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Peter van den Dungen:

**Jan Bloch and the Inaugural Nobel Peace
Prize (1901)**

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Introduction

The 100th anniversary of the Nobel Peace Prize provided a good opportunity to reflect on the history and significance of a remarkable institution. This was done throughout the anniversary year through a variety of events such as academic conferences and symposia, public lectures, exhibitions, and publications. They were organised not only by the Nobel Foundation in Stockholm and the Norwegian Nobel Institute in Oslo, but also by other non-governmental organisations elsewhere in the world, particularly those with an interest in promoting issues concerning peace and human rights.

A century of awarding efforts for peace has resulted in a unique pantheon of peace laureates - primarily individuals but also organisations - who together provide an excellent overview of the achievements and aspirations of the twentieth century in this respect. However, that century's peace efforts would be more fully captured and more truly represented by going beyond the necessarily very select group of Nobel peace laureates. One of the most common ways to attempt to discredit the Nobel Peace Prize is the simple expedient of referring to the absence from that group of Mahatma Gandhi - by general consent the greatest peace figure of the century.

The history and significance of the Nobel Peace Prize is therefore not limited to the group comprising only the laureates, but can be extended to a much wider community which includes also all those who were shortlisted and nominated for the honour. Among the many who were nominated for the inaugural prize was also the Polish industrialist and peace researcher *avant la lettre*, Jan Bloch (1836-1902). His monumental, six-volume study on the *War of the Future* (1898) contributed to the calling of the First Hague Peace Conference (1899) by Tsar Nicholas II and constituted a prophetic account of the nature of World War I which his urgent warning was meant to prevent.

The following pages document his candidacy for the prize making use of primary sources preserved in the archives of the Norwegian Nobel Institute. Among these sources are not only several letters of nomination but also a lengthy memorandum written for the purpose by the candidate himself (the existence of which appears not to have been noticed before). Bloch died only weeks after the award of the first Nobel peace prize. Some comments will also be offered on the question of whether he might have become a laureate if he had lived longer. First, however, a short presentation of Bloch's life and work is in order. If, as is indeed the case, many of the Nobel peace laureates have sadly been forgotten, even greater oblivion has befallen those heroes of peace who were not so honoured, including Bloch.

Jan Bloch

Jan Bloch was born in Radom in Russian-dominated Poland into a poor Jewish family. In western Europe, where he became famous around the turn of the century because of his studies on the war of the future, he was variously known as Jean de Bloch, Johann von Bloch, John Bloch and I. S. Bloch. At a young age, he became involved in the railway industry and when he was 26 he had earned his first million roubles. One of the great projects he was engaged in as a contractor was the construction of the important line between St. Petersburg and Warsaw, and later he was director of several railway companies. Bloch became known as the “king of Polish railroads”; his intensive involvement with their development in effect constituted for him, who was largely self-taught, a kind of “university of life” where he quickly learned about political and military thought as well as about the management of large-scale projects. Also as a banker and entrepreneur, he became an important figure in the industrialisation of Poland and western Russia. His scholarly, multiple-volume publications on Russian railways, Russian imperial finance, and similar subjects, brought him further honours and recognition - so much so that he became Counsellor of State and a member of the Learned Committee of the Ministry of Finance before he was forty. Indeed, he was even spoken of as a potential candidate for the post of Minister of Finance - a post which in the last decade of the 19th century was held successively by two of his former employees.¹

As an entrepreneur and financier, Bloch's interest in war was initially confined to its economic aspects but gradually they broadened to include also its technical-military and social-political dimensions. In 1891 he became a member of an official commission which was set up to investigate the defence plans for Warsaw in case of war and a likely siege of the city. Dissatisfied with the commission's report, Bloch submitted his own *Memorial* in which he addressed questions which the military had overlooked or marginalised in their report, mainly concerning the anticipated evacuation of more than half a million inhabitants, and the fate and provisioning of some 50,000 citizens who would be left in the city. His studies made him increasingly aware of the new character of war as a consequence of recent developments in the military and economic fields. In the first half of the 1890s, he published articles in Polish, Russian and German periodicals on future war and the devastation it would cause. They were eventually to result in his monumental six-volume treatise *The Future War in its Technical, Economic and Political*

