

Andrew Carnegie's Educational Efforts For World Peace

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Andrew Carnegie, at the time of his death, was one of the richest men in the world. The iron and steel industrialist was also committed to educating the public as to the benefits of world peace. After he sold his company in 1901, he used a good portion of his fortune establishing peace foundations aimed at promoting world peace through research and scholarship. His lasting testimonial in this regard was the creation of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, established in 1910.

Andrew Carnegie was born on November 25, 1835, in Dunfermline, Scotland. His family was composed of shoemakers and weavers. During the 1830s and 1840s his family supported the radical Chartist movement in Great Britain. At the age of twelve, after the failure of the massive Chartist demonstration in 1848, Carnegie and his family emigrated from Scotland to Pennsylvania. After arriving in America, young Carnegie was impressed with the virtues of American republicanism and "rugged individualism." He and his family also settled at a time when the growth and development of an organized peace movement was in full swing with the establishment of the American Peace Society. Carnegie's interest in world peace and distaste for militarism had been nurtured by his pacifist Uncle Lauder in Scotland. He was also influenced by John Bright, the British liberal who questioned imperialism and militarism. He considered Bright "my favorite living hero in public life" (Patterson, *Toward a Warless World*, 19). Before amassing his fortune in the iron and steel industry, Carnegie briefly served with the Union army at the Battle of Bull Run. He believed it was his duty to preserve the Union. But his Chartist pacifism was always close at hand. "I am not a 'peace at any price' man much as I should like to be," he once stated. "I believe it was my duty to be on the field at Bull Run. In the present state of civilization (barbarism) wicked powers will wage war, which it is the duty of righteous powers to repel," he also added. However, "I like the revised edition of the Scriptures: 'If a man strikes you on the cheek, turn unto him the other also....'" (Wall, 885).

In the years after the American Civil War, while Carnegie was developing his company into the largest steel business in the world, he began reading Herbert Spencer's theories on evolution. Carnegie was of the opinion that the world was gradually moving away from primitive and unchecked violence toward a more civilized and harmonious world order. His mantra was "All is well since all grows better" (Patterson, *Toward a Warless World*, 19). His views reflected the post-bellum organized peace movement's interest in internationalism, arbitration, and world law. Between 1865 and 1901, the American peace movement took on the appearance of a cosmopolitan endeavor. Linked at home to world-minded elite of lawyers, business leaders, and politicians, this approach valued arbitration, Anglo-American cooperation, and mechanistic means of organizing an industrial world of Great Power interdependence. In the 1880s Carnegie became an outspoken supporter of Goldwin Smith's Continental Union movement – a proposal calling for a union of Canada and the United States. In keeping with the tenets of the peace movement's internationalist vision he also looked across the Atlantic. He envisioned a day in which England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales would also become states in the Union – a *pax Anglicae*. To achieve this goal Carnegie purchased a chain of newspapers to propagandize his internationalist ideas. But it proved to be an economic failure and he abandoned the project two years later.

At the turn of the new century Carnegie became more deeply involved in the peace movement's efforts to educate the public about the benefits of international understanding and world law. During the Spanish-American War of 1898, Carnegie was a major supporter of Edward Atkinson's Anti-Imperialist League. He lashed out at "the shocking recklessness of speech" as well as the

"wicked sensationalism of a debauched and debauching press" which precipitated this needless conflict (Patterson, *Toward a Warless World*, 143). Along with other luminaries such as Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, and Ernst Howard Crosby the steel magnate opposed the United States' acquisition of the Philippine Island and Puerto Rico. He even offered to buy the Philippines from the United States so that the natives may have their independence. In a compelling tone he argued that "It does not stand to reason that the American with his good sense will seek additional territory if he wants it in distant parts of the world; he has Canada on the north and Mexico on the south, coterminous territory" (Wall, 889).

