

# The Price of Peace

SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE



THE PILOT PRESS LTD.

# THE PRICE OF PEACE



# THE PRICE OF PEACE

*by*

Sir William Beveridge

PILOT PRESS

45 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.C.1

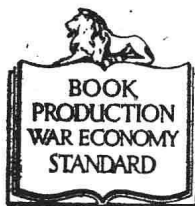
1945

# TARGET FOR TOMORROW SERIES

## EDITORIAL BOARD

SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, JULIAN HUXLEY,  
SIR JOHN BOYD ORR. EDITOR: CHARLES MADGE

*First published in March, 1945, jointly by  
The Pilot Press, Ltd. and Hyperion Press  
45 Great Russell St., London, W.C.1  
Reprinted April, 1945*



*This book is produced in complete  
conformity with the authorized economy  
standards*

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY  
W & J. MACKAY AND CO. LTD., CHATHAM

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	vii
THE TARGET: RULE OF LAW IN PLACE OF ANARCHY BETWEEN NATIONS . . . . .	9
THE LESSON OF EXPERIENCE . . . . .	14
THE COMING OF WORLD WAR . . . . .	14
THE FAILURE OF THE VERSAILLES SETTLEMENT . . . . .	19
<i>Disunity of Victors—Insufficiency of the Covenant—Two Lessons not One from Failure.</i>	
THE SOIL AND THE SEEDS OF WAR . . . . .	30
<i>Natural Pugnacity of Mankind—Economic System or Conditions—Special Wickedness of Germans—Ambition of Rulers—Revenge—Fear—The Causes of War Reviewed.</i>	
SOME FALSE TRAILS TO PEACE . . . . .	41
<i>Power Politics—Refusal of International Commitments—Balance of Power—Unchangeable Frontiers—Impoverishment or Dismemberment of Germany—Permanent Discrimination Between Nations.</i>	
THE CONDITIONS AND METHODS OF LASTING PEACE	
THE WORLD-WIDE RULE OF LAW . . . . .	50
SOVEREIGNTY UNDER LAW . . . . .	51
ARMS UNDER LAW . . . . .	53
CHANGE UNDER LAW . . . . .	56
THE ISSUES BETWEEN NATIONS . . . . .	57
SUPER-NATIONAL AUTHORITY NOT A WORLD STATE . . . . .	62
THE SCOPE AND NATURE OF A SUPER-NATIONAL AUTHORITY . . . . .	63
THE FEDERALIST ARGUMENT . . . . .	63
THE DUMBARTON OAKS PROPOSALS . . . . .	68
THE PRESCRIPTION OF MR. LIPPMANN . . . . .	75
COMPULSORY ARBITRATION ON ALL DISPUTES . . . . .	78

PEACE WORTH ITS PRICE . . . . .	83
THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT POWERS . . . . .	83
THE REGIONAL ALTERNATIVE TO WORLD ORDER . . . . .	85
OUR SECOND CHANCE . . . . .	87
APPENDIX . . . . .	90
THE FOURTEEN POINTS . . . . .	90
THE ATLANTIC CHARTER . . . . .	91
MOSCOW DECLARATION . . . . .	92
STATEMENT OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY . . . . .	94
CRIMEA CONFERENCE DECLARATION . . . . .	97

## PREFACE

“When the fighting in this World War ends, there are three things which each of us will need, three conditions which must be satisfied if all the efforts and sacrifices made in war are to seem worth while, as making possible a good life for ourselves and for our children. The first thing that we need is that peace when it returns shall be assured and lasting, that men of all nations shall be able in future to live without war and without fear of war. The second thing we need is that each man and woman, so long as he or she is able to work and serve and earn, shall have an opportunity of doing so. The third thing we need is that each man and woman shall be assured of an income sufficient for honourable subsistence and maintenance of any dependants when for any reason he or she is unable to work.”