¹ Cf. Andrzej Werner, “Bloch the man: a biographical appreciation”, pp. 85-100 in Gwyn Prins & Hylke Tromp, eds., *The Future of War* (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000). The most recent biography (in Polish) is by Elzbieta Malecka: *Jan Bloch - Niezwykly Warszawiak* (Warszawa: Towarzystwo Jana Gotliba Blocha/Jean de Bloch Society, 2002). An English edition is in progress.

Relations, first published in Russian in St. Petersburg in 1898.²

Bloch had come to the conclusion that a great war had become “impossible”, i.e. it would be so catastrophic for all concerned that it could no longer be regarded in the Clausewitzian sense as a rational instrument of statecraft. He predicted a long, drawn-out war, with rival armies facing each other across the trenches. Attempts to break the deadlock would result in mass slaughter owing to the “storm of fire” which the new weaponry would unleash. In the meantime, the dislocation at the home front which a prolonged war would bring in its wake would result in social upheaval and even revolution. The next great war, he wrote in the introduction to his prophetic work, would be “like a *rendez-vous* with death”. This is indeed what the Great War amounted to. Professor Sir Michael Howard, one of the leading military historians of our time, has called Bloch's book a “remarkably accurate blueprint for the war which was to break out in Europe in 1914.”³ Howard explains why a civilian, rather than military expert, saw so clearly the shape of things to come: “he brought to the study of war an entirely new sort of mind, one in which the analytical skills of the engineer, the economist, and the sociologist were all combined. His book was in fact the first work of modern operational analysis, and nothing written since has equalled it for its combination of rigor and scope” (p. 41). Professor Sandi E. Cooper, a leading historian of the pre-1914 European peace movement, has likewise written:

“In this masterly analysis combining military, economic, political and social data relevant to the case of a war between the two great alliances of pre-1914 Europe, the author demonstrated a grasp of the impending catastrophe seen by none of the experts of his day. Nowhere were Bloch's warnings and admonitions so amply vindicated as on the battlefields of World War I and in the following social upheavals which brought down emperors and ministers who ignored his advice.”⁴

If today's historians of war and peace are unanimous in praising his foresight and inventiveness, his contemporaries - both military experts and adherents of the peace movement - likewise recognised his stupendous achievement. But it is not surprising that while he was fêted by the latter, opinion among the former was more diverse, some dismissing his theory out of hand as the work of an amateur. It became Bloch's great concern to convince both the military experts and the political leadership as well as the

² For three recent assessments of Bloch's work, cf. Grant Dawson, “Preventing ‘a great moral evil’: Jean de Bloch's *The Future of War* as Anti-revolutionary Pacifism”, pp. 5-19 in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2002; Michael Welch, “The Centenary of the British Publication of Jean de Bloch's *Is War Now Impossible?* (1899-1999)”, pp. 273-294 in *War In History*, Vol. 7, No. 3, July 2000; Christopher Bellamy, “‘Civilian Experts’ and Russian Defence Thinking: The Renewed Relevance of Jan Bloch”, pp. 50-56 in *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 137, No. 2, April 1992.

³ Michael Howard, “Men Against Fire: Expectations of War in 1914”, pp. 41-57 in *International Security*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Summer 1984, at p. 45.

⁴ Sandi E. Cooper in her introduction (pp. 5-21, at p. 5) to the full reprint of the French edition of Bloch's work: Jean de Bloch, *La Guerre* (New York: Garland, 1973, Vol. I).

wider public of the accuracy of his predictions. As a result Bloch, who is today regarded as a pioneer of peace research, also became a tireless peace activist and lobbyist as well as educator.⁵ He played an important role in the genesis of the 1899 Hague Peace Conference and founded the world's first peace museum in Lucerne in 1902. It is not surprising that, when taken together, these activities and achievements made him a worthy candidate for the inaugural Nobel peace prize in the opinion of several of his contemporaries, as will be documented below.