In 1901, Carnegie Steel Corporation was sold and became known as United States Steel. The author of the popular essay "Wealth" (1889), later re-titled the "Gospel of Wealth" in Great Britain, now used a large portion of his personal fortune to promote world peace (Carnegie, "Wealth," 662). His philanthropic views were fueled by a strident belief that "the man who dies rich dies disgraced" and that the wealthy man should "consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust funds, which he is called upon to administer" (Carnegie, "Wealth," 662). What prompted his concern was his own personal desire to define his mission in life. How he was going to define it would be in the realm of education. Carnegie was far from being the "self-made man" industry, the myth that fed the Horatio Alger novels of that period. For all intents and purposes, Carnegie, despite his massive fortune, felt ill at ease in the company of scholars and intellectuals with whom he dined. His few brief years of formal educational training and lack of a college degree, however, did not deter him from using education to promote world peace. Peace through education would be Carnegie's most notable philanthropic endeavor. In speaking of Carnegie's mission Sir Robert Cranston proclaimed: "...I believe the way to obtain peace has been taken by the man [Carnegie] who occupies the chair tonight; it is to build libraries, endow schools, erect colleges and try to permeate every man and woman with the higher ideals of life, then armaments will fall to pieces" (Allen, 251).

Between 1903 and the start of World War I, he endowed four trusts or foundations and built three edifices, or "temples of peace" as he referred to them. The cost of these enterprises was well over twenty-five million dollars. Two of these so-called peace projects were rather curious. The Simplified Spelling Board under the direction of Melvil Dewey was designed to simplify the spelling of the English language in order to make English universal and an effective means of communication – the *lingua franca* of the globe. The Hero Fund with organizations spread throughout Western Europe and the United States was set up to replace battlefield heroes with civilian heroes who saved lives rather than taking them by sword or gun. Neither one of these projects received the enthusiastic backing of veteran peace activists who recognized the pitfalls of adverse public opinion to their own "realistic" efforts to win approval for peace treaties and international agreements. Nonetheless, both of these enterprises reflected Carnegie's quest to use educational techniques to further the goals of world peace and internationalism.

Carnegie's best-known peace endeavors were the establishment of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in 1910 with ten million dollars and the Church Peace Union in 1914 with two million dollars. Of these two foundations the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace had the largest impact. When Carnegie found out that textbook publisher Edwin Ginn decided to establish his own peace organization the World Peace Foundation, he immediately enlisted the support of more conservative-minded peace advocates such as former Secretary of War Elihu Root and Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University. Carnegie did not want to be outshined. In transferring a portion of his fortune to this educational foundation and its trustees Carnegie stated, "...I leave to them the widest discretion as to the measures and policy they shall from time to time adopt, only premising that the one end they shall keep unceasingly in view until it is attained, is the speedy abolition of international war between so-called civilized nations...." (Allen, 500). Of course, liberal and more radical pacifists were not impressed with Carnegie's peace foundation due to its elitist underpinnings and reliance on contacts in

government circles while also avoiding any involvement with immigrant, moderate socialist, and labor groups.

Despite the suspicions of radical pacifists, Carnegie's gift to promote peace education was the largest in history to that time. The Carnegie Endowment for International peace was guided by a scholarly commitment to promote international understanding and global peace through an appeal to the intellectual leaders throughout the world. The endowment consisted of three branches: Division of Intercourse and Education led by Butler; the Division of Economics and History headed by John Bates Clark; and the Division of International Law led by James Brown Scott. The first president was Root who was succeeded by Butler. As a research and educational enterprise the endowment gathered documents on the development of international law, the causes of war, and the record of peace efforts in history. Scholarly examinations and papers were written to discuss all aspects related to war and peace. A research library was set up in its New York City headquarters. The sponsorship of interchanges between American and foreign professors was also established. It also subsidized the efforts of peace societies in the United States and abroad. The foundation was designed to lend an aura of intellectual credibility to the cause of world peace and to reach the public "untouched by the more doctrinaire propaganda of peace organizations" (Curti, 205). The foundation which is still in operation (now headquartered in Washington, D.C.) continues to promote world understanding through education, international cooperation, and the implementation of international law.

As symbols of arbitration and international law and as concrete edifices to learning about peace, moreover, Carnegie's three "temples of peace" were the Palace of Peace at The Hague, the Pan-American Union Building in Washington, D.C., and the Central American Court of Justice in Costa Rica. All three structures were built as constant reminders of the importance of world peace when faced with the increasing destructiveness of modern warfare. Nevertheless, the outbreak of World War I in 1914 muted much of Carnegie's enthusiasm for lasting peace. His "last hurrah" was President Wilson's endorsement of the name Carnegie suggested for an international peacekeeping organization – the League of Nations. He died on August 11, 1919, in Lenox, Massachusetts, three months prior to the U.S. Senate's rejection of the Treaty of Versailles (1919) which had incorporated Wilson's plea for the League and Carnegie's last and final hope for global harmony.

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