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NAVAL RESEARCH¹

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WHEN the war ended ten years ago there was a universal feeling throughout the civilized world that there must not be another war. I am sure that such feeling still persists among intelligent, thinking people. There is, though, a group who think that the way to prevent future wars is for our country to set an example to the world by disarming, and who, I believe, would desire to have each individual in the country sign a pledge not to take part in a future war. This group is, in the main, made up of patriotic citizens who are actuated by an honest desire to have affairs between nations settled without resorting to war. They have not, however, in my opinion, sufficiently studied history, nor have they properly taken into account human nature and national hysteria.

There is another group who just as earnestly desire peace, but who believe that the best guarantee for peace is an efficient, prepared navy for enforcing national policies and protecting national ideals.

Our navy plays the same part in international affairs, in being the force behind our international policies and our interpretations of international law, as do the national enforcement agencies and local police in making effective national and local laws.

We have gradually adopted or developed certain policies which we believe express our American ideals. Among others, these include the Monroe Doctrine, the open door to the world's markets, the freedom of the sea and the freedom of the Panama Canal. The Monroe Doctrine has been considered so vital for the peace and security of this country that we have always refused to consider it a subject of arbitration in any international court. President Roosevelt stated a fact in saying, "The Monroe Doctrine is as strong as the United States Navy, and no stronger."

The causes of war are many; among others may be mentioned the pressure of increasing populations and national desires for obtaining greater resources as represented by natural or artificial wealth. Any steps the pacifists can take which will tend to harness the above forces will be welcomed by every one; but, as long as these forces remain uncontrolled, the possibility of war must be recognized. It is easy to scrap navies and disband armies, but it is not so easy to control the causes of war.

¹ Read before Section M, American Association for the Advancement of Science, New York, December, 1928.

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