

11-11-1924

# World Peace and Good Will: Address of Percival P. Baxter, Governor, at the Dedication of the State Memorial to the Sailors and Soldiers of Maine

Percival P. Baxter

*Office of Governor Percival P. Baxter*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalmaine.com/ogvn\\_docs](http://digitalmaine.com/ogvn_docs)

---

## Recommended Citation

Baxter, Percival P., "World Peace and Good Will: Address of Percival P. Baxter, Governor, at the Dedication of the State Memorial to the Sailors and Soldiers of Maine" (1924). *Governor's Documents*. Paper 21.

[http://digitalmaine.com/ogvn\\_docs/21](http://digitalmaine.com/ogvn_docs/21)

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Governor at Maine State Documents. It has been accepted for inclusion in Governor's Documents by an authorized administrator of Maine State Documents. For more information, please contact [statedocs@maine.gov](mailto:statedocs@maine.gov).

670.2/2: Me 533

c. 3

MAINE STATE LIBRARY

# World Peace and Good Will

ADDRESS OF  
PERCIVAL P. BAXTER  
*Governor*

AT THE

Dedication of the State Memorial  
to the Sailors and Soldiers  
of Maine



KITTERY, NOVEMBER 11, 1924

*Address of Percival P. Baxter, Governor, at the Dedication  
of the State Memorial to the Sailors and Soldiers of Maine  
at Kittery, on Armistice Day, November 11, 1924.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I welcome you as guests of the State of Maine. It is fitting that the United States and our sister State of New Hampshire join with us in these exercises. To the veterans of three wars I extend a special greeting. I also am glad to have with us the officers of many of the patriotic societies of our State, and representatives of the Legislative and Judicial branches of our government.

This day is one long-to-be-remembered in our history. For the first time in the 105 years of our statehood, we are erecting a state memorial. It is the State's only tribute to her "Sailors and Soldiers." This bridge, the principal gateway into Maine, and this memorial ever will remind all who enter our State that Maine does not forget the sacrifices of her loyal sons, and will cause those who leave our borders to carry with them a recollection of Maine's loyalty to those who served in her time of need.

**MEMORIAL PARK**

In planning for this memorial we have sought to build something dignified and striking, on a broad scale with suitable setting; something worthy of our State's noblest traditions. This area of land, approximately 600 feet long by 200 feet wide, was purchased by order of the Governor and Council and has been designated by them as the location for this memorial.

It was suggested that this land be used for commercial and advertising purposes and that a revenue be derived from it. The Councilors and myself, however, were unanimously opposed to such a plan and we have ordered that this park shall form an integral part of the memorial itself and shall be used for no other purpose. It is for the veterans and their descendants hereafter to insist upon this. It is theirs for all time and ever should be kept sacred and intact.

The Councilors entrusted me with the details of laying out this park and I accepted the responsibility. A few months ago this area was rough and unsightly; it was littered with buildings and rubbish. Gradually we have removed the buildings, cleared away the debris, raked the land into shape, planted trees and laid out walks. Next spring we plan to construct a background of lilacs and evergreens about the memorial, and the Highway Commission will complete the concrete road around the park. These improvements will make it one of the most beautiful spots in Maine. At the peak of the land nearest the bridge is to be erected a metal flagpole on a granite base, and I want both the United States and the State of Maine flags always to fly from it. This will emphasize it as a State memorial.

#### **CORNER STONE AND COST**

We are here today to dedicate this memorial and to lay a corner stone in which is to be placed a copper box, containing a history of this bridge and other records that some centuries hence may prove of interest to those who open it.

The cost of the memorial will be paid out of an unexpended balance of the original bridge appropriation, for by prudent management enough remains to take care of this expense.

#### **BRONZE STATUARY**

On this granite base above the inscription "The State of Maine to Her Sailors and Soldiers," there is to be a massive granite panel thirteen feet wide by nine feet high. On this panel will be erected a bronze statuary tablet, eleven feet wide by eight feet high, which will forcefully portray the spirit of service, and the sacrifice and waste of war. This will be completed in the Spring of 1925 and at that time will be fastened to the panel without further ceremony.

