in November.

[34]Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, pp. 152-53.

The Ethiopian crisis also brought to the surface a problem that Libby had yet to resolve. Since he envisioned that America would one day be a member of the League, Libby had to decide if he would support a League decision to invoke sanctions as it did in the present situation. Although Libby suggested that the Italian-Ethiopian war was a "laboratory experiment" that might give some indication of the practicality of collectively enforced sanctions he refused to face the issue squarely.[35] The United States "is a non-member of the League," he wrote. "This question will have to be faced when we join the League . . . but our country is not ready to join . . . yet. . . . This is no time to raise the issue."[36] Although he put off confronting the real issue at hand he, nonetheless, gave an indication of his feelings about the "practicality" of collective sanctions. "We can answer this question now," he wrote.

> The answer is . . . negative. Pressure alone, when exerted against determined resistance such as Italy's presenting, creates a dead lock which can end only in abject surrender . . . or in a war of desperation. The humiliation of Italy

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[35] Peace Action 2 (December 1935): 6.

[36] Peace Action 2 (January 1936): 2.

> . . . would make peace in Europe impossible for many years, because history shows that Italy would seek revenge with the aid of allies.[37]

Reluctant to "raise the issue," Libby turned his attention to the weaknesses of the 1935 law.

As Congress reconvened in January, 1936, the issue of neutrality and neutrality legislation had not disappeared. The Italian-Ethiopian war demonstrated the inadequacy of just limiting embargoed goods to arms and munitions. "Congress should extend the mandatory embargo legislation," Libby wrote, "to cover loans and credits and all contraband of war" including "such secondary munitions as minerals, oil and cotton."[38] Libby was not the only one concerned about the future of neutrality laws for the new congressional session. The State Department, the neutrality bloc in the Senate and a special committee of the National Peace Conference had been working during the recess to prepare proposals for consideration by Congress.

The Administration's policy reflected the reluctant acceptance of a mandatory arms embargo by Roosevelt and Hull. Roosevelt hoped that his compromise offered a choice between the mandatory-discretionary sides of the argument. The year 1936 was an election year and

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[37] Peace Action 2 (December 1935): 6.

[38] Ibid., p. 2; Peace Action 2 (November 1935): 3; 2 (January 1936): 10.

"Roosevelt hoped to avoid a long and bitter struggle over neutrality that would create serious divisions inside his own party."[39] Thus his plan, presented to Pittman of Foreign Relations and McReynolds of Armed Services, kept the mandatory arms embargo and added impartially applied trade quotas on raw materials and a mandatory ban on loans. But in an effort to give the President some authority, discretion was allowed in selecting the items placed on the quota. He could issue a trade-at-your-own-risk warning to those doing business with belligerents and he could exempt short-term credit from the ban on loans.

The Senate's neutrality bloc, pleased that the Administration did not offer a completely discretionary bill, prepared its own legislation. Although they accepted the concessions and agreed with portions of the Administration's bill, they felt it did not go far enough. Therefore, Senators Nye and Clark and Representative Maverick introduced their own proposals which included the impartial arms embargo, the trade quota and the ban on loans contained in the Roosevelt plan. But the congressional plan gave no discretionary power at all to the President; the quota system became automatic; and short-term credit was also banned. One further

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[39]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 134-37.

measure in the Nye bill was a cash-and-carry provision instead of the trade-at-your-own-risk warning. It required that all belligerent trade be via foreign ships and that all goods be "sold" before leaving the United States.

In Peace Action, Libby went to considerable lengths analyzing and comparing the congressional and Administration versions of the legislation.[40] He considered the substance of both versions (particularly the concessions in the Administration version) reflective of the "tremendous pressure from their citizens who don't want war." Libby criticized the discretionary features of Roosevelt's plan and called for "amendments . . . to the administrative bills bringing them in line with the Nye-Clark-Maverick proposals. . . . "[41]

The third neutrality proposal came from the National Peace Conference which selected a committee headed by James T. Shotwell to draw up another version for consideration. Although all factions of the NPC agreed on the necessity of extending the 1935 law and increasing its scope to include strategic materials, the division seen earlier over collective action and isolation remained. Again the disagreement was over mandatory or

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[40]Peace Action 2 (January 1936): 2-3; 2 (February 1936): 6.

[41]Ibid., p. 3.

discretionary embargoes. The NCPW and the WILPF argued for impartially applied embargoes while the collective security people called for flexibility for the President, so that embargoes might not be applied to the victims of aggression. The NPC plan to exclude the impartial embargo caused dissension within the peace movement and prompted Libby to write that the NPC plan was a suggestion and no more. It "possesses solid educational value," he said, "but it contains a section . . . (on the) controversial question (of impartial embargoes) . . . that would precipitate a . . . debate in Congress if the bill were presented there." As with the problem of sanctions, Libby relegated solving this dilemma to the future.[42]

As in 1935, the divisive issue within the Administration and the peace movement was collective security versus isolation. These conflicting viewpoints were presented repeatedly as Senate and House committees conducted hearings on the measures. The already confused situation was further complicated by a small group of congressmen, led by Senator Hiram Johnson of California, arguing for the reassertion of the traditional concept of freedom on the seas. Johnson criticized any suggestion, like the trade quota, that violated America's neutral rights as they had been defined until the

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[42]Ibid., pp. 3, 10.

mid-1930s. Johnson's challenge to the proposals in committee was aided by economic and ethnic (particularly Italian-American) interests.[43] The Johnson group of traditional neutrality advocates focused their attacks on the discretionary powers in the Administration's bill. Johnson charged that such powers were a "thinly disguised effort to permit cooperation with the League."[44] Libby had no more faith in the Johnson group than he had in the Administration. "No neutrality bill is insurance against war," he wrote, "neutrality legislation . . . is only a step . . . in the process (away) from our futile 'freedom of the seas' position . . . which has already involved us in two wars."[45]

As the deadline rapidly approached, at least four factions--isolationists, collective security advocates, freedom-of-the-seas advocates and the Administration--contended that their view of neutrality was the appropriate one. To this confusion a new measure aimed at satisfying all sides was offered. Utah Senator Elbert D. Thomas introduced a resolution extending the 1935 law until May 1, 1937. The only change from the old

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[43]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 146-47, 150-52; Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, p. 157.

[44]Divine, The Illusion of Neutrality, p. 146.

[45]Peace Action 2 (March 1936): 1.

law was the addition of a ban on loans to belligerents. The immediate reaction of peace advocates and the Administration was negative.[46] Libby's primary objection to the resolution's extension of neutrality was that it was again only temporary. The NCPW's main objective in the current campaign was permanency in the new law. But, "the enemies of this (permanent) legislation . . . were pressing hard."[47] The Administration, on the other hand, was less concerned with permanency than it was with the resolution's lack of some discretionary power for the President. Thus, both sides opposed it. But as the House and Senate committees remained deadlocked over the Roosevelt and the neutrality bloc's bills, the attractiveness of the Thomas resolution grew.

On February 7, less than a month before expiration, Senator Pittman told Roosevelt and Hull that between the Nye faction and the Johnson group there was no chance of the Administration's bill passing. At the urging of Pittman, Roosevelt reluctantly switched his support to the Thomas Resolution as the only alternative to absolute mandatory neutrality or traditional freedom of the seas.[48] Within a few days, the Senate and House

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[46]Divine, The Illusion of Neutrality, p. 153; Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, p. 158.

[47]Peace Action 2 (March 1936): 1.

[48]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, p. 155.

reported out the Thomas Resolution with only a few changes. In record time, both houses passed the bill and sent it to Roosevelt for signing. The rationale for such swift actions was the rapidly approaching end to the existing law.

On February 29, 1936, the day the 1935 law expired, President Roosevelt signed into law the 1936 version of neutrality. The new law continued the mandatory arms embargo and the travel restrictions of the 1935 law. But it added the ban on loans advocated by the neutrality bloc. Furthermore, it changed from discretionary to mandatory the extension of the arms embargo to new belligerents entering the war. The new law also exempted the Western Hemisphere from its application. The Neutrality Law of 1936 was to expire on May 1, 1937.

Libby and the NCPW believed the new law was a defeat for peace activists because their aim had been permanent mandatory legislation. Instead they got little more than the 1935 law with a slightly longer, but still temporary, lifespan.[49] In Peace Action, Libby complained that the new law was "not so adequate as we had hoped," and also had harsh words for "so-called peace-minded citizens." "This year (will be called) 'Remember the Neutrality Fiasco'" because

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[49]Peace Action 2 (March 1936): 3.

those who wanted peace were apathetic, allowing the "well-organized pressure of anti-neutrality groups to go uncombatted. Neutrality is dead (until next year, so) after you have had time for a good weep, get busy and educate the country on what is needed in the way of adequate neutrality legislation."[50] It was obvious that the NCPW did not create the organized pressure it had in the past.[51] The failure was not due to any laxity on the part of Libby or the staff but to the widening split within the peace movement over the appropriate type of neutrality legislation. Normally, Libby's directives were passed along to affiliated groups who in turn rallied their membership to the cause. But, now, NPC groups like the League of Nations Association were having second thoughts about Libby's stand on neutrality and were not urging their memberships to act.[52] Unfortunately for Libby, he had yet to realize the size of the gap between the collective security advocates, whether in the NCPW or the peace movement generally, and the relatively small faction of isolationists. With his isolationist stand in 1936, Libby could only effectively

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[50]Ibid.

[51]Kuusisto, The Influence of the NCPW, pp. 159-60; Peace Action 2 (March 1936): 3.

[52]Ibid., p. 161.

influence the Women's International League and the Friends of Reconciliation, which were the Council's closest affiliates. During the 1936 campaign, Libby placed his resources and influence completely at the disposal of the Nye-Maverick isolationist faction in congress which angered others in the peace movement who were not convinced of the wisdom of isolation. Thus, while international cooperation for peace had long been the key phrase of the peace movement, Libby, despite his references to neutrality as cooperation, had "irrevocably merged (himself) with the isolationists" to whom international cooperation was an invitation to war.[53]

III

By June, the Ethiopian war had ended and Congress adjourned to begin the political campaign of 1936, a presidential election year. Libby and the NCPW had begun in the spring to make plans for that summer's conventions. Although the neutrality debate had ended temporarily, the quest for stronger legislation would be foremost among the suggestions the NCPW would make during committee hearings at the two conventions.

Libby's attempts to influence the two parties were made independently of the peace movement as a whole,

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[53]Ibid.; Also see Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, pp. 223-55.

largely because the NPC was completely divided over the appropriate form of neutrality legislation. Thus, Libby began to work on his own toward the continuance of mandatory neutrality. In an effort to offset the loss of the collective security wing of the peace movement, Libby organized the Emergency Peace Campaign.[54] The EPC was officially launched on April 21, 1936 in Washington with a nationwide radio address by Hanna Clothier Hull, President of the Women's International League.[55] The purpose of the campaign was "To promote a cooperative national campaign to keep the United States from going to war and to achieve world peace. . . . " Libby hoped this could be done by offering "alternatives to armed conflict"; by helping to ensure the political and economic changes that are "essential to a just and peaceful world order"; and by uniting all those opposed to war.[56] Although the EPC began with only segments of the NCPW, the WILPF, the FOR and the AFSC, it hoped to influence American decision makers during its projected two-year life. For Libby, the EPC was merely

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[54]F. J. Libby, "Great Emergency Peace Campaign Is Planned," Peace Action 2 (March 1936): 5.

[55]Eleanor Roosevelt was scheduled to make the opening address, but was prevented from attending by the death of presidential advisor, Louis Howe. Ms. Hull read a statement from the First Lady.