In these words, from the Preface to my Summary of “Full Employment in a Free Society,” the three main objectives of post-war effort—peace, a job when one can work, an income when one cannot work—are named in the order of their importance and their difficulty. In dealing with them it has been natural to take the opposite order, to begin with the easiest, and work back to the hardest.

The third of the three objectives was the subject of the official Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services which I made in November, 1942, at the request of His Majesty's Government, and which took Freedom from Want as its aim. The second of the objectives was the subject of the unofficial “Report on Full Employment in a Free Society” which I published in November, 1944. The first of the objectives—the most important and the hardest to attain—forms the subject of the present work. It is an attempt to set out the terms on which we may have Freedom from War and from fear of War.

I completed a draft in September last for circulation to others more expert than myself in this field for their private criticism, as a first step to fuller collaboration. I received many helpful comments and criticisms, which have led to a drastic revision of many of my first ideas. But my election to Parliament in October last, combined with my other duties, made it impossible for me to proceed with the original plan of full collaboration, without delaying publication unduly. The winning of Freedom from War and the fear of War depends on the formation of



public opinion, in Britain and in other countries. The critical time for that is now or in the near future.

But the winning of Freedom from War, as of all other freedoms, depends on understanding as well as on desire. Within the limits of my time I have studied all that I could of what so many others have written or said on the theme of this volume. I have given many references to what I read, and I hope that, with the help of these references, those who read what I have written will be led on to further study of how lasting peace may be secured.

The present study is in two ways a work of different character from those which preceded it.

First, in writing of Social Security through Social Insurance and of Full Employment, I was dealing with subjects in regard to which I had special experience. I was helped also by others of greater experience than my own. Of the subject of the present work I can claim no special knowledge. I write of it because it is so vital, that none of us should neglect it.

Second, in each of the earlier studies it was possible to present concrete proposals—a Plan for Social Security and a Policy for Full Employment in a Free Society. The present work is concerned, not with Plan or Policy, but with *The Price of Peace*. Its theme is summed up in the title. Peace is a good which, like all other things worth having, can be won only at a price, by giving up something. The price, moreover, of any good thing can be paid only by those who have something to give, by the "haves" rather than by the "have-nots." The price of peace has to be paid in terms both of power and of wealth by those nations which are powerful and wealthy by their deciding to use their power not for narrow advantage but for the common good of world order, by their deciding through economic co-operation to spread wealth throughout the world. The ground on which they may be asked to do this is that repeated experience of world war has shown that to be self-regarding in international affairs is the primrose path to mutual destruction, for the strong and for the weak, for the rich and for the poor alike.

W. H. BEVERIDGE.

Rothbury,  
Northumberland,  
January, 1945.

*Postscript* : While this book was passing through the press, the decisions of the Crimea Conference were announced and formed the subject of a three day debate in the House of Commons on 27th and 28th February and 1st March, 1945. The statement of decisions is printed in the Appendix and notes dealing with particular points are printed on pp. 49 and 103.

## THE TARGET: RULE OF LAW IN PLACE OF ANARCHY BETWEEN NATIONS

“We have learned that those who desire to make peace must first understand the causes of war.” This is the first of the twelve main lessons drawn by Mr. Harold Nicolson from the failure of the Versailles Peace Treaty.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly it is the first and most essential lesson. It may be hoped that we have learned it.

War means that international disputes, that is to say differences between nations which cannot be resolved by agreement, get settled by mass-killing. In seeking the causes of war we have thus to answer two distinct questions: what causes irreconcilable differences between nations and why do these differences lead to killing and violence? The second of these questions is the more important. Whatever the precise causes of disputes between the groups of human beings which we call nations, it must be assumed that disputes will arise from time to time between these groups, as they do between individuals within each nation. But disputes between individuals do not, in an ordered community, lead to killing and violence. That is because in an ordered community individuals live under the rule of law, which means having courts to declare the law as something binding all citizens whether they like it or not, having police to enforce the law, and having a legislature to change the law from time to time in accord with changing circumstances and needs and public opinion. Disputes between nations, on the other hand, can and do lead to killing and violence, just because there is no other means of settling disputes which both parties are bound to accept; there is no ordered community of nations, and no rule of law among them. The general condition which makes war possible is international anarchy, is the fact that there is no authority whose decisions nations must accept, if they cannot settle their differences by agreement. That is the reason why, while killing and violence on the small scale by individuals have been nearly stamped out in most countries of the world, killing and violence on the grand scale by nations continue.

