

**THE OVERTHROW
OF THE
WAR SYSTEM**

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The Overthrow of the War System by Lucia Ames Mead

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FOREWORD

The pall of persecution which for centuries hung over witch and heretic vanished with the eighteenth century. The whip and slave block vanished with the next century. If America has the moral power to rise to her opportunity, the twentieth century may banish the accursed war system from an imperiled world.

The press is spreading millions of pages of censored war-news before dazed and weary readers, too numb or too unimaginative to feel. The publishers have issued two thousand books upon the war. Why add another to the list? Because, peradventure, it may meet some of the multitudes who need help to interpret in terms of duty the stunning phenomenon before their eyes and who grope shortsightedly through myriads of facts to find any vital truth to guide their immediate action. Hundreds of public meetings have sent them away pitifully ignorant that there stands waiting for them a task that calls with trumpet tones for instant activity of mind and heart and tongue. The

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summons is to study the remedy for the world's present woe and then to help create a public opinion that may save the world ere exhaustion, bitterness and bankruptcy leave Christendom lower than heathendom.

The following pages have been written with a modest hope that a small, untechnical book, written by those who are largely giving their lives to the greatest problems before humanity, might stir the hopeless and help the bewildered. Millions would respond had they hope that there was anything valid which non-voters or average men could do. To all these, and especially to the nearly two million women who in organized clubs have leisure for study, we urge that the critical situation and America's obligation take precedence of those minor matters that we have with us always. Let the economic illusions and the hoary fallacies that are the cause of every war be examined. Let the most time be spent not on unrelated details but on the philosophy of all war and its remedy—world organization. The Minimum Program and other programs in the appendix deserve careful study. They contain the quintessence of the best thought of many experts and, though coming from different lands, are strikingly harmonious. From these it will be seen that the plans presented aim not

to abolish all force but to diminish it to the minimum that gives sanction to law.

World peace means no flaccid, monotonous, tame existence, as military visionaries conceive. It means all the superb energy of the engineer, the inventor, the scientist, the explorer and the statesman made a thousand times more fruitful. It means, not merely no war, but a new conception of economics, politics and world relationships, which, nevertheless, in every nation will leave varieties of government, custom and religion untouched. The scoffer who flatters himself that he understands the new peace movement, which he imagines is still typified by the antiquated dove and olive leaf and is advocated by "peace at any price" weaklings, has yet to learn the alphabet of the subject.

All but one of the chapters in this book have been written by women who are active in the Woman's Peace Party, four of whom were on its platform committee and two of whom took a leading part in the Woman's Congress at The Hague. The valuable contribution from Professor Balch of Wellesley College was unfortunately unavailable until the book was already in type and was therefore of necessity placed in the appendix. Those who have written these pages are aiming primarily at international jus-