#### **ARMISTICE DAY ONE OF PEACE**

Armistice Day by its name denotes peace; it is not set apart as an occasion for the glorification of war but for the commemoration of the day when fighting stopped and peace reigned. Shall any of us ever forget the sigh of relief that went up the world over when in the early morning of that

first November 11, the news came that a truce had been signed and the war ended. On that day people were overcome by a conflict of emotions. Some went wild with delight and lost control of themselves in joyous outbreaks. Others, more thoughtful, fell upon their knees, thanked God for the relief that at last had come, and prayed that war never again might visit the earth. In every heart there was a deep seated feeling that a new and better world would emerge from the chaos; a world in which envy, hate and greed no longer would rule in the seats of power. Bleeding, sorrowing Nations at once began to bind up their wounds and wipe away their tears, but today the scars still are plainly visible and all eyes are not yet dry.

#### **A NEW DAY COMES**

Six years have passed; it is ten years since war began. Progress has been slow and the path to better things has been beset with pitfalls. Many who hoped for the new day have lost heart and given up in despair. The forces of evil and reaction too often have prevailed. Notwithstanding this, the pessimistic observer today must admit that the clouds are clearing, for already the rays of the sunshine of better days are piercing through them.

The best minds in the Nations are at work to solve the post war problems. The errors of the past are understood and will be avoided in the future. All the forces of distrust and suspicion cannot prevail against the spirit of hope and determination that has taken firm root in the minds of the people of all countries.

Throughout history war has been glorified, largely because those who profited by it have controlled the destinies, even the thoughts of peoples. The followers of the Prince of Peace have had but slight influence in the halls of state, but slight as that influence has been, it has proven to be the leaven that ultimately is to leaven the whole lump.

#### **PEOPLE AROUSED**

The peoples of the world at last are aroused. Slowly, as they begin to feel their power, they are emerging from their ignorance. They now see that since the beginning of time they have been exploited for selfish ends, their



property wasted and their lives sacrificed to build up and maintain great dynasties and great selfish interests. They are realizing more keenly than ever that they have been used as mere pawns upon the chessboard of life; mere tools to serve and enrich those who have lived upon them. One of the greatest military men of history, Frederick the Great, said, "If my soldiers would really think, not one of them would remain in the ranks."

Few today are bold enough to extol war and preach its blessings. The movement for peace extends into every corner of the globe. It knows no sect, no race, no creed, no national boundaries, and those irreconcilables who stand in its way are destined to be swept aside and forgotten.

### HISTORY HAS EMPHASIZED WAR

The history of the future will be one of peace and its accomplishments. As taught our children, history from the days of Greece and Rome until modern times is nothing but a recital of war. Little or no mention is ever made of the world's progress in science, politics and arts, or of the great movements that have underlain and been responsible for the advancement of civilization. In the text-books placed before our children war and nothing but war, has been and still is the dominating theme. History needs to be rewritten and movements and events other than war should be given their proper place in it.

### TO SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

In dedicating this memorial to the sons of Maine, we dedicate it to their services and to their sacrifices, to their unselfishness and to their loyalty, and in doing so protest against the war system that called for and required them. We are resolved to do all within our power to prevent war's repetition.

I would not dare be hopeful enough to say there will be no more war, for human passions and greed have not yet been conquered, nor have they been driven from the world. Nevertheless every year of peace brings about a better and more tolerant understanding among nations, and thus reduces the chances of armed conflict.

The radio, the aeroplane, the cable, the voyage of the ZR3, all contribute toward peaceful international relations. As I stood in my window in Boston a short time ago and saw that huge Zeppelin moving steadily and swiftly across the deep blue of the night sky with the moon shining full upon her, I thought of her as a great white Spirit of Peace coming across the sea from the land of a former enemy as a token of better times, a pledge of friendship for the years to come. A few evenings later an audience of 6000 Americans gathered to greet the commander of that ship and stood at attention while the band played "Deutschland Uber Alles."

### WAR LESS PROBABLE

From a wholly materialistic point of view war is fast becoming less probable, because more frightful. As science devises new methods of destruction, from the air above to the depths of the sea beneath, new gases, new slaughtering devices, new horrors, even war makers and war profiteers will hesitate before again plunging the world into conflict. They will not dare play the war games of old; for their new toys will be vastly more destructive than man ever before dreamed. These discoveries of themselves are preventatives of war. Their very existence serves to make designing men and aggressive nations hesitate before risking the chance of their own complete annihilation. Another conflict well might result in the extermination of a large portion of the human race. Once these forces are put into motion no man can tell where the end will be.