[56]"Great Emergency Peace Campaign Is Planned."

another vehicle to help keep America out of war. Since 1936 was an election year, Libby suggested that the NCPW and the EPC jointly sponsore a series of meetings in cities across the country urging support for peace-minded candidates.

But Libby's immediate task was the impending national conventions. In the June issue of Peace Action, Libby outlined the NCPW peace planks he hoped would be adopted by the two major parties. The first priority was that "national defense" should be defined solely as an invasion of "our soil." He also suggested reciprocal trade agreements to reduce tension; the nationalization of the munitions industry; and careful maintenance of First Amendment freedoms. On the question of neutrality, Libby supported permanence for the 1936 law. The American people are "overwhelmingly opposed" to participation in a European war, he argued, and there is "general support for the strengthening of our neutrality legislation to include war materials and incorporate the principal of 'cash and carry.' Thus we would reduce the risk of entanglement in foreign wars. . . . "[57] The importance of lobbying at the conventions for a peace plank can also be seen in Libby's assessment of the effect of foreign policy on the continuing economic crisis.

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[57]F. J. Libby, "Peace Planks for Party Platforms," Peace Action 2 (June 1936): 3.

> Failure (to unite in opposition to participation in foreign wars) would make a farce of all attempts at avoiding inflation, relieving the farmer, raising the laborer's standard of living. . . . Another war on top of the last one would . . . wipe out the middle class, double our debts and our taxes . . . (and) crush trade unionism. . . . All that any party may do . . . is futile if it cannot offer a . . . program for prevention of war.[58]

While Libby's vision of the future was none too bright, neither was his evaluation of America's current foreign policy. "Inconsistency and inadequacy" characterized Roosevelt's policies. Libby reacted favorably to Latin American policy ("we are pursuing a 'good neighbor' policy"); Hull's reciprocal trade agreements ("one of the greatest achievements . . . "); and he called withdrawal of marines from Nicaragua and repeal of the Platt Amendment "real progress." But he was critical of the Administration for its failure to secure arms reduction by international agreement; its failure to join the world court; and for "increases" in army and navy appropriations.[59] Lobbying efforts clearly followed the pattern set at the 1932 convention. Libby directed NCPW workers to buttonhole delegates and urged them to support the peace planks while staffers testified at committee hearings on the merits of the planks and

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[58]F. J. Libby, "Will the Conventions Meet the Basic Issue," Peace Action 2 (June 1936): 1.

[59]F. J. Libby, "Our Present Foreign Policies Are Confused"; "Has the Democratic Party Kept Its Promises?" Peace Action 2 (June 1936): 1, 5.

the political advantage (read: votes) their formal adoption would bring the party. The outcome of their work was more encouraging than the 1932 effort when fighting the depression was the only goal of the major parties. Although it was still a goal in 1936, the aggressive policies of Japan, Italy and Germany commanded a good deal of attention and resulted in some action. But the platforms written by the parties were only partly satisfying to Libby. The Democrats "adopted a strong and consistent peace program . . . (which) will necessitate important changes of policy (if they win)." On the other hand, the Republicans "made a grave mistake . . . (and if they win) they will need to be wiser than their platform."[60]

The Republicans' "grave mistake," according to Libby, was allowing Senator Borah to draft the foreign policy planks in their platform. Borah's effort

> . . . even repudiates the World Court. Not a word is said about neutrality, a fact which Senator Borah explained as "an oversight." No mention is made of taxing the profits out of war nor of nationalization of the munitions industry . . . (and he) declares against the reciprocal trade agreement policy.[61]

So disillusioned was the NCPW with the Republican platform, that Libby wrote the GOP candidate, Governor

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[60] Peace Action 3 (July 1936): 1-2.

[61] Ibid., p. 4.

Alfred Landon of Kansas, and pleaded with him to "fill in some of the . . . gaps in the section dealing with foreign policy." Most important, Landon was asked to define his neutrality policy.[62]

The Democratic platform was greeted more warmly by Libby. The Administration's party continued its support of "true neutrality"; encouraged working to take the profits out of war, to guard against being drawn into war by commitments or by munition makers and continued support for the reciprocal trade agreements. "What is unusual," Libby commented, "there is nothing elsewhere in the platform that conflicts with this peace program."[63]

Thus, with the two platforms clearly in mind, Libby urged readers to "question closely all the candidates for Congress. . . . " The objective was to secure "their interpretation of their party's platform on all questions affecting peace and war."[64] As in 1932, the NCPW offered no blanket endorsement, but urged peace-minded voters to examine individual candidates. The Democrats "will undoubtedly" discuss their plank openly but the Republicans ought to be offered "the opportunity to fill in the gaps in their platform" before the

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[62]Ibid., p. 10.

[63]Ibid., p. 5.

[64]Ibid., p. 10.

electorate casts its vote. Libby also encouraged readers to try and get questions and replies published in local newspapers for all voters to read.[65]

As a resident of the District of Columbia, Libby was disenfranchised. Nonetheless, he did as he urged his readers to do, and determined for himself which of the presidential candidates he would support. The "Republican convention turned us down pretty flat," Libby complained, and by mid-October candidate Landon had yet to "fill in the gaps." The Democrats, however, "adopted in substance" the NCPW peace planks. Although Libby was dissatisfied with some of Roosevelt's policies like naval appropriations, he "unquestionably" endorsed the President's re-election.[66]

As the peace movement began its campaign work following the conventions, the forces of Francisco Franco rebelled against the Spanish government in late July, 1936. For the United States, a new crisis developed for which its neutrality laws were not equipped to cover: a civil war. Although the war began as an internal affair, it quickly assumed international proportions. By August the war had become a battleground of ideology and weaponry as Germany and Italy, sympathetic with the

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[65]Ibid.

[66]F. J. Libby letter to the editor, The New Republic (October 14, 1936): 277.

fascist Franco, supplied him with war materiél and new weapons technology. The Spanish loyalists, on the other hand, were being aided by the Soviet Union and the future of the European peace was in doubt.

Unable to legally invoke the Neutrality Law of 1936, the Administration on August 22 chose instead to call for a voluntary embargo on both sides in the Spanish conflict. The measure was welcomed by Libby as indicative of FDR's determination to adhere to the spirit of neutrality, but since moral embargoes were not legally binding, American firms applied for weapons export licenses. The problem was resolved when Roosevelt, through Senator Pittman, requested that an emergency resolution be adopted by Congress invoking an impartial embargo on shipments of arms and war materiél. The measure was quickly passed by the new Congress on January 6, 1937.

The civil war in Spain and the new neutrality law again demonstrated the difficiencies of existing mandatory neutrality legislation. The effect of the law was hardly impartial for it penalized the loyalist government which was unable to buy arms in America while Franco's forces received aid from Hitler and Mussolini. Nonetheless, Libby approved of the new law and believed that real impartiality was working, German aid to Franco notwithstanding, because the United States was

not in any way involved.[67] For Libby the only weakness was the temporary nature of the 1936 Neutrality Law. With the European peace about to break up, those working for permanent neutrality grew more impatient.

IV

Quick congressional action on the Spanish embargo cleared the way for Congress, the Administration and the peace movement to return to their consideration of comprehensive neutrality before expiration of the current law on May 1, 1937. In this third round in the fight over neutrality, more legislative proposals would be introduced in Congress than appeared in the other two debates combined.

The Administration's proposals were introduced in mid-January by Senator Pittman and Representative McReynolds. Although Roosevelt and Hull hoped for reasonably flexible powers, they had given up hope of full presidential discretion. Thus, the Pittman and McReynolds measures retained the bans on arms, loans and travel. They differed only in that Pittman's proposal had a cash-and-carry feature while McReynold's bill revived the trade quota plan defeated the year before. Roosevelt's willingness to quit pushing for full discretionary powers had less to do with foreign

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[67] Peace Action 3 (February 1937): 1.

policy than it did with domestic issues. The so-called second New Deal was beginning and with it came a new round of social-welfare legislation. The last thing Roosevelt needed was an angry Congress more divided than it was already.

The Pittman bill in the Senate was, relative to the other measures introduced, a moderate proposal.[68] In February, Senate isolationists Nye, Clark and Vandenberg introduced a comprehensive measure reflecting Nye's desire for strict neutrality. Senator Thomas introduced a bill with broad presidential power and Senator J. Hamilton Lewis of Illinois offered one with absolute discretionary power for the president. Similar measures appeared in the House, but the bills offered by Representatives Maverick, Jerry Voorhis of California and Herman Kopplemann of Connecticut gained the support of Libby and the NCPW.

Libby supported the Maverick-Voorhis-Kopplemann bills simply because they most closely resembled the NCPW's view of neutrality. The aims, all of which were contained in the bills, were a mandatory embargo on arms, loans and credits; an embargo on the sale of any war material that endangered American neutrality; a

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[68]McReynolds' bill in the House was later changed to conform with the Pittman version.

prohibition on travel; and a cash-and-carry policy.[69] Libby's objection to the Pittman bill was that it fell "dangerously short" of the pledge by the Democrats to avoid being drawn into war by profiteering or political commitments. He argued that it did not prevent a war boon in private trade and it did not stop the flow of strategic materials like oil. "These are the main holes in the legislation," Libby wrote, "that must be plugged if we are to isolate a foreign war."[70] Libby was disappointed at the lack of response to the Maverick-Voorhis-Kopplemann bills and frustrated with Congress for its growing support of the Pittman bill. "If European nations go to war again," he lamented, "Congress is determined that we shall again try the experiment of making money out of their war. Already their preparations for war are glutting our ports . . . we are in a war boom now!"[71]

During February, 1937, the House and Senate held hearings on the various neutrality measures although only the Pittman (and McReynolds) bill and the Maverick-Voorhis-Kopplemann bills received serious attention.

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[69] Peace Action 3 (February 1937): 7.

[70] F. J. Libby, "Open Letter to Our Readers on Neutrality," Peace Action 3 (March 1937): 1.

[71] Peace Action 3 (April 1937): 1.

Libby's staffers were out in force to testify on behalf of strict neutrality. Jeannette Rankin, Florence Brewer Boeckel and Warren Mullin all testified, stressing the advantages of strict neutrality and the dangers of discretionary power for the president. Their objections to Pittman's bill closely followed Libby's arguments and they stressed that flexibility for the president would lead, tacitly at least, to support for sanctions against aggression.[72] Such action would not be in the best interests of peace, Libby contended, "The object is to restrict every war, as one would a fire, to the smallest possible area." Nothing can "justify making any war a world war. . . . No injustice to either party in (a) dispute is regarded as comparable with the vast injustice of plunging the world into the abyss that threatens us."[73]

But that extreme isolationist position was not the one that was rapidly gaining support in Congress. On February 20, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out the Pittman bill. It contained the mandatory arms embargo and the ban on loans while adding a ban on travel on belligerent ships and a cash-and-carry feature. The "cash" portion of the measure was mandatory,

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[72]Peace Action 3 (February 1937): 7.

[73]Libby, "Open Letter."

thus, if the embargo was invoked the ownership of American goods must be transferred to the buyer before leaving an American port. The "carry" portion was left to the president to decide if and when American ships would be banned from carrying the material for which "cash" had just been paid. On February 25, the House Foreign Affairs Committee reported out the McReynolds version of the bill. The only major difference between it and the Pittman bill was that the entire cash-and-carry provision was to be discretionary. Thus, the choice facing Congress in 1937 was simplified compared with previous debates. There was agreement on the mandatory embargo and the ban on loans and travel; only the issue of whose ships will carry the goods remained to be decided. Both houses of Congress passed their respective bills in early March, 1937 and a Senate-House conference was appointed to work out the differences. The final compromise of the committee was adopted by both chambers and Roosevelt signed it into law on May 1, the day the old law expired.