To say that, in contrast to the growing peacefulness of relations between individual human beings, killing and violence as between the groups of human beings that we call nations continue, is to understate the case. War today is not a continuation—not the same as wars of past generations. It is something infinitely worse, in itself and in its possible consequences after it is over.

<sup>1</sup> *Peace-making*, 1919, by Harold Nicolson (first published in 1933 and republished with an introduction in 1943). The quotation is from the Introduction, p. vii.

To appreciate the difference between war today and in the past, it is only necessary to read the novels of Jane Austen, written for the most part at the height of the Napoleonic Wars. These wars hardly affected the general life of the people, and in Jane Austen's novels the military seldom appear except as dancing partners. No novel true to life could be like that in ignoring war today. There was a famous Ball before Waterloo. There were no Balls before Stalingrad, El-Alamein or D-Day. With its bombing and its blockades, its compulsory mobilisation of total manpower, its rationing of all essentials, war today is a war not of armies but of peoples, with any distinction between combatant and civilian fading continually. The "Statistics Relating to the War Effort of the United Kingdom" published in November, 1944 illustrate this in many ways. In five years of war there were 176,000 fatal casualties in the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom and 87,000 or just half as many among civilians including merchant seamen. This does not mean that it was nearly half as dangerous to be a civilian as to be in a fighting service, for the total number of civilians was much greater than that of the Armed Forces; the service casualties, moreover, in addition to those killed, include three times as many missing, wounded and prisoners of war. But it does mean that of every three British lives lost up to September, 1944, two were those of men and women in the Armed Forces and one was that of a civilian. The figures of damage to dwelling houses show the same aspect of total war; one house in every three in Britain has been damaged; half a million have been destroyed beyond repair or made uninhabitable. Finally we have the reduced consumption—a lowering of the average standard of life by 21%; it is true that by rationing and in other ways this reduction has been made to fall on those persons who best could bear it and on comforts or luxuries rather than on necessities. But it is none the less a civilian contribution of vast importance to total war.

And as total war differs from the military wars of the past while it is proceeding, so it may differ in its possible results. The old wars were wars and done with; however, they ended, they let human life return to much the same in each country, conquered or conquering. But that was not the design of the Axis dictators this time. If they had won, they would have stamped out freedom; they would have riveted the chains of economic and political servitude on all their victims. The Battle of Britain in 1940 might easily have ended the other way, in favour of Germany; it probably would have done so, if the German planners had put a little less of their total resources into their Army and a little more into their Air Force. If the Battle of Britain had gone the other way, civilization might have gone from Europe; that was what we risked in being driven once more to the arbitrament of war. We should regard as unthinkable the taking of such a risk again, by leaving any room for war in the world.

As is said in the Report of a Liberal Party Committee on the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals :

Ancient and modern wars are diseases of altogether different kinds. To say light-heartedly that, because there have been wars in the past, we must make up our minds to have wars in the future is like saying that, because we have suffered from colds in the past, we should reconcile ourselves to bubonic plague. Peace, like all other things worth having, can be had only at a price. Lasting peace today is worth a much higher price than ever it was before, because the alternative of war is so much more dreadful. We must at all costs win Freedom from War and from the fear of War which is a main cause of War.

Total war is a new thing in the world—one of the worst by-products of industrialisation. In one respect only is it like the wars of earlier generations. It is man-made and therefore by man it can be prevented.