All the old-time chivalry has gone from modern warfare. Today war is as sordid as it is bloody, as cruel as it is unnecessary. As the commander of the Canadian troops, Sir Arthur Currie, recently said, "There is no glory in war, either in its conduct or method. War is not a means of solving international disputes or bringing peace to a troubled world." If nations again go to war, treaties will prove but "scraps of paper." Solemn covenants against the use of submarines, airplanes and gas will be valueless. Plagues, poisons and disease will be recognized as lawful and will be freely used by the contending nations. Nothing, not even a solemn compact, will prevent a nation in extremis from

resorting to anything to save itself from annihilation. Any other course would be national suicide.

### INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Practical idealists, and I class myself as such, do not expect a new heaven and a new earth. They however recognize that the same moral standards that govern the settlement of disputes between individuals should govern the settlement of international disputes. They hold that the new era can come only through gradual and regular processes of better international understanding and less national selfishness. Premier Herriot of France says that international affairs must be conducted "with the same regard for honesty and morality as private affairs." With this principle as a foundation, the pioneer work of the past that aimed to remove the causes of war and promote peace is sure to bear fruit in the days to come.

### EDUCATION FOR PEACE

There are large and influential groups of earnest men and women who are doing much for world peace. Last year in San Francisco sixty-two nations were represented in a great conference of educators who solemnly and unanimously resolved to do all in their power to "cultivate international good will and educate children in the ways of peace." The influence of that gathering will be felt the world over, and it is well for us to recall that an official of the State of Maine, our Commissioner of Education, Dr. Augustus O. Thomas, was its distinguished President.

True patriotism and a proper pride in one's own land are by no means inconsistent with a broad and tolerant sympathy with the problems of other nations. The highest interests of all is the end to be desired. When our children are taught the ridiculousness of war and the beauties and reasonableness of peace, that all the virtues are not possessed by any single nation, that it is our duty to lead in better international understanding and that our flag is the symbol of peace rather than that of war, we can expect the next generation to be worthy to be called true Americans.

### THE CHURCHES FOR PEACE

The power of the churches is making itself felt in the great Peace movement. It is strange that Christian ministers often have been slow and reluctant to begin an active, aggressive crusade against war. One would have expected that long since every pulpit in the civilized world would have thundered out against the wickedness and crime of war. Instead, clergymen of many denominations within recent years have asked God's blessings on the armies of kings and kaisers as they went forth to kill and to conquer for power and position. The "men of the cloth" often have played an active part in war by justifying it and by preaching the gospel of salvation by the sword. Today however some of the most active of the great national church organizations have formed an alliance and are "determined to outlaw the whole war system." These militant pacifists rightfully assert that "the glorification of war must end" and that "the cause of peace is dearer than party allegiance." The churches joining hands with the teachers, form an alliance that is destined to prove irresistible, an alliance that ultimately must win.

### PEACE MOVEMENT ABROAD

In countries beyond our borders the peace movement is perhaps even stronger than here at home, for the sufferings and sacrifices of our Allies and our enemies were far greater than ours. Among the nations of Europe it has a membership of over ten million former service men. Moreover the millions of the laboring classes are behind it and many a country would face revolution if its leaders perpetrated another conflict. Great foreign generals do not hesitate to say that "only general disarmament can save the world" and they urge a "strike against war." In this vast movement America surely will do her part.

### PREPAREDNESS

We hear much about "preparedness" for war, and special "days" are being observed annually to interest our citizens in building up a great system of national "defense." Those accustomed to think in terms of war constantly are warning us against the possible attack of hostile forces. Many



thoughtful people are impressed by such statements and approve such days. Though differing from them I in no way question their motives or patriotism. Still others whose motives are not as free from question and who profit from armament, play upon the fears of peacefully inclined citizens. In my opinion such special days are likely to cause distrust of our motives in the minds of our neighbors, and principally for that reason I question the wisdom of their observance. When the proper time arrives I would prefer to see a general "Demobilization Day" in which all the world would join.