The Neutrality Law of 1937 was to take effect when the President proclaimed that a state of war existed (between two or more foreign nations or a civil war). At the moment it became operative, the following features were automatically in effect: an embargo on arms and munitions, a ban on loans, a ban

on travel on belligerent ships, a ban on the use of American ships to transport arms and munitions and the application of all these measures to any new belligerent. In addition, the new law allowed the President, if he chose, to invoke a cash-and-carry policy, separately or as one action. The cash-and-carry provision had a two-year time limit while the rest of the law was permanent.

Reaction to the new law was generally favorable. The Administration and its supporters in Congress were, of course, pleased. The isolationists in Congress led by Nye, which had originally supported Pittman's partially discretionary cash-and-carry provision, voted against the final resolution. Nye did feel, however, that solid gains had been made, for all of the law's mandatory features were measures advocated by the isolationists during the first battle over neutrality two years earlier. Thus, his criticism was largely confined to cash-and-carry. The collective security wing of the peace movement (led by Eichelberger and Shotwell), on the other hand, favored the discretionary power in the cash-and-carry provision but it deplored the mandatory features as restrictive.

Libby and the NCPW, although disappointed that any flexibility had been built into the law, were not completely dissatisfied. The 1937 law was, after two

years of struggling, the permanent one they had worked so hard to achieve. It contained more mandatory features (like the travel ban) than Libby had thought possible in 1935. Even the cash-and-carry feature, although he disliked the President's power, was a step in the right direction because it reduced the chances of American ships being sunk as they had been in 1917. Despite these solid accomplishments, there were "several bad holes" in the new law. The specter of a trade boom still loomed large without adequate measures to prevent it. More important, trade in strategic materials like oil and scrap iron was not covered and could, therefore, add to the tension as was the case with Ethiopia. Clearly, Libby and the Council were ready to begin to "plug the holes," and they were encouraged by increasing congressional support for mandatory neutrality, particularly when compared with 1935. This Libby felt was "a sign of health and hope."[74]

The neutrality debate had now monopolized foreign policy decision making in the United States for two years. Many Americans, caught up in the immediacy of the depression, only slowly became aware of that debate. To these people, and others, more knowledgable in foreign affairs, the defense of traditional

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[74]Peace Action 3 (May 1937): 1, 3.

neutral rights--like freedom of the seas--had caused America's involvement in the European war. Thus, when members of Congress, such as Nye and Maverick, and leaders of the peace movement like Libby offered neutrality as an alternative, public opinion accepted embargoes on arms and loans and restrictions on sea travel. But, agreement on surrendering traditional neutral rights came much easier than did the agreement on implementation of the new neutrality. By early 1937 the split was less disagreement than division. The Roosevelt Administration, members of Congress like Senator Pittman, and a significant portion of the peace movement (generally, and within the NCPW) advocated collective action internationally to prevent war or, at least, halt aggression. On the other hand, a small but effective segment of the peace movement (WIL, FOR), led by Libby's NCPW, joined a vocal group of congressional isolationists led by Senator Nye to prevent American participation in any war, not by cooperating to prevent war, but by legally preventing American decision makers from acting in anything but an impartial way. By May, 1937, Libby and his supporters had even moved away from Senator Nye's faction in their quest to keep America out of war. So the result was a redefinition of neutrality--it now meant isolation--quite unlike that sought by the traditionalists or the advocates of collective security

and the irrevocable division of the peace movement into factions supporting international action to prevent or halt war and those supporting complete non-involvement in war.

Although Libby accepted this division, he deepened it by criticizing his former colleagues in the peace movement who were advocating collective action against aggression. Collective security "stripped of its disguise," Libby wrote, "is an old-fashioned military . . . alliance of certain states against certain other states." Those who support it, support only a "myth" because "collective security is impossible . . . in a freely armed world."[75] The support within the peace movement Libby enjoyed in the twenties was rapidly disappearing.

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[75]F. J. Libby, "Cooperation with All Nations," The Christian Science Monitor, May 18, 1938.

CHAPTER 7

The Neutrality Act of May, 1937, which had satisfied no one completely, soon faced its first serious challenge. Surprisingly, the challenge came not from Europe, but from Asia, as Japanese and Chinese troops renewed their fighting. The Roosevelt Administration was reluctant to invoke the neutrality law and Frederick Libby was critical of the President for his inaction. Thus, before the NCPW could again work for restrictions on executive authority, through additional neutrality legislation or through enactment of a proposed referendum on war, the immediate crisis of war in Asia had to be dealt with.

I

The civil war in Spain and the increasing bellicosity of Hitler in Germany convinced most observers that the tenuous peace would most likely break down in Europe, particularly since the volatile situation in Asia had remained quiet, though unresolved, since the Manchurian incident in 1931. But on the night of July 7, 1937, Japanese troops stationed in north China

fought with units of the Chinese army less than twenty miles from Peking. After three days of fighting, a two-week truce was declared while negotiations took place. But the Japanese took advantage of the truce to send in reinforcements and the fighting was renewed. By the end of July, Japanese troops occupied Peking, and a few days later, attacked the port of Shanghai. Although no declaration of war had been issued, the two countries were fighting a full-scale war.

The immediate problem for the Roosevelt Administration was how to act under the Neutrality Act of 1937. Since no formal declaration of war had been issued, the President was not required to invoke the law. The problem as the President saw it was that invoking the Neutrality Law (which was advocated by Libby and the isolationist wing of the peace movement) would not guarantee an impartial stance for the United States. China was heavily dependent on imports for arms and munitions while Japan was much less so. Furthermore, if Roosevelt used the cash-and-carry provision only Japan had a merchant marine capable of taking advantage of it. Thus, since official neutrality would have benefited the aggressor, Roosevelt and Hull waited, hoping that the fighting would end.

By mid-August, the Administration announced that neutrality would not be invoked but was being

considered on a stand-by basis.[1] Worried that the Sino-Japanese war posed a threat to world peace, Libby was fearful of the implications of Roosevelt's reluctance to act.[2] Responding to the argument that neutrality for the United States would not be an impartial policy, Libby wrote,

> Many of the appeals to our sympathy for the Chinese are unfortunately traceable to selfish (economic) interests. . . . To go to war with Japan in behalf of China would be a supreme disaster and the height of folly. To try and sell our goods when Japan controls the seas would be to assure our involvement in a war five-thousand miles from home.[3]

Libby and the Council staff quickly began working to bring pressure on Roosevelt to declare neutrality. On August 20, after he had sought the support of representatives like Ludlow and Voorhis, Libby released a "Statement by (25) Congressmen of All Parties," urging Roosevelt to invoke neutrality "in the immediate future" and "stop feeding the war which means destruction of thousands of lives in the Orient and the danger of war to all the world." The statement also called on Congress

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[1]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, p. 203.

[2]Peace Action 4 (August 1937): 1; 4 (September 1937): 1.

[3]Peace Action 4 (August 1937): 1.

not to adjourn until "every possible action has been taken" to keep the United States out of the Asian war.[4]

But Congress did, in fact, adjourn and the NCPW shifted its focus directly to Roosevelt. In a letter to him, Libby protested the President's delaying tactics and argued that if the Neutrality Law failed it would be because of the Administration's "failure to apply it."[5] As in the past, Libby requested that NCPW member groups send telegrams and letters to the White House in support of neutrality. The staff also wrote a radio address for Senator Nye stressing the impartiality of the law, arguing that Japan, too, would be hurt by an embargo because it would prevent her from obtaining loans to procure raw materials.

Libby's efforts to pressure Roosevelt into declaring neutrality were not accepted unanimously by the peace movement. The internationalist wing challenged Libby's assertion that an embargo would insure impartial treatment of the belligerents. Indicative of this division was a radio debate between Senator Nye and Clark Eichelberger of the League of Nations Association in which Eichelberger challenged Nye's advocacy of neutrality and argued that the only way to stop aggression

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[4] Peace Action 4 (September 1937): 7.

[5] F. J. Libby letter to Roosevelt, August 18, 1937, NCPW files.

was through collective action. Much to the consternation of Libby, he even went so far as to advocate revision of the Neutrality Law to allow presidential discretion.[6]

After several Americans were killed during the fighting in Shanghai, the war in China grew even more perilous for the United States as Roosevelt sent marines to the city to protect American nationals. Libby felt that sending in the marines could lead to American involvement and he called for the immediate evacuation of Americans from the war zone. He also urged that a "definite date" be set for evacuation of American nationals, after which they remained at their own risk and without military protection. The marines must also be withdrawn, he demanded: "Their presence between two hostile forces is a continued menace to peace and therefore to the lives of millions of Americans in our own country."[7] Although Roosevelt urged Americans to leave the war zone, he declared no cut-off date and had no intention of doing so.

America's precarious position was further complicated when, at the end of August, the nation learned that a government-owned ship, the Wichita, operated by

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[6]Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, p. 282.

[7]Peace Action 4 (September 1937): 2.

a private American company, was in route to China carrying nineteen Bellanca war planes. Angered by what they considered a serious threat to peace, Libby and the representatives of the WIL, the EPC, the FOR, World Peaceways and the Committee on Militarism and Education gathered to formulate strategy and demand the implementation of the arms embargo. "Stop the Bellancas!" Libby demanded in Peace Action. "Wire . . . the President to stop the Bellanca planes. Ask him to declare our neutrality, to set a date for evacuation of our nationals . . . and then withdraw our . . . forces permanently from China."[8] Those demands were the substance of the strategy with which the board of six hoped to awaken public opinion to the need for immediate enactment of the Neutrality Law. For the benefit of public consumption, Libby drew parallels between the Wichita incident and the action of "aggressive business interests" prior to the Great War: "A deadly parallel . . . is becoming apparent," he wrote, private companies are "filling our press with appeals to our sympathies, our pride, our anger. Public opinion is . . . being deliberately inflamed against Japan. The time for putting out a fire is before it starts. The Neutrality Law is on the books . . . (it) should be obeyed."[9] The pressure of the

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[8]Peace Action 4 (September 1937): 1.

[9]Ibid., p. 2.

campaign paid off and on September 14 Roosevelt issued an order prohibiting government-owned ships from transporting munitions to belligerents, and the Wichita remained at the California port where she had made a scheduled stop.

Although Libby was pleased with Roosevelt's ship order, he still argued for invocation of neutrality.[10] "The choice faced by America today," he said, is "the neutrality law or war."[11] The President, of course, had not chosen to invoke the law, thus, "The policies of President Roosevelt are policies that lead straight to war."[12] "He is disobeying the law and substituting an opposite policy of his own. Whether or not . . . his disobedience of the law (is sufficient) to justify impeachment . . . the law is plain enough . . . (and) he is disobeying it."[13]

The Roosevelt Administration, since the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war, had repeatedly chosen delay to avoid taking a firm stand. As the situation in Asia

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[10]Press Release, September 24, 1937, NCPW files.

[11]Ibid.

[12]F. J. Libby, "Statement on Roosevelt Policy," October, 1937, NCPW files.

[13]F. J. Libby, "Should the Existing Neutrality Law of the United States be Applied in the Sino-Japanese Dispute? Yes," October 18, 1937, NCPW files.

worsened the tactic of delay became more and more precarious. Then, on October 5, 1937, Roosevelt, during a speech in Chicago, suggested that an

> . . . epidemic of world lawlessness is spreading. . . . When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease. . . . There must be positive endeavors to preserve peace.[14]

The meaning and implications of this now famous quarantine speech are still the subject of historical debate.[15] But to Libby the implications were clear enough:

> The President's Chicago speech . . . has been recognized as a reversal of the policy of the Neutrality Law . . . the spirit as well as a plain act of Congress had been not only nullified but violated. . . . The President is himself thwarting the will of the nation as expressed in an overwhelming vote of Congress. . . . We are again on the road to war. . . .[16]

The day after Roosevelt's quarantine speech, the NCPW opened its annual meeting with a press release arguing that "the only protective quarantine for the people of this country is the invocation of the neutrality law."[17] The tone of the 1937 meeting was set by the

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[14]Quoted in Borg, The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis, p. 381.