Bloch and the 1899 Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Kristiania

In January 1901 Christian L. Lange, the secretary of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, sent out a standard letter informing those who wanted to nominate any candidates for the peace prize that they had to do so before 1st April. This submission date did not leave much more than two months for the recipients of the letter to act. It is of course true that the Nobel legacy had created a good deal of interest and even before Lange's letter, nominations were coming in, also from people who were not qualified to nominate or, equally inadmissible, who had nominated themselves. Some even had a special booklet printed to advance their candidate (for instance, in December 1900 a booklet appeared entitled "Nobel's peace prize for H. Dunant", in Norwegian). Some 130 individual proposals or applications were received before 1901.⁶

Inevitably, the developments regarding the establishment of the prize were keenly followed by the contemporary peace movement, notably by one of its best-informed and most reliable publicists, Alfred H. Fried (who was awarded the prize in 1911). He published several articles about the prize in the years leading up to the first award in 1901 in the important journal which he founded and edited, *Die Friedens-Warte*. Of particular interest is an article published in December 1899 in which he was concerned with correcting reports which had appeared in the press. However, Fried himself could not resist the temptation to speculate when he wrote that "we can assume that inside the Committee the distribution of the prize for the next five years has been decided upon". He reported that during the recent Inter-Parliamentary Conference held in Kristiania [Oslo], *Storting* president Ullman had informed the parliamentarians present that the first award would be made on 10th December 1901, and that the prize would be awarded to the person who had done the most for the fraternity of peoples during the last few years. Fried

⁵ See Peter van den Dungen, "Jean de Bloch: A 19th Century Peace Researcher", pp. 21-27 in *Peace Research*, Vol. 15, No. 3, September 1983.

⁶ They are listed in the following volumes: Det Norske Stortings Nobelkomité, Nobels fredspris - Forslag og ansøgninger.

commented, “Dozens of names are buzzing through my head! We only name the Tsar, the Baroness von Suttner, Fréd. Passy, Tolstoi, von Bloch.”⁷ Although one may have reservations about Nicholas II,⁸ it is difficult to think of a more distinguished quintet as regards the peace movement of the time. Bloch's inclusion in it is one illustration, among many, of his prominence.

William Thomas Stead, the great British journalist and peace campaigner (and promoter of Bloch in England), took part in the Inter-Parliamentary Conference and wrote an extensive account of it in the journal which he edited. He quoted a long extract from a report on the Nobel prize which the Norwegian parliamentary delegation had prepared and then continued: “Who will be selected as the first recipient of the Nobel peace bequest is not known. When the subject was first mooted the names of M. Passy, Mr. Cremer, and Baroness Suttner were mentioned as the most likely favourites, but ... the whole subject is still in abeyance till 1901.”⁹

The Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Kristiania where Ullman made his announcement was held during the first week of August 1899. Since both Bloch and von Suttner had been invited as guests of honour to attend the deliberations and festivities, they heard first-hand the latest news about the dispositions of the Nobel peace prize. Indeed, von Suttner referred in her memoirs to Ullman's report; they had been acquaintances for a long time and had first met as long ago as 1892 at the Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Berne.¹⁰ Ullman was member of a committee of three which the *Storting* had created in June 1898 and which shortly afterwards decided to accept the compromise agreement which the executors of Nobel's estate had reached with his

⁷ Alfred H. Fried, “Über den Nobelpreis”, pp. 159-160 in *Die Friedens-Warte*, Vol. 1, No. 25, 18th December 1899.