On what conditions and by what methods can we find most surely a means of settling international disputes without war between the disputants? That is the fundamental question. The other question—of how disputes between nations arise—calls for examination as well, but is less important. If we can discover and eliminate the main causes of dispute between nations, we can reduce the number of wars. But it may be taken as certain that, to the end of time, human beings grouped as nations will take different views of their rights and will have disputes, about one thing or another. We may diminish the frequency of disputes but we can never hope to prevent disputes altogether. If we want to abolish war, not merely to make it less frequent, we must provide a means, alternative to war, for the settlement of international disputes, over the heads of the disputants.

International anarchy is the general condition which makes it possible for disputes between nations to result in war. International anarchy is the soil of war. The various forms of difference between nations which may lodge in this soil, can be described as the seeds of war. As will appear in the argument, international anarchy is not merely the soil of war, but carries always within it one of the most potent seeds of war—the seed of fear. International anarchy makes war not only possible, but certain to come some time. International anarchy in an industrialised world makes it certain also that war, when it comes, will be total and nearly certain that war, when it comes, will be general.

International anarchy means not merely the outbreak of war from time to time. It is a continuing condition; it means that between wars the rights and relations of nations are determined by their relative force. "Trial by battle is an exceptional incident, but the conflict of national force is continuous."<sup>1</sup> This means that differences between nations may

<sup>1</sup> R. G. Hawtrey; *Economic Aspects of Sovereignty*, p. 97 (Longmans Green, 1930).

be settled neither by agreement nor by open war, but by unwilling surrender on the part of the nation which feels itself weaker or less prepared for war, by what the other nation will call a diplomatic victory. Experience shows that such surrenders are often the prelude to open war. They may lead the nation which has imposed its will to make further demands later, as Germany followed the peaceful surrender of the Sudetenland in 1938 by overrunning the whole of Czecho-Slovakia in 1939. They may lead the nation which has surrendered to nurse revenge and to accept battle later when it feels stronger; the surrenders which Russia made to Germany and Austria in respect of the Bosnian crisis of 1908 and which Germany made to France and Britain in respect of Morocco in 1911 were only stages to the joining of general battle in 1914.

International anarchy means not merely the absence of law between nations, but the absence of morality. Not only by indulging in mass-killing during war, but also in their behaviour during peace, nations are expected and allowed to behave as no respectable private citizens behave, breaking solemn agreements when it suits them, practising fraud and blackmail against other nations, pursuing self-interest without shame and without remorse. "War is the continuation of political relations by other means."<sup>1</sup> This saying implies and is intended to imply that, in its relation to other nations, each nation at all times should be as little guided by moral considerations as it is in war. This saying comes from Germany. But even from the United States, which in general has stood at the opposite pole from Germany, in upholding the sanctity of international agreements, have come from time to time pronouncements as immoral and anarchistic. "The nation has as a matter of course a right to abrogate a treaty in a solemn and official manner for what she regards as a sufficient cause, just exactly as she has a right to declare war or exercise another power for a sufficient cause."<sup>2</sup>

The rule of law between nations means that no nation, large or small, ever takes the law into its own hands in a dispute with any other nation. In private life all respectable citizens honour their obligations, avoid blackmail, assassination, and robbery by violence, respect rights unless and until they can get them changed by orderly accepted procedure, support the police in dealing with wrong-doers. The rule of law between nations means that nations behave as if they were respectable private citizens.

The target for tomorrow in relation to peace is to discover the conditions under which and the methods by which international anarchy may be replaced by the rule of law between nations. That is the main

<sup>1</sup> In citing this famous observation of Clausewitz, E. H. Carr (*The Twenty Years Crisis*, p. 140) quotes also R. G. Hawtrey's definition of diplomacy as "potential war," putting the same view in even fewer words (*Economic Aspects of Sovereignty*, p. 107).