[15]See Ibid., pp. 369-98; Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 210-19; Osgood, Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations, p. 405.

[16]Peace Action 4 (November 1937): 1.

[17]Press Release, October 6, 1937, NCPW files.

President's speech and the objective quickly became how to combat its disastrous implications as the NCPW viewed them. The members resolved to work toward strengthening the existing law to include further restrictions on trade in strategic materials and the nationalization of the munitions industry. Libby also managed to manipulate an endorsement for a proposal to seek a joint resolution of Congress to force the President to invoke the Neutrality Law ("although there were able advocates of the opposing viewpoint").[18]

Calling for measures such as these only sought to insulate America from war, but Libby also dealt with the root causes of war by advocating peaceful change. A brief reiteration of a theme Libby had been discussing for some time concerning "have" and "have-not" nations was included in the meeting's annual report.[19] Libby felt the need to reiterate this theme while he was so disillusioned by Roosevelt's Chicago address. He hoped its retelling might impress the seriousness of the world situation upon those in the peace movement less inclined toward mandatory neutrality. What Libby suggested was that the post-war world was geared to the preservation

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[18]"Report of the Annual Meeting of the NCPW," October 6, 7, 8, 1937, NCPW files; quoted in Peace Action 4 (November 1937): 4-5.

[19]See Chapter 3 for a general discussion of this theme.

of the status-quo of the Versailles Treaty by the "have" nations (the United States or the British Empire, for example) who benefited from it. The "have-not" nations (Italy or Japan) were prevented from legitimate access to needed resources by the maintenance of the status-quo. This imbalance resulted in repeated challenges to the status-quo like the events in Ethiopia and China. The only way to stop those whom the "haves" called the aggressors, or disturbers of the peace, was through force. A better way, Libby suggested, was for the "haves" to take the lead to eliminate the imbalances and, thus, the causes of war.[20]

On December 12, Libby's worst fears were realized when Japanese planes sunk the American gunboat Panay stationed on the Yangtze River near Nanking killing two Americans. "The inevitable incident has come," Libby wrote, there must be "means by which people can check a government policy heading toward war. . . . " In desperation, Libby's campaign to avoid war reached new extremes as he turned to another recommendation of the NCPW's October meeting to limit executive discretion.

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[20]"Report of the Annual Meeting . . . ," 1937. For a more elaborate discussion of this theme see Peace Action 4 (October 1937): 1-2; "Should the Existing Neutrality Law . . . ," and To End War, pp. 132-34.

"The need for adoption of the War Referendum Amendment," he wrote, "needs no argument in words."[21]

II

The NCPW's failure to satisfactorily limit presidential authority by the Winter of 1937, convinced Libby to push harder for the "War Referendum Amendment." The Panay affair proved to be the shot in the arm the amendment needed to reach the House floor and Libby took advantage of it.

The idea of establishing a popular referendum before Congress would be allowed to declare war had been a part of peace activist programs for a number of years. Its enactment through a Constitutional amendment was first introduced in the House of Representatives in 1935 by Indiana Democrat Louis Ludlow. Ludlow's referendum was a response to the Nye Committee's investigation of the munitions industry which was taking place when he introduced the bill. Ludlow was convinced that America's involvement in the Great War resulted, as he believed Nye was proving, from the actions of munitions makers. He, therefore, saw the referendum as a means of checking that industry's influence on policy makers by leaving the decision of whether or not to go to war to the people.

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[21] Peace Action 4 (January 1938): 1.

Libby supported the amendment shortly after the resolution was introduced by Ludlow in February, 1935.[22] "This bill," Libby wrote, "is in line with our proposed revision of our foreign policy to make United States entry into war more difficult. . . . "[23] But, despite Libby's support for the proposal, it did not command the attention or efforts of the NCPW in mid-1935. Neutrality legislation took precedence and all the Council's efforts were directed at securing mandatory embargoes. For nearly two years, until early Summer, 1937, the referendum was of secondary importance not only because neutrality continued to be the issue of the day, but because the resolution was kept tightly bottled-up in the House Judiciary Committee whose responsibility it was to consider the measure.

The pseudo-campaign on behalf of the referendum was largely ineffective until late 1937 when the Council began to slowly step-up its effort. Urged on because of repeated disappointments in his battle for adequate neutrality legislation, Libby and the NCPW paid the publication costs for Ludlow's book Hell or Heaven, a two-hundred page tract outlining Ludlow's plan for the

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[22]Peace Action 1 (March 1935): 5; 1 (June 1935): 12.

[23]Peace Action 2 (July 1935): 8.

decentralization of war powers.[24] At Libby's urging, Ludlow began a campaign with the new Congress to force the bill out of committee.[25] According to House procedure, a bill for a Constitutional amendment can be brought to the floor for a vote without recommendation by the appropriate committee if a simple majority (218) of House members signed a discharge petition in favor of such action.

The outlook for obtaining the required signatures was dim because in the previous Congress Ludlow was only able to secure seventy names. But Libby offered to help by authorizing Jessie M. MacKnight, the NCPW's legislative researcher-writer and Stephen Raushenbush, the counsel from the Nye Committee, to organize the effort. They were supported by various members of the staff and by a $4000 fund set aside especially for that purpose.[26] Signatures accumulated gradually; 110 by June, 172 by August and by the beginning of December, 205. Then, on December 12, the Panay was sunk and the "inevitable incident" secured the remaining signatures and the

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[24]Louis Ludlow, Hell or Heaven (Boston: Stratford, 1937); Peace Action 3 (February 1937): 7.

[25]Peace Action 4 (November 1937): 4; 4 (December 1937): 4-5.

[26]Memo from Raushenbush to Libby, April 30, 1937, NCPW files.

amendment was headed for a floor debate and vote on a motion to consider.[27]

The House was scheduled to vote on the motion to consider on January 10, 1938, leaving one month for both the peace activists and the opposition to organize their forces. "The Ludlow Amendment Must Be Passed!" Libby pleaded in the lead story in January's Peace Action, "Get the word to your Congressman before it comes to a vote on January 10."[28] In the same issue, Libby listed, by districts and states, all congressmen who did not sign the discharge petition and urged readers in those districts particularly to contact their representatives.[29] The opposition to the amendment was concentrated primarily within the White House and its supporters in Congress. Roosevelt believed that a war referendum would further restrict his already diminished power in the conduct of foreign affairs. Numerous public figures like former Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson came out in support of the President. Clark Eichelberger organized an ad-hoc committee to back Roosevelt which included former Libby supporters like the Church Peace

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[27]Kuusisto, "The Influence of the NCPW," p. 195; Chatfield, For Peace and Justice, p. 283; Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 219-20; Peace Action 4 (January 1938): 3.

[28]Peace Action 4 (January 1938): 1.

[29]Ibid., p. 4.

Union and the Board of the YMCA. The Administration was forming a strong hand and, according to Secretary Hull, every bit of influence the executive branch could exert was used to defeat the bill.[30]

After a brief, spirited debate the House of Representatives voted 209 to 188 against consideration of the Ludlow Amendment. The vote was a turning point for Libby and his influence in the peace movement even though the measure failed by a mere twenty-one votes. During the neutrality debates from 1935 to 1937, Libby was spokesman for many peace activists who disagreed with him on how embargoes should be applied. But as Libby became less and less flexible on neutrality and the international order continued to crumble, many activists, some within the NCPW itself like Ms. Morgan, questioned the validity of policies that ignored the spread of fascism and aggression in the world. As long as the NCPW's programs were focused on international cooperation with a wide range of goals, those who disagreed with Libby on particular policies like the implementation of embargoes, could remain with him in pursuit of common objectives. But as he increasingly focused NCPW resources on isolationist measures, internationalists moved slowly, but deliberately, away from Libby. Just as he had given up hope of preventing

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[30]Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, 2 vols. (New York: MacMillian, 1948), I, p. 564.

war (thus, concentrating on keeping America out of it), so too did Eichelberger and the collective security wing of the peace movement see no hope in keeping America out of war without collective action to halt the aggressors. Thus, Libby's influence slowly declined.

It seemed that by the beginning of 1938, Libby had not truly realized the depth of the division. Throughout the debate over neutrality his references to those against his policies were patronizingly characterized ("although there were able advocates of the opposing viewpoint"), and not taken very seriously. But his advocacy of the Ludlow amendment, seen in the context of international politics, was for many the final bit of evidence that Libby's search for peace was unrealistic. The realization of the seriousness of the division finally reached Libby when Laura Puffer Morgan, virtually a charter member of the NCPW, resigned in protest in early 1938. Although Libby wrote later that the resignation was accepted "with no bitterness and caused none" he did acknowledge the lack of unity within the peace movement and within the NCPW.[31] In addition to the resignation of individuals, the Council's affiliated members slowly began to do likewise. The WCTU, the American Association of University Women and

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[31]Libby, To End War, pp. 147-48.

the National Council of Jewish Women were among the first to leave. The only advantage of these resignations for Libby was to purge the NCPW of dissidents which allowed him to freely pursue isolationism. This new "unity" brought Libby in contact with a new group of isolationists, like aviator Charles Lindburgh, who agreed with Libby that America should come first.

III

Libby spent most of 1938 opposing a 20 percent increase in naval appropriations and a proposed naval base at Guam. Not until the Fall did he begin to prepare for another neutrality debate for the new Congressional session opening in January. Libby was convinced that a new debate was certain to occur because of President Roosevelt's less than enthusiastic reception of the Munich agreement in late September.

The Munich agreement, by which Hitler was "given" part of Czechoslovakia by Mussolini, French Premier Eduoard Daladier and British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, was welcomed by Libby in part because "war has been averted." But he also believed that the redrawing of Czech boundaries corrected the "most serious maladjustment that remained from the war treaties. The real betrayal of Czechoslovakia's true interest," he wrote, did not result from the partition, but "came twenty years ago when minorities that have proven

unassimilable were included in the new state."[32] Libby believed that Hitler's demands were legitimate and consistent with his own belief that the inequities of the status quo, initiated in the Versailles Treaty and maintained by the powerful "have" nations, would eventually be challenged. "The unquestioned fact," he continued, was "that these were just grievances in the heart of Europe to be corrected and that no attempt was made to correct them in any fundamental way. . . . "[33]

Libby's reaction to the Administration's critical response to the Munich Pact was unfavorable. In Peace Action, he questioned the President's sincerity in keeping America out of war and yet, at the same time, seeking increased appropriations for the army and navy.[34] He wondered why so many "liberals (were) resentful of the Munich peace that they (gave) the definite impression that they would have preferred war. The policy of negotiating peace between the democracies and the dictatorships looks to our State Department apparently like

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[32]Peace Action 5 (October 1938): 1-2.

[33]Ibid., p. 2.

[34]Peace Action 5 (November 1938): 1.

condoning sin." Therefore, he regarded as a "dangerous hinderance to peace our government's huge armament program. . . . "[35]

Libby's interpretation of Roosevelt's actions appeared valid when the President delivered his message to the new Congress on January 4, 1939. "We have learned," Roosevelt said, "that when we deliberately try to legislate neutrality, our neutrality laws may operate unevenly and unfairly--may actually give aid to an aggressor and deny it to the victim. The instinct of self-preservation should warn us that we ought not to let that happen any more."[36] In a piece entitled "President Says Peace But Policies Say War," Libby responded that

> . . . when a neutral abandons neutrality and takes sides between belligerents, he becomes a belligerent . . . he is in the war. . . . If the President believes that the American people want to wage war . . . why does he not ask Congress to declare that war instead of proposing that we slide into it?[37]

Libby concluded that Roosevelt, "almost in the very phrases of President Wilson, is asking us to abandon our neutrality. . . . " Therefore, the strategy of the

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[35]Ibid., p. 2.