⁸ For a concise, rather critical, appraisal of Nicholas II as a peace leader, see the entry on him by Andrew M. Verner in Harold Josephson, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Peace Leaders* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985, pp. 690-692). Verner sums up the Tsar's merits as follows: “The name of Nicholas II is forever associated with The First Hague Peace Conference of May-July 1899. The praise lavished on Nicholas at the time by the pacifist movement and large sections of the European and American public, if not all government circles, was certainly not undeserved. In a formal sense, the initiative was his, and without it The Hague Peace Conference might never have taken place.” It is also pertinent to note the author's comments as regards the role of Bloch in all of this. He writes that the idea for an international conference, put forward by the Russian Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs, ‘eventually met with Nicholas' approval, reportedly after he had read a six-volume study on *The Future of War* and talked extensively with its author, Jean de Bloch.’ For full details of this episode, see Peter van den Dungen, *The Making of Peace: Jean de Bloch and the First Hague Peace Conference* (Los Angeles, CA: California State University, Center for the Study of Armament and Disarmament, Occasional Papers Series, No. 12, 1983) and, more recently, “From St. Petersburg to The Hague: Bloch and the First Hague Peace Conference (1899)”, pp. 69-83 in Prins & Tromp, *The Future of War*, o.c. The book, which has several chapters on Bloch, contains the papers delivered at a Bloch Commemorative Conference held in St. Petersburg in 1999 on the occasion of the centenary of the First Hague Peace Conference.

⁹ W. T. Stead, “The topic of the month: A plea for international picnics”, pp. 256-269 in *The Review of Reviews*, Vol. 20, September 1899, at p. 263. The Nobel Committee shortlisted Stead himself in 1901 and 1902.

¹⁰ *Memoirs of Bertha von Suttner* (Boston: Ginn, 1910, Vol. 1, p. 432 and Vol. 2, pp. 327-332).

relatives.¹¹ At the Kristiania conference, von Suttner also met with two other leading Norwegian parliamentarians who were good friends of hers - both of whom were shortly to be appointed as members of the first Nobel Committee of the *Storting*: John Lund and the famous poet Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson.¹² (A third member of the future Committee formally opened the conference: Norwegian Prime Minister Johannes Steen). It is likely that Bloch also met one or more of these influential parliamentarians on this occasion. The establishment of such personal contacts, more than two years before the first prize was awarded, is one factor among many which has to be taken into account when assessing the likelihood of the award of the prize to him if he had not died a few weeks after the first award was made.¹³

However, we should not assume that Bloch's presence at the 1899 Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Kristiania - and the establishment of personal contacts with leading parliamentarians which it enabled - was necessarily strengthening his reputation. He was impatient with peace societies and the kinds of conferences they organised, and did not exempt his present hosts, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, from his criticisms. He objected that while the military machine had been perfected during the past three decades, and the economy had likewise developed to such an extent that the life of nations now resembled a mechanism even more complex than that of a precision watch - which war would catastrophically destroy - the leaders of the peace movement continued to engage in mere discourses about the horrors of war and the benefits of peace, despite the gravity and urgency of the situation.

Therefore, for the members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union gathered in Kristiania - this was the year of its tenth anniversary, and a record 468 representatives from 18 states participated¹⁴ - Bloch had prepared a printed report on the Hague Peace Conference. He hoped that this new work which contained the views of military experts on the nature of future war (and which had not been taken into account by the delegates at the Hague Peace Conference), would provide a basis for the asking of questions in Parliament. Unfortunately, he says, this new work has not had any immediate results.¹⁵ Apparently, Bloch wanted to put this issue also on the agenda of the conference in Kristiania. In his own words: "I had requested authorisation to develop before an elected

¹¹ See Ragnar Sohlman, "Alfred Nobel and the Nobel Foundation", pp. 25-84 in Nobel Foundation, ed., *Nobel, The Man and his Prizes* (Stockholm: Sohlmans Förlag for the Nobel Foundation, 1950, at p. 80).

¹² He was greatly admired by Nobel, and the recipient of the 1903 Nobel Prize in literature. For details of the meetings between von Suttner and Lund and Bjørnson, see her *Memoirs*.

¹³ On the importance of such personal contacts during the early years of the prize, see Ivar Libæk, *The Nobel Peace Prize: some aspects of the decision-making process, 1901-17* (Oslo: The Norwegian Nobel Institute Series, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2000).