<sup>2</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, quoted by H. F. Pringle, *Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 309.

task for all peace-loving nations and persons, the most important of all tasks in the world today. A subsidiary task is to reduce the causes of difference between nations, so that their relations may be governed as far as possible by free agreement and do not lead to disputes which have to be settled either, as at present, by war, or in the ordered world of tomorrow, by the rule of law above their heads. In considering how we can perform these tasks and hit our target in future, the first step is to try to profit by the experience of past failures.

# THE LESSON OF EXPERIENCE

## THE COMING OF WORLD WAR

The main theme thus briefly stated—of international anarchy as the general condition which allows disputes between nations to issue either in open war or in unwilling surrender to force without open war—can be illustrated by examination of war in its latest and widest manifestation, the war in which we are now engaged as one of the United Nations against the Axis Powers. But to understand this war, it is not sufficient to look only at recent events, those immediately preceding 1939. The hostilities which began in 1939 should be regarded as resumption, after a twenty year truce, of the hostilities of 1914-18. "We are faced not with the prospect of a new war, but with something very like the possibility of a resumption of the war which ended in November, 1918," said Mr. Winston Churchill in March, 1935.<sup>1</sup> In his volume on *Conditions of Peace*, published in 1942, Mr. E. H. Carr speaks of "the contemporary war of which the first outbreak occurred in 1914 and the second in 1939."<sup>2</sup> The necessity for treating the "First World War" of 1914-18 and the "Second World War" of 1939 as two outbreaks of the same malady will appear plainly in the course of the argument. It is important to understand just why the attempt made in 1919 not only to end the war of 1914-18, but to ensure lasting peace failed so soon and so completely, but it is even more important to understand how war came in 1914.

This is a subject dealt with in innumerable books. Among those readily accessible and without too great profusion of detail are *Fifty Years of Europe* by J. A. Spender (Cassell, 1933), *England, 1870-1914* by R. C. K. Ensor (Clarendon Press, 1936) and a study of German Foreign Policy *From Bismarck to the World War* by Professor Erich Brandenburg of the University of Leipzig. This last, though written from the German point of view to clear Germany of the charge of war guilt, is a scholarly and serious work, based on diplomatic documents published in many countries or, in Germany, made specially available to the author. It has been translated into English by Annie E. Adams and published by the Oxford University Press, a third impression being issued in 1938. This translation is cited below as "Brandenburg." The author's main thesis in defence of Germany is that in the period 1890-1914 "no one can pretend with any show of reason that at any given time she either

<sup>1</sup> *Arms and the Covenant*, p. 199. This collection of speeches from October, 1928 to March, 1938, published in 1938, by George Hawap and Co., should be read by every one who can get hold of it. It is cited here repeatedly.

<sup>2</sup> *Conditions of Peace*, p. 3 (Macmillan, 1942).



wished for war or strove to bring it about. Had Germany really wanted war, no more favourable time could have been found than during and after the Russo-Japanese War. Russia was then incapable of action, France and England inadequately equipped, and the Entente only recently founded. Had we wanted a preventive war, all the chances were in our favour then and up till 1909. The General Staff as in duty bound, called attention to that fact. But this possibility was never even considered by our Government and even in 1909, when Austria was considering an invasion of Serbia it worked consistently for peace. Perhaps it would have been wiser to attack boldly then. In spite of all the sounding words which have been spoken our policy was, in fact, too anxious and too peace-loving, rather than too militant. We never wanted to win at the expense of others, but only and always to share with them and alongside of them in the apportioning of the earth."<sup>1</sup> While defending Germany against the charge of desiring war, Brandenburg admits that she made errors of judgment, of which the most serious were :

(a) supposing that France, Russia and England could never come to an agreement and that Germany therefore could continue to exploit their differences to her own advantage, by keeping them guessing ;

(b) allowing her foreign policy to be increasingly dictated by Austria-Hungary, as her last remaining ally and one whose very existence conflicted with the principles of nationality.

This defence of German policy, elaborately supported by reference to the diplomatic documents, ignores the facts that the rulers of Germany, even if they did not want war, wanted things that could only be got by war or by threat of war, or that were bound to lead to war.