[36]Quoted in Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, p. 234.

[37]Peace Action 5 (January 1939): 1-2.

NCPW was clear: "American neutrality must be maintained." In fact, Libby called for tightening the law to include "an all time embargo on munitions to all nations as a consistent policy."[38] The gulf between the Administration and the isolationist wing of the peace movement had widened considerably since passage of the existing law in May, 1937. Compromise was now impossible.

The next several months saw the introduction of almost twenty resolutions dealing with neutrality, the most important of which were those sponsored by Senators Thomas, Pittman and Nye-Bone-Clark. The Thomas resolution, introduced with the assistance of Clark Eichelberger and other collective security advocates, would have granted the president the power to prohibit the export of all war materiél to belligerents and to remove the embargo from the victims of aggression with Congressional approval. The proposal received support from internationalist groups like the League of Nations Association. Despite the resolution's rejection of mandatory neutrality, the Administration opposed it.[39] Libby also opposed the Thomas resolution, but because

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[38]Ibid., p. 2.

[39]Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, p. 240.

it gave Roosevelt additional power when the NCPW believed he already had too much.[40]

The Pittman resolution, introduced in the Senate on March 20, reflected the position of the President and the State Department although it lacked the power to discriminate against aggressors which Roosevelt really wanted. Its introduction, coming as it did after two months of relative inaction by the Administration, was apparently in response to Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia. Congressional supporters of the Administration responded favorably to the bill which called for a repeal of the arms embargo and the extension of the cash-and-carry provision to include arms. Libby's reaction to the bill was predictable. It would "have the United States line-up against Germany and Italy" and further increase executive authority.[41] The most vocal opposition to Pittman's bill came from the Chinese who saw the cash-and-carry provision as benefiting only Japan. The Chinese criticism was quieted when Pittman attached a proposal to the original measure that, in effect, prevented the Japanese from taking advantage of the cash-and-carry provision.

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[40] Peace Action 5 (April 1939): 2-3.

[41] Ibid.

The third proposal before Congress, the Nye-Bone-Clark resolution, would have given the president and Congress equal power in deciding if war existed and it placed further restrictions on American shipping and American citizens. The Administration and the internationalists who supported the Thomas resolution opposed this further limiting of presidential power. But Libby supported the resolution because it sought to "diminish the president's discretion," limiting presidential power to take sides, halting American arms traffic and keeping the United States out of war--so "write your Senators and Congressmen now" to support the Nye-Bone-Clark resolution.[42]

The NCPW campaign in the Spring and Summer of 1939 reflected Libby's frustration over the approaching war in Europe. More than in the earlier debates, his efforts were directed not to passage of legislation he supported (Nye-Bone-Clark) but to preventing the enactment of the Thomas and Pittman resolutions. As a result, Libby found himself attacking both the Administration and his former allies in the peace movement. He criticized Roosevelt for following a policy of "obstruction to Chamberlain-Daladier policy of peaceful negotiations" to alleviate just grievances and charged

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[42]Ibid.

that the President had nullified the Neutrality Law "by refusing to find that a state of war exists" in China.[43] Libby then leveled his first serious blast at his former colleagues as he opposed the Thomas resolution. He charged that the advocates of collective security were using a "dishonest name for a crude military alliance of one group of imperialist powers against a rival group that is challenging its control of the world."[44] Once again, Libby was consistent in his criticism of the "haves" in the world. But in criticizing the supporters of collective security, Libby demonstrated the depth of division within the peace movement. What Libby had yet to realize, and in fact never would, was the seriousness of the Fascist threat. It was the understanding of that threat that led many of his former supporters to advocate collective security. The support for mandatory neutrality in the 1935-1937 period no longer existed largely due to the increasing belligerency of Tokyo and Berlin. Libby's rigidity on neutrality, which had caused defections earlier, coupled now with his attacks on internationalists, left only a few affiliated groups like the WILPF and the FOR as staunch supporters of the NCPW.

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[43] Peace Action 5 (March 1939): 1; 5 (Summer 1939): 1.

[44] F. J. Libby letter to Council affiliates, April 5, 1939, NCPW files; Libby, To End War, pp. 141-44.

Once the cash-and-carry provision of the 1937 law expired on May 1, the battle over the new proposals gained momentum. Both the NCPW and the Administration lobbied heavily in Congress for adoption of their particular view. Libby accused the Administration of tacitly cooperating with the British, offering as evidence the impending visit of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth to Washington.[45]

At the end of May, Congressman Sol Bloom introduced yet another resolution in the House repealing the arms embargo and instituting a modified cash-and-carry feature allowing American ships to carry "sold" goods. "We are equally opposed to such repeal," Libby wrote, for "if Europe should blunder into war, the President's proposal (the Bloom resolution) would make our country the arsenal" for the war. Recalling 1914, Libby explained how money would flow to America in large quantities and then as the money ran out," we should be tempted to legalize loans . . . rather than let our war boom collapse into a major depression." According to Libby's scenario, the United States would then be subjected to intense British propaganda until "we corrupted our youth to fight in Europe's trenches.

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[45]Peace Action 5 (Summer 1939): 1-2.

. . . The Bloom resolution is the road to war."[46] The Bloom bill finally passed in the House but not before the isolationist bloc removed the repeal of the arms embargo.

In the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the isolationists led by Senator Clark won approval to table the entire neutrality issue until the next session of Congress. The successful motion to postpone the issue reflected growing Congressional opposition to Roosevelt, particularly on domestic legislation. A coalition of Republican and conservative Democrats was responding negatively to domestic issues like the Supreme Court packing in 1937 and the intervention of the President in political campaigns during the 1938 Congressional elections.

The deadlock in Congress thus ended temporarily, the 1939 neutrality debate. The 1937 law including the arms embargo but without the cash-and-carry provision, a reflection of the declining but still effective strength of the isolationists in Congress and the peace movement, remained on the books as Hitler's troops marched into Poland.

IV

The beginning of the war in Europe on September 1, 1939, brought the neutrality issue into focus once again.

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[46]Ibid., p. 1.

President Roosevelt scheduled a special session of Congress for September 21 and it was clear that the arms embargo would be his chief topic. Libby was convinced that the President would ask for its repeal in his message.[47] He was aware of the arguments Roosevelt would use for aiding Great Britain and France but he remained unsympathetic. "From the standpoint of our first great objective, keeping America out of war, the arms embargo is vital . . . the interests of Great Britain and France or what will 'please Hitler' (should not) be deciding factors . . . the object is to prevent our involvement. . . . "[48]

In his message, the President expressed regret for his earlier support of neutrality legislation and called for repeal of the arms embargo and tacitly endorsed a cash-and-carry proposal that included the sale of munitions. Several times during the speech, he referred to his desire to remain neutral and keep America out of the European war. But Libby responded, "Since when has the President wanted our country to be neutral in a war between Great Britain and Germany?" as he reminded readers of Roosevelt's earlier repudiations of neutrality like the quarantine speech and

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[47] Peace Action 6 (September 1939): 2.

[48] Ibid.

his January 4 message to Congress. "If the Administration were candid, it would admit . . . that they don't want us to be neutral, that they want our country to help Great Britain and France . . . that is why they support repeal of the arms embargo."[49] Libby argued that the best way to remain out of the war was to combine the existing arms embargo with a cash-and-carry provision "on other trading" so that the United States could "avoid the moral and economic implications of 'blood money.'" Together, they would offer "more protection than either alone."[50]

The movement for revision of the Neutrality Law began almost immediately. Both isolationists forces and those supporting repeal began extensive public lobbying campaigns. Senators Nye and Borah made radio addresses, Libby called for his followers to "write now . . . don't delay" and prominent Americans like Lindbergh were called on to make speeches.[51] The Administration rallied its supporters like former Secretary of State Stimson, and Roosevelt successfully appealed to Clark Eichelberger and the collective security wing of the peace movement for help.

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[49] Peace Action 6 (October 1939): 1.

[50] Ibid., pp. 2, 3.

[51] Ibid., p. 1; Divine, Illusion of Neutrality, pp. 297-99.

In Congress, the task of presenting the Administration's plan for repeal once again fell to Senator Pittman. On September 26, he presented his bill to the Foreign Relations Committee, where it received swift approval two days later. During debate on the Senate floor, opponents of the bill--led by Senators Nye, Clark and Vanderberg--argued for implementation of the cash-and-carry feature but only if the arms embargo was retained, which coincided with Libby's position. Advocates of the bill like Pittman and Tom Connally of Texas argued that repeal would help avoid involvement in the war and restrict American commerce. The unspoken reason for repeal, however, was that it would allow Britain and France to buy munitions from the United States. After four weeks of debate, the Senate passed the Pittman bill 63-30 on October 27 and sent it on to the House. A week later, after some heated debate and several motions to amend, the House voted 237-177 in favor of repeal. A conference committee quickly ironed out minor differences and Roosevelt signed the new measure into law.

Under the Neutrality Law of November 4, 1939, the president had the power to declare a state of hostilities. Following such a declaration, the belligerents were identified and America could no longer ship goods or passengers to these nations. American goods,

including munitions, could be purchased in the United States and shipped in foreign vessels under the cash-and-carry provision. A few provisions of the 1937 law, such as prohibiting Americans from traveling on belligerent ships, remained. The new law had no expiration date.

Libby's reaction to the new law was unequivocal. "Repeal of the arms embargo was a step towards war. . . . "[52] Referring to Roosevelt in particular, Libby wrote, "We are not safe while one man has the power to bring about a reversal of an almost unanimous decision of three sessions of Congress."[53] Despite such feelings, Libby believed gains had been made. "The educational campaign (speeches in Congress) that accompanied the debate in Congress crystallized public opinion . . . against participation," he wrote, and "the speeches made in both Houses of Congress are . . . in favor of staying out of Europe's war." Thus, Libby concluded that such public support against American participation "for the time being (makes us) safer from involvement than we were a month ago."[54] Libby was correct in his

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[52]Peace Action 6 (November 1939): 1.

[53]"Mr. Libby's Proposed Statement," November 2, 1939, NCPW files.

[54]Peace Action 6 (November 1939): 1.

observation that during the debate most congressmen who spoke opposed American participation. But supporters of repeal differed from Libby and the isolationists in their willingness to aid, via cash-and-carry munitions, Great Britain and France. Curiously, in their support for cash-and-carry, both Libby and the Administration were advocating a very un-neutral position since Britain ruled most of the Atlantic and could therefore benefit from it. Even though Libby favored retention of the arms embargo, he advocated cash-and-carry for "other" goods. Although he did not admit it at the time, his position was, nonetheless, un-neutral.

V

The winter of 1939-1940, with Hitler's "phony war" bogged down in Europe, was very much the lull before the storm. During the lull Libby continued his efforts to keep America out of the war by advocating another war referendum, limits on military spending and a negotiated settlement of the war.[55] But in the Spring of 1940, Hitler's "blitzkrieg" rolled through Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg in a matter of weeks. The most devastating blow of all came on June 22 when France surrendered to Germany.

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[55]Peace Action 6 (November 1939): 2; (December 1939): 1-2, 4, 8; (January 1940): 1-2, 6, 8; (February 1940): 1-3; (March 1940): 2, 5; (April 1940): 2-4, 6.