¹⁴ See Yefime Zarjevski, *The People Have the Floor: A History of the Inter-Parliamentary Union* (Aldershot: Dartmouth, 1989, p. 48). Bloch's criticisms are taken from his unpublished 80-page memorandum (cf. infra), esp. pp. 9-12 & 45-46.

¹⁵ A copy of this printed report has so far not been found; it is also absent from Peter van den Dungen, *A Bibliography of the Pacifist Writings of Jean de Bloch* (London: Housmans, 1977).

committee [of that conference] the means for inaugurating an efficient action to promote peace. Hiding behind questions of formality, this was refused. Since I was not a member of any parliament, I could not be heard even in the course of a non-official session, as a minority had suggested.” It is not at all inconceivable that Bloch's forthrightness and the way in which he campaigned for his deeply-held convictions annoyed some of the organisers of the conference, possibly including future members of the Nobel Committee.

Nominations for Bloch

For the inaugural prize, altogether some 320 letters containing nomination proposals were received in Kristiania. They were listed and numbered, more or less in chronological order of receipt, it seems, in a large ledger entitled “Protocol for 1901”. In the first three years, the long list comprising all candidates was not included in the annual, printed volumes, the *Redegjørelse for Nobels fredspris* (Norwegian Nobel Committee Advisers’ Reports) which comprise the confidential reports on the shortlisted candidates. Each handwritten entry in the 1901 Protocol starts with the name of the nominator, followed by that of the candidate(s), and sometimes a brief description of the latter's merits. For Bloch, the entries are numbered 142 (Tarnowski), 195 (Sagnac), 197 (Baart de la Faille), 205 (Nigra), and 241 (Kasperek and Rostworowski).

Incidentally, it should be mentioned here that the extensive collection of letters and documents which were submitted for the first Nobel peace award constitutes a fascinating archive which combines original and valuable letters and documents of most of the leading peace figures of the day - which may contain original insights and information for the historian of the peace movement of the time - with submissions which range from the fantastic and deluded to the hilarious and pitiful, and from the jealous and conceited to the magnanimous and the mean. All life is here! There is a rich harvest, of course, in later years too - including letters from diplomats and officials admonishing the Nobel committee not to award the prize to certain individuals. There is material here for more than one interesting or entertaining anthology. (That this archive has long been rather neglected, including by the Nobel Institute itself, is illustrated below).

Bloch received six nominations although some of those who nominated him also put forward at the same time other candidates. Except for the first one, which was made as early as 25th January 1901, all the nominations were made during March 1901. The nomination letters were all handwritten, and between one and four pages long. Three were written in French, two in German, one in Italian. The nominators consisted of five individuals, and one institution. They represented a good geographical spread, since the individual nominators were Dutch, French, Italian, and Polish, the latter being also the

nationality of the institutional nominator (the country itself was then of course not to be found on the map of Europe). This European-wide spread, together with the different backgrounds of the nominators, can be regarded as confirmation of the fact that at this time Bloch had become a well-known figure in the different milieux concerned with questions of war and peace.

The first letter in which Bloch was nominated was perhaps the most impressive since it was signed by Count Stanislaw Tarnowski on behalf of the prestigious Academy of Sciences in Cracow (Akademia Umiejetnosci). However, the case made on behalf of the candidate was very short. After having referred to the stipulations regarding the peace prize in Nobel's will, he wrote:

"The work of Mr. Jean Bloch, *La Guerre* (in Polish *Przyszla Wojna*, in German *Der Krieg*), brings together, in the opinion of the *Academy of Sciences in Cracow*, the prerequisites and qualities demanded by the founder of the competition. According to a widespread view, to be found in the criticisms and reviews, and confirming our opinion, *La Guerre* is to be regarded as a remarkable work.

Therefore, Mr. President, I permit myself, on behalf of our Academy of Sciences, to propose the candidacy of Mr. Jean Bloch for the fifth part of the competition mentioned, and request you to submit it to the committee."

