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The Book of Mormon Aspect of Preparedness

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Abstract: Quoting the book of Alma pericope regarding the refusal of the newly converted Anti-Nephi-Lehies to take up arms against their antagonists, the author pleads for peace during the First World War.

The Book of Mormon Aspect of Preparedness

BY JOHN CUTIERS

[Our correspondent submits to the ERA a lengthy argument for Peace which includes the statements of several leading national characters, newspaper editorials, and comments upon the conditions in Europe, and the cost of the terrible war that is draining the finances and destroying the lives of the nations. He quotes statements in the Book of Mormon concerning Peace from which the following extract is made, with our correspondent's comment thereon.—EDITORS.]

That some at least of the ancient inhabitants of this continent were averse to the continuous and increased use of weapons of war, and of engaging in mortal combat with their brethren, as a means of settling disputes, is clearly depicted in the following extract from the Book of Mormon :

“Now there was not one soul among all the people who had been converted unto the Lord, that would take up arms against their brethren; nay, they would not even make any preparations for war; yea and also the king commanded them they should not. * * *

“Now, my beloved brethren, since God has taken away our stains, and our swords have become bright, then let us stain our swords no more with the blood of our brethren.

“Behold, I say unto you, nay, let us retain our swords that they be not stained with the blood of our brethren, for perhaps if we should stain our swords again they could no more be washed bright with the blood of the Son of our great God, which shall be shed for the atonement of our sins. * * *

“Oh, how merciful is our God! And now, behold, since it has been as much as we could do to get our stains taken away from us, and our swords are made bright, let us hide them away that they may be kept bright as a testimony to God at the last day that we shall be brought to stand before him to be judged that we have not stained our swords in the blood of our brethren, since he imparted his word unto us, and has made us clean thereby.

“And now, my brethren, if our brethren seek to destroy us, behold we will hide away our swords, yea even we will bury them deep in the earth, that they may be kept bright as a testimony that we have never used them at the last day; and if our brethren destroy us behold we shall go to our God and shall be saved.

“And now it came to pass that when the king had made an end of these sayings, and all the people were assembled together, they took their swords and all the weapons that were used for the shedding of man's blood, and they did bury them up deep in the earth. And this they did it being in their view a testimony to God and also to men that they would never use weapons again for the shedding of man's blood; and this they did vouching and covenanting with God, that rather than shed the blood of their brethren, they would give up their own lives.

"And thus we see that when these Lamanites were brought to believe and know the truth, they were firm, and thus we see that they buried their weapons of war, for peace.

"And it came to pass that their brethren the Lamanites, made preparations for war, and came up to the land of Nephi for the purpose of destroying the king, and to place another in his stead, and also of destroying the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi out of the land. * * *

"Now when the Lamanites saw their brethren would not flee from the sword, neither would they turn aside to the right hand or to the left, but that they would lie down and perish, and praise God in the very act of perishing under the sword: * * *

"Now when the Lamanites saw this, they threw down their weapons of war, and they would not take them up again, for they were stung for the murders which they had committed. * * *

"And there was not a wicked man slain among them; but there were more than a thousand brought to a knowledge of the truth, thus we see that the Lord worked in many ways to the salvation of his people" (Alma 24:6-27).

THE NATIONS SHALL NO MORE LEARN WAR

Nearly everybody desires a world peace, and yet there is not apparent anywhere any man free and able and willing to establish it. On the other hand, there are a considerable number of men in positions of especial influence and power who will certainly resist the arrangements that are essential to its establishment.

Let not this exhaust the question or mankind is doomed to a perpetual, futile struggling of states and nations and peoples breaking ever and again into war. Rather let us earnestly entreat our rulers and lawmakers to enact such legislation as will provide for all future national and international questions and difficulties to be settled by mediation and discussion. Thus war will be entirely obliterated and armies and navies will have no pretext for existence. The money spent for increasing the army and navy, and weapons and means of warfare, could be used for the erection of sacred edifices wherein the Gospel of Peace would be taught to young and old, and wherein priest and people would officiate in the holy ordinances of true religion, for *God's truth* and *not increased armaments* are the only sure foundation upon which *the world's peace and the security of nations* shall be established forever.