With the fall of France the attention of the Administration and the isolationists was broadened to include the Asian holdings of the British, French and Dutch which were now virtually unprotected from Japanese attack. Although events in Asia would remain of secondary importance to the Administration and Libby until the attack on Pearl Harbor, they could no longer be entirely ignored. As Hitler consolidated his gains in Europe, the Japanese army seized control of the government in Tokyo and Foreign Secretary Yosuke Matsuoka and War Minister Hideki Tojo reaffirmed their country's previous agreement with Germany (the Tri-partite Pact) and tacitly threatened European imperial holdings in Asia.

Back in the United States, Roosevelt took steps to increase America's preparedness for war. The President requested over $1 billion in appropriations for tanks, ships, planes and men to maintain them and Congress quickly gave its approval. "Congress is acting too promptly for wise action," Libby argued, and after consultation with some "experts," concluded that over two million men would be needed (the regular military and support forces). "There is no way," Libby wrote, "to get an army of two million men in America save by . . . universal military conscription."[56] Libby soon found

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[56]Peace Action 6 (May 1940): 1-2.

that he was correct when, in August, Congress considered the adoption of a bill providing for America's first peace time military conscription. Libby's criticism of the bill focused primarily on required service and presidential authority. He argued that mandatory service was tantamount to a "totalitarian" system where the individual gives up all rights and is little more than a "chattel slave." Thus, conscription was inconsistent in a century where "we have grown up as free men. . . . "[57] His criticism of presidential authority was more pointed. It was "so drawn as to give the President dictatorial power over all males. . . . He may send them anywhere . . . for any purpose. . . . This is not the American way of life. This is Hitlerism." Arguing that the real danger faced by America was "the contagion of regimentation" and not Germany, Libby offered an alternative to forced military service: "We must . . . find out how to live in the same world with a Europe dominated by Hitler."[58] Libby's rejection of Hitler and his dislike for Hitler's methods were still insufficient to make him realize the threat posed by a "Europe dominated by Hitler." His willingness to "live in the same world" with a government whose tactics

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[57]Peace Action 6 (August 1940): 6.

[58]Ibid.

he so despised reflected his determination to keep America out of war. It is difficult to think what would have had to happen to the international order to change his mind. In Peace Action, Libby argued that resorting to war took a disputed issue "completely out of the field of morals" and placed it instead with the likes of medieval combat. The war in Europe, like medieval combat, only proved the relative strength of weaponry. To Libby, it made little difference if Britain or Germany won the war; neither the "rightness" of their respective causes nor peace and justice would result because "the fault is in the method. Victory becomes the objective."[59] In that at least, Libby was right.

And what of the chances for "victory" if America should enter the war? In the end, according to Libby, whether the enemy was Japan in the Pacific or Germany in Europe, America would lose. In the Pacific, the "United States is stronger than Japan" but a war would take five years and an incalculable number of lives. Despite the advantage the United States would be "defeated by the magnitude of the problem of landing and maintaining a sufficient army across an English

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[59]"What Has a Pacifist to Say Now?" Peace Action 6 (May 1940): 4.

Channel 6,000 miles wide." If, on the other hand, the United States turned Japan into a "desert," pushed her armies into China and destroyed them (leaving both China and Japan "devastated and starving"), America would still lose because "Communism would sweep over" them and "Stalin would win our war."[60]

In Europe, the American prospects for winning were even dimmer, particularly in light of the failure of "Churchill's reckless attempts at landing expeditionary forces on an enemy's shore." Even if an American invasion were successful, years would be required to defeat Hitler. The devastation of Germany would spread "chaos and revolution . . . over Europe . . . (and) by the time the fighting ended, Stalin could virtually take Europe over by telephone."[61]

Despite Libby's belief that Josef Stalin's victories in Europe and Asia were "inevitable," he still felt that the war could only be successfully resolved through negotiation. A settlement in which the outcome was not dictated but arbitrated was the only way in which civilization could "progress." The advocacy of such a policy again demonstrated Libby's singular inability to evaluate the situation realistically.

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[60] Peace Action 7 (October 1940): 1-2.

[61] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

Advocating arbitration of "just grievances" before the war was one thing (he so advocated), but to suggest that negotiations were possible, let alone had any chance for success, after the fall of France, was fantasy. Furthermore, he failed to consider that negotiations to alleviate grievances prior to the war (at Munich, for example) failed miserably.[62]

But Libby stubbornly stuck to his beliefs despite massive evidence to the contrary and, for all practical purposes, the effectiveness of the NCPW collapsed with the enactment of the 1939 Neutrality Law. The decline of its influence closely paralleled the disintegration of world peace that had begun in Manchuria in 1931. The Council made its last stand in helping to prevent neutrality revision in late 1939. But once the European war began, and certainly after the fall of France, almost no one listened. The internationalist wing of the peace movement had long since departed and it was, in 1940, counted among the advocates of collective security. Some internationalists like Eichelberger were supporting Roosevelt's lightly concealed attempts to aid Britain. Within the NCPW, affiliated groups like the AAUW pulled out as did trusted individuals such as Ms. Morgan. By 1940, Libby's staff was reduced to a

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[62]Ibid., p. 4.

handful, and only the WILPF and the FOR remained loyal to the NCPW's chief aim of staying out of the war. Libby remained loyal to that goal regardless of the NCPW's loss of influence or the goal's loss of practicability. In that sense, Libby was consistent. He firmly believed that involvement in war solved nothing except proving who had superior weaponry, thus, he was willing to accept and advocate virtually anything to preserve peace for America. His fear of the effects of war, and particularly American participation in war, left him in charge of a rapidly diminishing group of supporters. Learning to "live with a Europe dominated by Hitler" was symbolic of the advocacy that cost Libby his following. As the European situation worsened, his pleas for America to remain aloof from Europe were little more than yelling into the wind.

VI

The United States abandoned any semblance of neutrality with the so-called Destroyers-Bases agreement with England. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill began lobbying for American aid almost as soon as the war started. By the Summer of 1940, Britain was desperate and Churchill requested the loan of fifty overaged American destroyers to replace those England had lost. Simple transfer of the warships to Britain

would push neutrality to the limit, so a compromise was arranged. The United States exchanged the destroyers for bases in British possessions in the Western Hemisphere on the grounds, not of helping Britain, but of shoring-up the national defense.

Libby's criticism of the agreement was predictable but calm compared with his response to Roosevelt's next step away from neutrality.[63] In January, 1941, Roosevelt asked Congress for the authority to sell, lease, transfer, etc. any war material to Britain as she needed them. A "Blank Check for War Dictatorship" Libby called the Lend-Lease bill. It gave "the President the authority to take us to war if he chooses. . . . It means surrender of our rights."[64] After the passage of the Lend-Lease Act on March 11, 1941, Libby urged his readers to keep their "chins up." But even Libby seemed resigned to eventual American participation in the war, for he began speculating on the effect of American aid. It "could certainly prolong the war. But it is equally certain that (it) could not bring Britain victory."[65]

The German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, changed the complexion of the European war by

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[63] Peace Action 7 (September 1940): 2.

[64] Peace Action 7 (January 1941): 1-2, 4-5.

[65] Peace Action 7 (March 1941): 1-3.

relieving some of the pressure on Britain and allowing the United States time to arm. In Peace Action, Libby criticized Churchill for the Prime Minister's warm welcome to his new ally, Stalin: "Churchill threw to the winds the last shreds of idealism . . . " and Libby remained convinced that America's only role was to "remain aloof and wait patiently" to help establish a negotiated peace.[66]

Libby's tone changed perceptably, however, when it came to the increasing aggressiveness of the Japanese. Their occupation of southern Indochina in July, 1941, led to Roosevelt's freezing of Japan's assets in America virtually cutting off all trade. Libby supported the President's action, albeit reluctantly. So great was his fear that American participation in a European war was close at hand that he now feared a two-front war.[67] Although advocacy for economic sanctions was uncharacteristic for Libby, as early as October, 1940, while advocating American negotiations with the Japanese, he wrote: "Our position in such negotiations, considering economic dependence of Japan on this country, (should be)

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[66]Peace Action 7 (June 1941): 1.

[67]Peace Action 7 (August 1941): 1-2.

strong enough for us to safeguard vital . . . interests.[68] Libby's support for sanctions was not given in the hope they would deter the Japanese (in the same sense as collective security advocates believed they would), but in the frustrated hope that they would prevent a Japanese-American war and lead to negotiations. In October, 1941, he advocated a resumption of trade "so long as no further military . . . action is taken by (Japan) to aggravate the situation." In fact, if negotiations could have taken place, Libby was quite clearly sympathetic to the Japanese desire for "raw materials and world markets."[69]

Libby's advocacy of sanctions against Japan, seen in isolation with his consistent opposition to coercion, appears as though he altered his position considerably. For someone so convinced of the evil and futility of coercive actions, Libby's change of mind was significant. But, seen in the context of the time, arguments over the use of sanctions had now been superseded by arguments over how much aid America should give to Britain, and over America's state of preparedness for war. Sanctions, once considered a hostile policy, were now passé. Thus, Libby supported a policy deemed

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[68]"Seek a Settlement in the Far East," October 15, 1940, NCPW files.

[69]Peace Action 7 (October 1941): 2.

obsolete by his contemporaries in the peace movement and as they moved on to consider other courses of action, Libby remained the advocate of the least hostile, least dangerous of the alternatives offered.

Libby's actions during the last years of peace (particularly advocating sanctions) demonstrated how desperately he wanted to keep America out of war. That was the only goal Libby still strived for; the others had long since been abandoned for isolation. He firmly believed he was right and thus ignored or attempted to refute the arguments of his former colleagues who supported collective security. He could no more accept their position, than they could accept his. During the harmonious years of the twenties there were numerous differences over which methods were most effective for securing their common goal. But once Libby decided that the United States must remain isolated from the war that would inevitably come, he refused to consider the merits of other methods of securing peace. There was for Libby no alternative to staying out of war.

By November, 1941, Congress had repealed most of the remaining restrictions of the 1939 Neutrality Law. Most important in terms of impact was that American ships were now allowed, with armed escort, to transport goods anywhere, even to belligerents. Libby, needless to say, was critical of Congress' action but, reflecting

his belief that America was inevitably headed for war, the edge was gone from his words. In a rare display of compassion for the "forces of war," Libby wrote, "It should be added in all fairness that many Congressmen who have supported the President's foreign policy have done so, not for political reasons, but because they sincerely believe that is the best policy for this country to pursue."[70] By the time the issue of Peace Action in which those words were written reached Libby's readers, the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor.

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[70]Peace Action 7 (November 1941): 1-2.

CONCLUSION

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought to an end Frederick Libby's twenty-year struggle to keep America out of another war. Throughout the Second World War, Libby adhered to a three-point program designed not to obstruct the war effort: "curb the growth of hate and intolerance; educate on the elements of a just and lasting peace; (and) work for the earliest possible peace by negotiation."[1] Libby wrote later that he was pleased that America was "free from the hysteria" of the first war and surprised that the NCPW was not subjected to government censorship.[2]

Since Libby was committed to not interfering with the war effort, he focused most of his attention on how the post-war world ought to be constructed to avoid future wars.[3] The thrust of his argument was that collective security failed to prevent two world wars and

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[1]F. J. Libby, "Men of Goodwill in Wartime," August 16, 1942, NCPW files; Libby, To End War, p. 171.

[2]Libby, To End War, p. 172.

