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U.S. SPURNED FIRST ARMS CONFERENCE

Held Aloof When Czar of Russia Called Meeting of Nations to Discuss Disarmament.

ACTIVE AT HAGUE

Growth in Sentiment Favoring Disarmament of Nations May Result in Much Good at Conference to be Held in Washington

By A. L. BRADFORD
(United Press Staff Correspondent.)
WASHINGTON, Oct. 6.—What will the Washington disarmament conference accomplish?

With the hopes of peoples everywhere for some action to limit and reduce the staggering burdens of war preparations gratified by President Harding's call for the Washington conference, these same people now are anxiously awaiting an answer to the question of what relief will come from this great international gathering.

Delegates and advisers of the conference now are studying previous attempts to reach some agreement among the nations of the world for a limitation of armament.

The Washington conference is not an original attempt to effect a limitation of armament, except insofar as armament limitation in this conference is to be linked with discussions to settle outstanding problems in the Pacific and the Far East, now held to be the main contributing cause of the feverish race in armament competition.

The first attempt, initiated by the Czar of Russia, was made at the First International peace conference at The Hague in 1899, and the next principal effort toward this high end, sponsored by the United States government, was at the second Hague peace conference in 1907.

Both attempts failed, it is shown in the official records of these conferences in the archives of the state department here. The net results were the following sets of resolutions:

In 1899. "The conference is of opinion that the restriction of military charges, which are at present a heavy burden on the world, is extremely desirable for the increase of the material and moral welfare of mankind."

"The conference expresses the wish that the governments, taking into consideration the proposals made at the conference, may examine the possibility of an agreement as to the limitation of armed forces by land and sea and of war budgets."

In 1907. "The second peace conference confirms the resolution adopted by the conference of 1899 in regard to the limitation of military burdens; and in view of the fact that military burdens have considerably increased in nearly all countries since the said year, the conference declares that it is highly desirable to see governments take up again the serious study of that subject."

"The first Hague conference was called to discuss means of assuring to all peoples the 'benefits of a real and durable peace.' The first article of the 'agenda' suggested for the conference by the Russian minister of foreign affairs read:

"An understanding stipulating the non-augmentation, for a term to be agreed upon, of the present effective armed land and sea forces, as well as the war budgets pertaining to them; preliminary study of the ways in which even a reduction of the aforesaid effectiveness and budgets could be realized in the future."

It may seem strange now, in view of the present initiative taken by this government for a limitation of armament, but the United States would have no part in the limitation of armament discussion in the Hague conference of 1899.

An explanation of this is found in the following paragraph of the instructions to the American delegates in that conference by John Hay, then secretary of state:

"The first article (in the Russian agenda for the conference), relating to the non-augmentation and future reduction of effective land and sea forces, is at present, so inapplicable to the United States that it is deemed advisable for the delegates to leave the initiative on this subject to the representatives of those powers in which it may properly belong. In comparison with the effective forces, both military and naval, of other nations, those of the United States are at present so far below the normal quota that the question of limitation could not be profitably discussed."

The following excerpts from the instructions of this famous American secretary of state is also interesting in view of the known attitude of Secretary Hughes that it may be desirable to take up in the Washington conference the question of restricting new means of warfare, such as poison gases and aerial bombs:

"The second, third, and fourth articles (again referring to the Russian agenda), relating to the non-employment of firearms, explosives, and other destructive agents, the restricted use of existing instruments of destruction, and the prohibition of certain contrivances employed in naval warfare, seem lacking in practicality, and the discussion of these propositions would probably prove provocative of divergence rather than unanimity of view. It is doubtful if wars are to be diminished by rendering them less destructive, for it is the plain lesson of history that the periods of peace have been longer protracted as the cost and destructiveness of war have increased. The expediency of restraining the inventive genius of our people in the direction of devising means of defense is by no means clear, and considering the temptations to which men and nations may be exposed in a time of conflict, it is doubtful if an international agreement to this end would prove effective. The dissent of a single powerful nation might render it altogether nugatory. This delegates are, therefore, enjoined not to give the weight of their influence to the promotion of projects the realization of which is so uncertain."

The American delegates to this conference, Andrew D. White, Seth Low, Stanford Newel, Captain Alfred T. Mahan of the United States navy, Captain William Crozier of the United States army, and Frederick W. Hollis, secretary, observed this attitude to the letter.

However, the attitude of the United States on this question changed with the years.

The need of a second peace conference was suggested to the powers signatory to the acts of the first Hague conference by President Roosevelt in a note by Secretary Hay on October 21, 1904. The second conference had to be postponed, however, on account of the Russo-Japanese war.

At the conclusion of peace between Russia and Japan, the United States transferred the initiative for the second conference to the Czar of Russia, as initiator of the first Hague conference, and June 15, 1907, was agreed upon as the date for the second peace conference.

The agenda for this second conference proposed by the Russian government did not contemplate a discussion of limitation of armament. On June 7, 1906, Elihu Root, then American secretary of state, sent a note to Russia, giving notice that the United States reserved the right to propose in the conference "the reduction or limitation of armaments."

Later came the same "jockeying" with the powers to agree to a discussion of this subject that has occurred in the negotiations which Secretary Hughes has carried on with the foreign powers, to make possible the holding of the present Washington conference. Great Britain and Spain agreed to this question being taken up.

Discussing the desire of this government that an effort be made in the conference to reach an agreement for the limitation of armaments, Root stated in his instructions to the American delegation:

"Under these circumstances this government has been and still is of the opinion that this subject should be regarded as unfinished business, and the second conference should ascertain and give full consideration to the results of such examination as the governments may have given to the possibility of an agreement pursuant to the wish expressed by the first conference. We think that there should be a sincere effort to learn whether, by conference and discussion, some practical formula may not be worked out which would have the effect of limiting or retarding the increase of armaments."

Reporting back to Root on this

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question after the conclusion of the second peace conference, the American delegation—made up of Joseph H. Choate, Horace Porter, Uriah M. Rose, David Jayne Hill, George B. Davis, Charles S. Sperry and William I. Buchanan—merely stated:

"The second conference was equally unprepared (with the first Hague conference) to limit armaments to place a restriction upon military or naval forces, or to bind the nations not to increase the budgets pertaining thereto. It will be remembered that the United States reserved the right to bring the question to discussion, although as such it did not figure on the program. Pursuant to this reservation and instructions from the secretary of state the American delegation insisted that the subject be discussed and in and out of conference lent it support. By general agreement a resolution (already quoted above) was introduced, supported in an address by the first British delegate on behalf of the delegation."

A few years later the powerful nations of the earth and the less powerful were arming to the teeth, or, as in the case of the central powers were already so prepared, for the war which was to throw the world into chaos.

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Women Endorse Irvine For Governor

SALEM, Oct. 6.—The movement, which was started in Portland by the Democratic Woman's club, popularizing B. F. Irvine, editor of the Oregon Journal, as a candidate for governor of Oregon, is being given a decided impetus by their method of procedure in the campaign. Petitions simply worded to the effect that the citizens of Oregon desire B. F. Irvine to allow his name to be placed on the primary ballot are being circulated among the voters of Oregon.

The club feels that they have a candidate with a peculiar distinction of appealing to all classes and feels no hesitancy in presenting these petitions for the signature of all voters regardless of party affiliation.

Many prominent women are assisting in securing signatures on the petition in and about Portland. Petitions are going forward to all parts of the state to be placed in the hands of leading democratic women who will solicit the names of representative citizens.

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