

ENOUGH FOR ALL!

BY DOROTHY THOMPSON

Most of you here have been in advance of the thought of your country on the issue of war. You knew that matters having been allowed to run as long as they had, and in the direction that they had, only one outcome could be expected, namely the present total and world-wide conflict in arms. All sought to avoid being embroiled in this struggle and all failed.

The means adopted to avoid participation in the conflict varied. But behind all of them was a popular sense of the evil in war, a troubled conscience, and a sense,

too, of intellectual as well as spiritual revulsion.

All thoughtful people realized that the perennial causes of war, which have been held to lie in the economic sphere, were rapidly being removed by the alchemists of modern science. Through countless ages, it had been a fact of human life that to them that had was given and that from them that had not was taken away even what they had. It was a fact that at no time during those ages had the discovered land and resources of the earth been sufficient adequately to nourish the whole population living upon it. Because men were always hungry and other men had bread, the hungry killed them and took away their good lands. Because men had the ingenuity to build industries, and other men with less ingenuity had the aluminum and manganese, antimony and rubber, oil and coal and tin necessary to the creation and maintenance of those industries, the ingenious organized against the naïve and robbed them of their resources.

This is the text of an address made on November 19 at a public dinner, in New York, marking the first anniversary of Freedom House. The AMERICAN MERCURY editors are pleased to publish it because Miss Thompson's eloquent message seems to them significant in connection with American thinking on the world after the victory.

Over war hung the justification of The Progress of Civilization. Even so humane and disinterested a spirit as Wynwood Reede could, in the last century, in his book *The Tragedy of Man*, find justification for the despoiling of one people by another on the ground that, on balance, the interests of civilization as a whole had been served.

Our country, wrested from its original Indian inhabitants by sword and fire, could support, according to the outlook of the eighteenth century, only a limited number of white settlers, to be counted by the millions and not the tens of millions. The brutalities committed in Asiatic colonies, in the same century, by Europeans of all nationalities were all inspired by a doctrine of *Lebensraum*. The researches of men like Darwin into anthropology resulted in the theory that man had evolved upon this planet through struggle and that the Survival of the Fittest was a law of nature and hence justifiable in the eyes of God. Malthus preached that the rapid growth of population to be observed in the rising industrial era would eventually overcrowd the planet. Since there would never be enough for all, it was argued that one race or people would constantly be exterminating another, and even

that war was a therapeutic against mass starvation.

II

Our century, with all its troubles and maladjustments, had glimpsed a vision of a totally different world. In industries, laboratories and universities, a new learning had grown up out of research into the nature of matter. It was discovered that what previous physicists had regarded as little gobs of static stuff, namely matter, was not static at all but was energy in constant motion. Chemists were discovering that the elements and energies in this seemingly static and frozen matter could be broken down and reassembled.

The Kingdom of Man, the material kingdom, lay no longer in the earth alone, but in the seas and in the air. Man could harness the inexhaustible lightning and tides to turn his wheels; he could draw from the air nitrates to feed his soil; he could turn grain into plastics, acetylene gas into wood, wood into silk, vegetable matter into a substitute for mineral matter and *vice versa*. In the recent words of Dr. M. A. Stine, vice-president of du Pont, new continents of matter were being discovered daily and hourly. These continents did not

lie overseas, in lands inhabited by other peoples, nor over the borders of neighboring nations. They lay close at hand in the ingenuity of man himself.

Thus, for the first time in man's long and tragic history on this earth, he had ceased to be the slave of matter. Thus, for the first time in man's painful journey upward out of the slime through trillions of years, he was, if he wished to take possession of it, master of unlimited possibilities of abundance. For the first time, Cain had no reason to slay Abel. For the first time, there was enough for all upon this planet.

In a groping and inarticulate way, the apprehension of this had spread to the masses of people of the earth. A message was flickering on the winds, whether they blew over the steppes of Central Asia, or the uttermost islands of the seas, or over the oldest centers of the most highly developed civilizations. The message was: *There is enough for all!*

Since time immemorial, the conscience of man has cried out against spilling his brother's blood. Yet his conscience had been at war with the material realities of his life. Now, at long last, the dreams of the prophets of old were capable of realization. Man could at long

last survive and be humane at the same time!