[3]See for example, Peace Action 8 (January 1942): 1; 8 (March 1942): 2-3; 8 (June 1942): 1; 8 (September 1942): 1; 9 (April 1942): 1; 9 (July 1943): 1;

should therefore not be the basis of the new world organization as outlined in the San Francisco Charter. In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in July, 1945, Libby explained his position: "There is nothing in the Charter . . . to prevent war among the 'Big 3.' . . . The much-touted theory of collective security based on force goes bankrupt . . . " when the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain talk of spheres of influence. "It is precisely at this point that the gravest danger of war confronts us . . . (because the interests of those nations) have never clashed more sharply than they do today in the continuing game of power politics."[4]

The onset of the Cold War confirmed Libby's fear that peace and stability would be challenged again. Although he went to great lengths to explain the "aims of the Communist International" and concluded that their "aim" was a "Blueprint for World Conquest," he argued that Washington should not prepare for war with Moscow, and should abandon programs like conscription that lead to war.[5] Instead, the United States should adhere to

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9 (October 1943): 1; 10 (February 1944): 1; 10 (October 1944): 1; 11 (March 1945): 1.

[4]Peace Action 11 (July 1945): 1-3.

[5]Peace Action 12 (March 1946): 1-2; 12 (October 1946): 1-3; 12 (November 1946): 1-3.

policies that imply "friendly firmness." Libby never precisely defined "friendly firmness," but he did suggest that America had "more to offer" than the Soviets, thus, he supported post-war economic programs aimed at reconstructing and stabilizing war-torn Europe.[6] But Libby refused to go beyond economic aid when, in 1947, President Harry S. Truman advocated military assistance for Greece and Turkey. "The 'Truman Doctrine' is the new name for another global Lend-Lease program of 'aid short of war' in an undeclared war with Soviet Russia."[7] The Truman Doctrine

> . . . should be repudiated (because) it is an attempt to prevent the spread of Communism on a global scale by the use of military power and wealth of the United States. . . . It will bleed our taxpayers white and drain our manpower until collapse becomes inevitable.[8]

By 1950, Libby was suggesting the "encouragement of East-West trade, neutralization of Germany and increased use of the facilities of the United Nations for better cooperation" as "positive" steps toward

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[6] Peace Action 12 (November 1946): 3.

[7] "Testimony of Frederick J. Libby . . . before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, April 3, 1947," NCPW files.

[8] "Statement to the National Republican Resolutions Committee by Frederick J. Libby . . . June 18, 1948," NCPW files.

reducing tension and ending the Cold War.[9] Despite this desire to reduce Cold War tension with the Soviet Union, he did support the United Nations in the Korean War. "Our commitment to protect South Korea from aggression is . . . clear," he wrote. It should be pointed out, however, that Libby's support was not for "our government (which) jumped the gun by several hours by its unilateral action (of committing troops)," but for America's action through the U.N. Although he advocated a negotiated settlement, the war meant that Korea would "sink into misery and hopelessness--a fruitful soil for the spread of Communism."[10]

After Korea, Libby believed that "Russia's probing of our willingness and ability to fulfill the requirements of (our) excessive obligations may be expected almost anywhere now. . . . " The consequences of these obligations were clear to Libby: "If this (the presence of American troops but not Soviet troops in Korea) is to be repeated in other parts of the world--perhaps . . . Indo-China . . . it will be hard for us to escape being 'stuck' with the charge of 'imperialism' in the eyes of (other) peoples."[11]

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[9]"NCPW Program for Peace--1950," January, 1950, NCPW files.

[10]"Statement of Policy on Korea," June 20, 1950, NCPW files.

[11]Ibid.

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When Frederick Joseph Libby died in 1970, the United States was again at war and the world's super powers still expressed little interest in disarmament. Peace and disarmament seemed as illusive in 1970 as they did when Libby began actively working for peace in 1921. But the organization that he built and controlled, the National Council for the Prevention of War, was not without accomplishments. From the Washington Conference in 1921 to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931, Libby created an effective, influential peace group ready to face the challenges of the 1930s.

During the twenties, Libby worked with other peace activists like Clark Eichelberger, Dorothy Detzer and Kirby Page. He originally organized the NCPW to coordinate peace group activity by emphasizing common goals like disarmament and the outlawry of war. Although they all agreed, for example, on the necessity of educating the public about the advantages of a peaceful world, there were differences in outlook. Libby, Page and Detzer, unlike Eichelberger, were disenchanted with the antagonisms inherent in the political and economic relationships that grew out of the Versailles Treaty. Colonies were always a threat to the mother country and rival imperial powers often collided in their quest to renew the balance of power.

Rivalries that could lead to war also resulted from competition for the world's resources and markets. Libby, Page and Detzer argued that the status-quo had to be changed in order to attain a peace system. Thus by advocating political and economic change, they were considered more "radical" that activists like Eichelberger who saw no need for such changes. But in the first decade of the interwar years, their differences of opinion could be overlooked while common goals were being pursued.

The NCPW's prominent role in the quest for these goals was due to its ability to attract support, not only from peace groups, but from many other groups (like the NEA or the League of Women Voters) for whom a peaceful world was a secondary goal. Through the expert use of such publicity devices as letters, telegrams, petitions and press releases, Libby was able to marshall support for his programs when it was needed. It is important to realize, however, that he was only able to capitalize on existing support. "We cannot create sentiment on an issue," Libby wrote, "(we) must be content with mobilizing existing and scattered sentiment."[12] Libby's ability to mobilize existing sentiment was due primarily to the fact that he offered organization and coordination to those interested in

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[12]F. J. Libby letter to Morrell Heald, February 12, 1948, NCPW files.

peace where there had been none before. To peace groups, this meant increased strength for their position and increased resources from which they could draw. To groups whose secondary concern was peace, Libby offered regular memberships in the NCPW no matter what their primary focus happened to be, thus giving them an effective outlet for peace work. The number of people that Libby brought together not only made the peace movement larger but made its voice in Washington louder.

Libby also created an effective lobbying force through the use of staff personnel and allies in Congress. On more than one occasion significant pressure was exerted to accomplish a specific task. But the role of lobbyist, even more than organizing peace groups or perfecting communication techniques, brought Libby and the NCPW into the political arena where they sought not simply to "educate for peace" but to influence foreign policy decision makers. As a result, Libby's own decisions reflected not only his ethical and moral beliefs, but his political judgment. In the twenties his judgments frequently supported Administration programs like arms limitation and he worked <u>for</u> their success. But in the thirties his judgments, colored by fear of war, could not always support Administration programs, and thus, Libby frequently worked <u>against</u> their enactment.

Libby's decision to move beyond "educating for peace" separated him from his colleagues like Page and A. J. Muste. Their efforts on behalf of a peace system based on peaceful change brought Page and Muste a great deal of public attention. But they saw education only as an end while Libby saw it as a foundation upon which he could build organized pressure to try and influence policy makers. Thus Libby was the organizer who spent most of his time away from the public eye, trying to use the ideas popularized by Page and Muste to rally grass roots sentiment into an effective voice against war.

As lone as Libby focused NCPW efforts on attaining internationalist goals as he did in the 1920s, the Council was indeed the clearinghouse through which internationalist sentiment was organized and spoken for in Washington. Libby and the Council acted as the countervailing force to militarists who constantly defined patriotism in their own terms. But in the 1930s, as the international order began to crumble in Manchuria, Ethiopia, Spain, China and finally in Europe, the peace movement gradually divided. The internationalists (like Eichelberger) increasingly advocated collective action to halt the aggressors while Libby (along with Detzer) sought ways to keep America isolated from the conflicts. As Pearl Harbor drew nearer, the division widened with

Libby continually ignoring internationalist goals in his pursuit of American isolation from war.

Libby's prominence in the peace movement declined. Almost all his supporters but Detzer had left him; his influence had diminished and yet he continued until the bitter end to try and keep America out of war. What had happened to the man who in the 1920s was so flexible and so attuned to changing circumstances? Why did he give up in the 1930s all that he had so skillfully built in the 1920s? It was because of his fear of war and the physical and spiritual devastation it caused. His flexibility during the NCPW's early years was supported by success--the Washington Conference or the Kellogg-Briand Pact, for example--that made war seem less likely. With that in mind, Libby had little trouble believing that policies of "audacious friendliness" might indeed be instituted by the nations of the world. In this atmosphere, arbitration (through the "court" and the "town meeting") seemed not only possible but logical to Libby. While all this may seem unrealistic in retrospect, it is not difficult to understand Libby's optimism in a world that had just outlawed war.

But the false sense of security that came after the Kellogg-Briand Pact was quickly shattered in the 1930s. Once Libby decided that preventing another war was impossible he directed all his efforts to keeping

America out of it. As the attractiveness of "audacious friendliness" lessened and arbitration seemed further away than ever, Libby's mood changed. Several years earlier, he had perceptively argued that "wise men make no threats, knowing that they may not want to carry them out and that . . . to do so would be . . . folly."[13] But in the late thirties, Libby saw few wise men in the Capitol. "The President and our State Department (were) seeking to break down our neutrality," he complained, as his attention remained riveted on isolating America from war.[14] It had been more than twenty years since Libby had stood on that World War I battlefield in France where the roots of his pacifism "sank deep into . . . the earth." He quite simply never forgot the horror of that experience. His almost fanatical determination to keep America out of war led him to make statements--particularly, that we should learn to "live in a world dominated by Hitler"--not in keeping with his judgments in the 1920s and quite unacceptable in a world on the brink of global war.

It is unfortunate that much of what Libby worked so hard to achieve should be obscured by the rigidity of his position in the 1930s. He had done much to

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[13]NCPW Bulletin 3 (December 13, 1924): 3-4.

[14]Peace Action 5 (January 1939): 2.

remove the negative connotations from the word "pacifist" and helped bring peace activism a new respectability it deserved. But through his advocacy of isolationism Libby allowed pacifists and peace activists to again be judged within the confines of rigid moral guidelines even though their thinking was influenced as much by the political climate as by morality. In the end, however, it should not be forgotten that, for a time at least, "patriotism (could) no longer be identified with military action alone. . . . "[15]

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[15]Libby, To End War, p. 63.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

This study was primarily based on the public and private writings of Frederick Joseph Libby which are located at the Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania and the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. At Swarthmore, Libby's papers constitute the most significant portion of the files of the National Council for the Prevention of War. In Washington, the Manuscript Division holds the remainder of the papers which are considered to be "not peace-related" material.

The most valuable files for this study were those at the Peace Collection. The NCPW file contains all of Libby's peace-related writings from 1920 to 1957. It includes: position statements on such matters as world organization, war, conscription; letters to Congress, the press, staff members and colleagues in the peace movement; speeches, radio addresses, debates and articles for publication; copies of statements made before Congressional committees and the Resolutions committee of the two major political parties. Most

important, it includes many pages of notes, memos, etc. Libby wrote for himself on a wide range of peace-related subjects.

The most helpful of the NCPW papers for sorting out and understanding Libby and his thinking as it evolved over the years, are the Council's News Bulletin and Peace Action. Libby was the sole editor of these newsletters for thirty-three years. Ranging in length from one to sixteen pages, the monthly newsletters provide a vivid picture of Libby and his thinking. The reader is able to trace the development of Libby's thoughts, detect subtle changes in position and comprehend his sense of priorities. Used effectively, these newsletters, particularly Peace Action, provide a valuable framework for understanding Libby and his writings described above.

The NCPW file also includes "minutes" of Council meetings, "minutes" of the annual meetings and the "Annual Reports," almost all of which were written by Libby. They allow the reader to see the harmony or discord among staff members, the control Libby had over policy decisions and Libby's estimate of the Council's effectiveness and shortcomings.

Other files in the NCPW papers that proved useful were the records of the Council's Legislative Department and the Press and Publicity Department. They not only

provide an accurate view of their activities but also show Libby's influence in determining the kinds of activity they should pursue. There are also files detailing the attacks on the NCPW and Libby. It is interesting to note that the number of attacks increases or decreases depending on the attacker's estimate of Libby's effectiveness.