It will not be many years before great military establishments will find themselves outlawed by public sentiment. This is inevitable, once the people understand. It has been well said that "wars are the games of old men for which youth pays the price." The fight has not yet been won, for many of these same "old men" still control the channels through which public sentiment flows and seek to move the destinies of the world from within their newspaper offices and from behind their counting tables. When the youth of all countries refuse to fight the battles of these instigators and profiteers of war real progress will have been made.

There are those who conscientiously advocate peace through preparedness for war. Again I do not question their loyalty or motives. History however, as I read it, shows that too often preparedness has promoted war by building up an arrogant spirit that sooner or later sought expression through aggressive action. Moreover those who have derived great profit through preparedness often have been the ones to derive even greater profit through war. A distinguished British General, Sir Frederic Maurice, recently said: "I went into the British Army believing that if you want peace you must prepare for war. I now believe that if you prepare for war you will get war." At best preparedness is playing with fire, an uncertain and dangerous method of preserving peace.

#### A SELF-RESPECTING PEACE PROGRAM

I would not have this nation disarm, nor in the present unsettled state of the world would I leave my country de-

fenseless. No more would I have her swagger about with drawn sword and proclaim herself the greatest power on earth. I would train our youth to be self-reliant and would instruct them in the art of self-defense. I would live strictly up to the letter and spirit of our international reduction of armament treaties, no more, no less, and would work for further mutual reduction. I would have our country remain tolerant in spirit and, while taking such defensive precautions as are reasonably necessary, would not emphasize or call the attention of others to them. I would cultivate a spirit of good will and of friendship for other nations, urge the removal of all points of friction and assume no superiority of race or color. All the while I would pronounce an anathema against war and a curse on those who foster it by propaganda, secret or open.

In a broad sense these are the principles of a "Pacifist," in the proper sense of the word, and no loyal American who believes in them need be ashamed to be called by that much abused title.

#### OUR ARMY AND NAVY

No one more than myself recognizes the splendid services rendered this country, both in peace and in war, by our Army and Navy. Together they constitute the strong right arm of our government, and have been and are a force for good. In times of peace they render distinguished service in science, and the arts, exploration and discovery, in engineering and in countless other phases of useful activity. These branches of our government arouse the admiration and gratitude of all good citizens. In the present state of the world they are an essential part of our governmental machinery, and deserve our cordial and united support. I number among my friends many officers of both services and never have known one unworthy to wear the uniform of our country. In expressing abhorrence of war, I believe I am voicing the overwhelming sentiment of almost every military and naval man in this land.

#### LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND WORLD COURT

The League of Nations is a great international movement the purpose of which is to bring nations into closer and more friendly relations and thus lessen the possibility of

conflict. Although our country has not yet become an official member, we are watching its work with deep concern, and when the proper time comes can be depended upon to carry our share of the burden. Another institution that is destined to render great service to humanity is the World Court. It will provide a lawful and peaceful method for the settlement of disputes between nations. The forces behind these movements are mounting in strength and numbers with each passing year. Certainly education and preparedness for peace are well under way, and people the world over are aroused.

As a distinct contribution toward world peace, would it not be advisable for our country to have a cabinet officer of equal rank with his associates, whose sole duty would be to promote better understandings? We have Secretaries of War and of the Navy. Why not have one official whose duty it is to prevent war, as well as two to prosecute it?

### WAR TO END WAR

This memorial as I have said, is not erected as a glorification of war, it is in protest against it. It is a memorial to service and sacrifice, a tribute to those who, caught in the meshes of world unrest and selfishness, proved themselves unselfish enough to risk their all in the belief that at last had come a "war to end war." That was the call that went ringing across this continent. It stirred the emotions of both old and young, and brought forth lives and treasure for a great cause. The future will show that that call was not in vain.

For six years progress has halted; a step forward often has been followed by two backward, but more often has the reverse been true. It is most appropriate that just at this time, when world affairs seem brighter than at any moment since 1914, that the State of Maine should dedicate a memorial to the hope that Maine's sons never again will be called to War, and that before long Peace may reign supreme.

Let us all here today, soldiers, sailors, clergymen, jurists, politicians and citizens, dedicate ourselves to the greatest cause of all causes, Peace and Good Will among the nations.