There was truly a war still to be fought in the society of mankind, but it was a bloodless war in the mind and heart. It was a war against outlived theories of economics and international relations. It was a war against ignorance and intellectual timidity. It was a struggle to call man into his inheritance. From the intellectual mountain tops of the world, voices were crying to man:

"Wake up and stand up! The day of slavery is over! Through countless generations men have built civilizations on the enslavement of their fellows and have known no other way. But behold, mankind has new slaves, slaves of metal and electricity and steam. They are here in billions. They have no hearts to beat, no minds to trouble, no egos to long for expression, no blood to spill. They will work for you without ever a revolt. When they die, you can throw them into a cauldron and revive them to work again. They will pull the strongest rocks out of the ground, fell the highest forests, add and subtract, multiply and divide for you. They will carry your words to the uttermost parts of the earth with the speed of light; they will carry you over the tops of the world more swiftly than a bird

can fly; they will propel you under the sea. There is a new heaven and a new earth, for the old earth has passed away and there shall be no more seal”

III

If man on this globe had ever fully realized just once, clearly and with vision, the fact of his liberation; if he had realized to the fullest that the prayer he has prayed for two thousand years: “Give us this day our daily bread” is fulfilled, if only he wants it to be, and fulfilled through his own creativeness, the attribute he shares with God — if all men realized this, would they not dash into the streets as the Russians used to do on Easter Day and kiss everyone they met, and sing with joy? Would man not set about to fulfill the rest of the prayer: “Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven”? Would man not wrestle with the last unconquered territory, his own mind and soul? Would he not say to the Black Man: “Let me share with you from an inexhaustible fountain”? Would he not call the Yellow Man “brother”? Would he not use his liberation to turn the whole world into an Eden, with not an ugly building, a shabby street, a hungry child?

Today we have organized the whole world to blow each other to bits because mankind cannot believe the good news. Instead of receiving the good news with thanksgiving, some men listened with greedy eyes, thinking: “All this new wealth — how can we have more of it than anyone else? How can we use it further to enslave our fellows?”

They set about turning this new wealth into the most prodigious aggressive weapons the world has ever seen. Instead of proclaiming the liberation of man, they heralded his new enslavement. They claimed for themselves a monopoly of this illimitable universal power. They declared themselves masters of the prosperity — masters in Europe and masters in Asia.

Yet this new prosperity was created by no nation of men. It has been created by the human intellect and every race on this planet has contributed to it: the Hindu, Sir C. V. Raman, with his researches into the nature of light; the Negro, Dr. Carver; the great Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans, Swiss, Chinese, Jews, Moslems — each adding his mite of knowledge to the vast accumulations of knowledge of how to conquer matter, disease and

want; how to make man the master of his planet and reach out from it to other stars.

We are now engaged in a great civil war, testing whether the creations of these minds shall be used for new slaveries among the peoples of the earth or whether they shall be used for the creation of a commonwealth of fellowship and prosperity for all humankind; testing whether man shall have conquered matter in order to be conquered by himself, or whether he shall have conquered matter in order to possess himself and enter into his full inheritance.

A year after we Americans entered into this war, we have begun to release inventions, energies, create new forms of human organizations, and make such transmutations of elements as were latent in this society all along. Everything that men are doing for war they could have done for peace to make this earth a paradise.

As our armies, standing now in

might upon the frontiers of the globe, blast open paths into the heart of the enemy, the kings of slavery, may we bring with us, wherever we break through, no old treaties, old compromises, old diplomacies, old faces, old concepts, old formulas — for new wars. By all means let our arms restore to nations of men the constitutions embodying their political liberties. But let them also carry a great word, thundered above the roar of our cannons, and addressed to the people of this now so little star:

“Get up from all fours! Stand on your feet! Open your eyes, and your ears, and your minds! These planes that drop bombs have made the earth *one* habitation; these energies which propel shells will turn wheels; this blood that we spill will fertilize the earth for a new flowering. Whether you stand in our ranks or against them, to all we bring this message: Mankind is free! There is enough for all!”



► *Why are we being denied the use of this strategic metal?*

THE SCANDALOUS SILVER BLOC

BY ELLIOTT V. BELL

BURIED in the ground at West Point is the world's biggest hoard of an important strategic metal, badly needed by our war industries. It is needed in the making of ships, airplanes, tanks, trucks, guns, shells, bombs, torpedoes. Yet industry is cut off from that supply. In this all-out war, we fix prices, wages, salaries; we requisition property, draft soldiers and prepare to draft labor. We compel holders of copper, aluminum and other metals to sell them at a fair price or face seizure. But this one strategic metal is exempt; this one hoarder is privileged.

The metal is silver; the hoarder is the United States Government. We have heard loud, indignant blasts from Congressmen and government officials against industries and individuals who are accused of holding up the supply of vital materials for selfish ends. But in all this, there has been no word of silver.

For nine years our government has been subsidizing the silver interests. It has bought every ounce

of domestically-produced silver at double the market value. It has bought the foreign silver Mexico and other countries chose to dump on us. It has accumulated a great store of silver, although there was no monetary use for it, in the face of our enormous reserve of \$23,000,000,000 of gold. Until the war came, there appeared no earthly prospect that the American people would ever get a return for the bounty they had showered on the silver interests. Now, suddenly, a greatly expanded industrial need for silver has appeared.

Quite beyond its normal use for making knives and forks and dental fillings, silver is needed now to substitute for copper, tin, nickel and other scarce war metals. For nine years silver has been a kept metal, dependent for its sole support upon the bounty of an unwilling government. Now it has a chance to lead an honest, useful life in industry and the American people have an unique chance to get a dividend on their investment. But in the face of this opportunity and