Libby wrote two books during his career of peace activism: War on War: Campaign Textbook (Philadelphia, 1922) and To End War: The Story of the National Council for the Prevention of War (Nyack, New York, 1969). As the subtitle indicates, War on War is a textbook of how activists ought to go about working for peace while Libby offers his appraisal of international politics and the chances for peace in 1922. The book is little more than a compilation of Libby's writings that can be found elsewhere in his papers and in the News Bulletin. The more important of the two books is To End War, the "story" of the NCPW according to Libby. Its importance lies not in his description of the Council's various "fights" (the News Bulletin and Peace Action are more useful), but in Libby's reflections on the people he encountered and the episodes he was involved in during the Council's most important years. The book does not, however, capture Libby's thoughts or the intensity of his convictions. In the NCPW papers is a "Subject and

Special Project File" tracing the fourteen-year evolution of To End War from the initial outline to the published version.

A complete historical record of the Council is also among the NCPW papers. It outlines the founding of the Council, its changes in direction and includes such items as the NCPW Constitution and bylaws. Here, Libby's influence even on day-to-day administrative decisions of the NCPW is clearly shown.

The Libby papers at the Library of Congress were, generally, less useful than those at Swarthmore. For the most part they were very personal materials (sermons, family correspondence) and only infrequently referred to peace-related issues. Most helpful were two "Journals" that chronicled trips to the Southern United States and to Palestine early in Libby's life. They contributed to the understanding of his upbringing and outlook on life before his peace activism. Comprehending his changing sympathy for oppressed people (black people discussed in the Southern trip) and his optimistic religious philosophy (despite the bleak outlook for Palestine) helped the reader to understand his later opposition to imperialism and his firm belief that popular opinion against war could be effectively organized to prevent war.

The Libby diaries (1919-1969) proved to be only partially useful. The early years (1919-20) again contributed to understanding the man and his thinking. But from 1921 to 1954, the same thirty-three years that Libby edited the newsletter, they were virtually useless because as long as he had the News Bulletin and Peace Action as a written outlet for his thinking, the diaries were little more than a calendar of his movements. After 1954, however, when the newsletters were no longer being written, the diaries became the outlet for his thoughts. Thus, the primary focus of this study (1921-41) depended less on Libby's diaries than on the newsletters.

A small amount of general correspondence did contain a few references to peace and war, but it did not materially add to that found at Swarthmore. There were also several larger boxes of unprocessed material at the Library of Congress but they are not open for examination. At the time of my visit (Winter, 1974) there were no plans to process it in the near future. I was able to glance through two of these boxes finding such items as photographs and postcards. What the others contained is unknown, but, according to the staff all the "important" materials have been processed.

This study also relied on numerous other primary sources that complimented the Libby papers. The

New York Times Index was a useful guide to the Times and the Washington Post. But pieces on Libby and the NCPW in both papers were mostly confined to simple reporting on a speech or a debate. The United States Congressional Record contains all of Libby's testimony before Congress with copies appearing in the papers at Swarthmore. The wartime essays of Randolph S. Bourne, War and the Intellectuals: Collected Essays, 1915-1919 (New York, 1964) edited by Carl Resek captured precisely the aversion to war felt by Libby. Pacifist Kirby Page wrote numerous books and pamphlets during the interwar years, the most useful of which was War: Its Causes, Consequences and Cure (New York, 1923). The religious opposition to war is best seen in Realistic Pacifists: The Ethics of War and the Politics of Peace (New York, 1935) by Leyton Richards. It was Richards, the Australian pacifist, who had such a strong impact on Libby's development as a pacifist and on his determination to adhere to pacifism against increasing opposition. Jane Addams, Peace and Bread in Time of War (New York, 1922), outlines her struggles in the peace movement in the post-war years. Dorothy Detzer's Appointment on the Hill (New York, 1948) is an interesting account of her efforts at lobbying for an investigation of the munitions industry.

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The interwar period has been the subject of many fine works, some of which contributed to the understanding of the events and issues that prompted Frederick Libby to work for peace. John Chalmers Vinson, The Parchment Peace: The United States Senate and the Washington Conference, 1921-1922 (Athens, Georgia, 1955) examines the impact of public opinion, including peace groups, operating before and during the Conference. In Peace in Their Time: The Origins of the Kellogg-Briand Pact (Durham, 1957) Robert Ferrell shows how shrewd diplomacy and unsophisticated public opinion combined to outlaw war. Robert Divine's The Illusion of Neutrality: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Struggle Over the Arms Embargo (Chicago, 1962) helped clarify a complex subject. These books were particularly useful in sorting out the details and thus, making Libby's role clearer.

The peace movement (pacifist and nonpacifist) has received considerable attention. Selig Adler, The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth Century Reaction (New York, 1957) and Robert Osgood, Ideals and Self Interest in America's Foreign Relations: The Great Transformation of the Twentieth Century (Chicago, 1957) both examine pacifism within the movement but are skeptical of its impact and doubt its usefulness. Merle Curti,

Peace or War: The American Struggle, 1636-1936 (New York, 1936), focused on the organization of the peace movement and the place of pacifists within it. Two brief but extremely useful works are Robert Ferrell's "The Peace Movement" in Isolation and Security (Durham, 1957) edited by Alexander DeConde and the first chapter (an overview of the peace movement in the 1930s) of Rebels Against War, 1941-1960 by Lawrence S. Wittner (New York, 1969). Both pieces are an excellent starting point for an examination of peace activity in the 1920s and 1930s. Ferrell outlines the major goals of peace groups and sketches the most important leaders and their groups while Wittner explores the breakup of peace movement unity as World War II approached. Warren F. Kuehl in Seeking World Order: The United States and International Organization to 1920 (Nashville, 1969) traces the development of the concepts of world organization that gave the peace movement its basic philosophy on the subject. The American Peace Movement and Social Reform, 1898-1918 (Princeton, 1972) by Roland Marchand explored the relationship between peace activists and social reformers and their desire to change the order of things. Peter Brock's Pacifism in the United States: From the Colonial Era to the First World War (Princeton, 1968) is a tedious account of America's pacifist heritage. More useful, and more

readable, is John K. Nelson's The Peace Prophets: American Pacifist Thought, 1919-1941 (Chapel Hill, 1967) which examines not only the pacifist heritage but explains the difference between its religious, moral and ethical roots before discussing the role of pacifism during the interwar years.

The merging of pacifism and the politics of the period can be found (after Ferrell and Wittner) in Charles Chatfield, For Peace and Justice: Pacifism in America 1914-1941 (Knoxville, 1971) and Chatfield, "World War I and the Liberal Pacifists in the United States," in the American Historical Review 75 (December 1970). His examination of peace groups, their leaders and how they worked to affect policy through ideology and politics is fascinating and most helpful in keeping the complexity of peace groups and their aims clear. Four brief studies published by the NCPW attempted to analyze some of the peace groups between the wars, but they were less useful than their titles indicate: Organizations in the United States That Promote Better International Understanding and World Peace (Washington, D.C., 1921), The American Peace Movement (1930), Between War and Peace: A Handbook for Peace Workers (1928) and, The Turn Toward Peace (1930). The only analysis of the NCPW itself is Allan A. Kuusisto's "The Influence of the National Council for the Prevention of War on

United States Foreign Policy, 1935-1939" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard, 1950). Kuusisto concludes that Libby did indeed affect policy particularly through lobbying and praises Libby for his determination. For another view, Armin Rappaport's The Navy League of the United States (Detroit, 1962) describes the limited achievements of the NCPW's opposite number and the extent to which the peace movement restricted Navy League activity.

The period between the Washington Conference and the Manchurian crisis is explained adequately in The Far Eastern Policy of the United States (New York, 1938) by A. Whitney Griswold; America's Response to China: An Interpretative History of Sino-American Relations (New York, 1971) by Warren I. Cohen. A somewhat different perspective is offered by Sadao Asada, "Japan's Special Interests and the Washington Conference, 1921-1922," American Historical Review 67 (1961) and by Akira Iriye, After Imperialism (Cambridge, 1965).

The Manchurian crisis which produced Secretary Stimson's "nonrecognition" doctrine that was supported by Libby is discussed in Robert Ferrell, American Diplomacy in the Great Depression (New Haven, 1957) and Richard Current, "The Stimson Doctrine and the Hoover Doctrine," American Historical Review 59 (1954).

The Secretaries of State during the period under study, Hughes, Kellogg, Stimson and Hull are best seen in Betty Glad, Charles Evans Hughes and the Illusion of Innocence (Urbana, 1966); Ethan Ellis, Frank B. Kellogg and American Foreign Relations (New Brunswick, 1961); Elting Morison, Turmoil and Tradition (Boston, 1960); Harold Hinton, Cordell Hull (New York, 1942) and Hull's Memoirs of Cordell Hull, 2 vols. (New York, 1948).

America's relations with the League of Nations are discussed in Denna F. Fleming, The United States and World Organization, 1920-1933 (New York, 1938) and in F. P. Walters, A History of the League of Nations, 2 vols. (New York, 1952). Although they agree that American resistance to membership helped kill the League, Fleming believed the United States ignored its responsibility while Walters argued that America supported the League without commitment.

America's role in the Mexican land expropriations is explained in Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge, 1965), who argued that the NCPW played an important role in quieting the crisis. Samuel Flagg Bemis, The Latin American Policy of the United States: An Historical Interpretation (New York, 1943) and Robert Freeman Smith, The United States and

Revolutionary Nationalism in Mexico, 1916-1932 (Chicago, 1972), on the other hand do not see the NCPW's role as significant.

The Nye Committee investigation is best described by John E. Wiltz, In Search of Peace: The Senate Munitions Inquiry, 1934-36 (Baton Rouge, 1963). Wiltz stresses the lobbying efforts of Dorothy Detzer and Libby's staff. Several books and articles were popularized by Libby and others in favor of placing the blame for World War I on the munitions industry. The two that were most effectively propagandized are Iron, Blood and Profits: An Exposure of the World-Wide Munitions Racket (New York, 1934) by George Seldes, and Merchants of Death: A Study of the International Armaments Industry (New York, 1934) by Helmuth C. Englebrecht and F. C. Hannighen.

The neutrality controversy, at best a very complicated issue, is best sorted out in Divine's Illusion of Neutrality, cited earlier. William Langer and Everett Gleason, The Challenge to Isolation: The World Crisis of 1937-1940 and American Foreign Policy (New York, 1952) and Donald F. Drummond, The Passing of American Neutrality, 1937-1941 (Ann Arbor, 1955) are useful introductory examinations of the subject. Two other books that discuss the peace movement and the neutrality question are Robert A. Divine, The Reluctant

Belligerent: American Entry Into World War II (New York, 1965) and Manfred Jonas, Isolationism in America, 1935-1941 (Ithaca, 1966).

The last years before the war are best described by Dorothy Borg, The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-1938 (Cambridge, 1964); Herbert Feis, The Road to Pearl Harbor (Princeton, 1950) and Paul Schroeder, The Axis Alliance and Japanese-American Relations, 1941 (Ithaca, 1958). The role of Libby and other peace group leaders in the last days is discussed in "The Role of Peace Groups in the United States" by Warren I. Cohen, in Pearl Harbor as History: Japanese-American Relations, 1930-1941 (New York, 1973), edited by Dorothy Borg and Shumpei Okamoto. Those like Libby, who still held out against war but who did not share his philosophical base are discussed by Wayne S. Cole, America First: The Battle Against Intervention, 1940-1941 (Madison, 1953).

One final note, an extremely useful bibliographical aid, not only for the focus of this study but for war and peace generally, is Bibliography of Books on War, Pacifism, Nonviolence and Related Studies (Nyack, 1960) by William Robert Miller.