First, they wanted colonial expansion—not by consent of other powers, but by force ;

Second, they insisted on international anarchy—rejecting arbitration as proposed by Britain, both at the first Hague Conference in 1899 (Brandenburg, p. 131) and at the second in 1907 (Brandenburg, p. 277) ;<sup>2</sup>

Third, they insisted on building up armaments at their own discretion—rejecting discussion of limitation at the first Hague

<sup>1</sup> Brandenburg, p. 518. The author on pp. 512-13 advances it as a further argument exculpating Germany that though in August, 1914, Germany was armed and equipped "as our exposed position required us always to be," "from a diplomatic and economic point of view, practically no preparations had been made for war." "Those who meet a great catastrophe thus unprepared scarcely can have feared it in real earnest, certainly cannot have willed it, manifestly cannot have striven for it." To this argument the retort is simple—that Germany has always been better at war than at diplomacy or at understanding the attitude of other nations.

<sup>2</sup> In the same spirit, in July, 1914, Germany thought that "intervention by non-interested Powers between Austria and Serbia was out of the question, because that would be bringing the Austro-Serbian quarrel before the tribunal of Europe, so to speak." (p. 490.)



Conference (Brandenburg, p. 131), at the second Hague Conference (Brandenburg, p. 276), and in direct negotiations with Britain as to their Navy. "Agreements bearing upon the limitation of our fighting strength are not to be discussed by us. A power which demands such an agreement means war with us." (Circular letter by Bülow to German ambassadors, 25th June, 1909 cited by Brandenburg, p. 281.) "A better tone towards Germany can only be obtained by a stronger fleet, downright anxiety about which brings the British to an understanding." (Kaiser on 21st August, 1911. Brandenburg, p. 396.) It is true that in the last stage of Lord Haldane's mission in 1912, Germany got nearer than before to discussing naval limitation, but only on the basis of England making a declaration of benevolent neutrality should Germany be forced into war (Brandenburg, p. 410).

In the three respects named in the last paragraph, Germany was not unique. Other countries (Japan and Italy) had colonial ambitions which they pursued by force, as the U.S.A. and Britain had extended their territory by force in earlier times. Most Governments believed in the inevitability of war and acted accordingly; according to Brandenburg, the Czar's invitation to the first peace Conference at The Hague in 1899 "roused a general feeling of bewilderment and distrust" (p. 129).<sup>1</sup> Austria and Russia at the second Hague Conference joined Germany in postponing discussion of disarmament; all countries armed. But the Brandenburg argument illustrated strikingly one of the main points made later: it is not enough to desire to avoid war. One must avoid also actions which lead to war and desires which can be satisfied only by war or threat of it. It illustrates also the complete and accepted immorality of international relations. Brandenburg thinks that it might have been wiser for Germany to go to war earlier, not that it would have been wrong to go to war at any time. He thinks her policy of exploiting the differences of others by keeping them guessing for her support wrong only because it was ill-judged tactically. In the immorality of international relations, however, Germany was far from being unique. Italy and Japan, to name no others among the Great Powers, were as shameless or more shameless. Britain, Russia and the United States, while showing more readiness to accept arbitration and reduce armaments, were in the last resort self-regarding and prepared to use their strength to enforce their own view of their rights.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> While Governments generally were sceptical, public opinion in England, America and Italy "cordially welcomed the idea of restricting the armaments fever by means of international agreements and reducing the risk of future wars, but in Germany there were few adherents of these pacific ideas." (Brandenburg, pp. 130 and 132.)

<sup>2</sup> In his *History of Peaceful Change in the Modern World*, p. 45, Mr. Cruttwell gives three instances "in which Britain asserted the justice of her claims by ultimata, backed by a naval predominance which made armed resistance unwise if not futile. These were the disputes with Portugal over the Zambesi region (1890), with France over Fashoda (1898) and with Turkey over the Egyptian