It would be interesting to know more about the circumstances which led the Academy to nominate Bloch for the peace prize. Was he proposed, as seems likely, by one of their number? Was this followed by a vote? Was Bloch's son-in-law, K. von Kostanecki - a professor at the university in Cracow (see below) - a member of the Academy, or perhaps otherwise involved with its proposal? Research in the archives of the Academy might shed some light on these questions.

It seems that this is the only nomination which is mentioned in the few biographical sketches of Bloch where this matter is raised at all, first and foremost by Ryszard Kolodziejczyk in his 1983 biography of Bloch.¹⁶ In his biographical sketch of Bloch published in English a few years later, he writes in this regard: "An important sign of popularity enjoyed by Bloch's work was a decision taken by the Academy of Sciences in Cracow and written down in a protocol from its session under the date of January 26, 1901 concerning the submitting of the *Future of War* for the Nobel Peace Prize alongside a simultaneous entry about submitting Henryk Sienkiewicz's novel *Quo vadis?* for the Nobel Prize in Literature."¹⁷ In his lengthy review of Kolodziejczyk's important monograph, Andrzej Werner commented: "So great was his involvement [in the peace movement] that, if Bloch had lived longer ... he might have been remembered as a

¹⁶ Ryszard Kolodziejczyk, *Jan Bloch (1836-1902): Szkic Do Portretu 'Krola Polskich Kolei'* (Warsaw: Panstwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1983, p. 242).

¹⁷ Ryszard Kolodziejczyk, "Jan Bloch (1836-1902) - Outstanding Polish Pacifist", pp. 55-71 in *Polish Peace Research Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1989, at p. 65.

laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize.”¹⁸ Indeed, just as Sienkiewicz received the literature award in 1905, a few years after the Academy had first nominated him, so there is every possibility that by this time Bloch would have been similarly honoured. This paper adduces some elements which are meant to provide further substance to that view (which, it cannot be denied, remains speculative).

A second nomination was made by Philippe Sagnac, professor of modern history at the University of Lille (France). After expressing his gratitude for the honour which the Nobel committee had extended to him by inviting him to submit a nomination, he wrote on 17th March:

"In my opinion, among all the people who have shown, through arguments which are both theoretical and especially practical, the necessity of peace and demonstrated the ruinous catastrophe which a great war would entail, the illustrious publicist, M. Jean de Bloch, seems to me to be in the first rank. Without any doubt he has not only been a philosopher and a jurist, but, moreover, a man of action; he has exercised influence on the peace congress at The Hague. In my view his great work on war, which is still too little known by the public, as well as the efforts which he has made and which he continues to make for the maintenance of peace, should be recompensed in a dignified manner by the great prize founded for this purpose by your generous and illustrious compatriot [sic] Nobel."

The next day, Dr. Samuel Baart de la Faille sent his letter containing the names of six candidates. He wrote from The Hague, and signed the letter in his capacity as treasurer of the central committee of the Dutch Peace Society. He had been an officer in it since 1897, and continued to serve it until 1915, two years before his death. He was a familiar figure in the annual Universal Peace Congresses which he actively participated in during almost two decades. His high standing in the Dutch and international peace movement of the pre-1914 era is indicated by the fact that he was the first Dutch representative to be selected to serve on the Council of the International Peace Bureau (IPB).¹⁹ In fact, he opened his letter by stating that in his capacity as a member of the standing commission of the IPB, he wanted to draw the attention of the Nobel committee to six candidates, the first of which was the IPB itself. He praised the work of Elie Ducommun, the IPB's honorary secretary, and "the undeniable soul of the organization". This was followed by his nominations of Frédéric Passy, Henry Dunant, and Bertha von Suttner. The next name he put forward was that of 'M. Jean de Bloch, Councillor of State in Warsaw, author of "War" [etc.], the scientific Hercules for clearing out that stable which is called excessive armaments and human slaughter. It is M. Jean de Bloch who has done the most for the suppression and reduction of standing armies. As with the work of Mad. von Suttner, Tsar

¹⁸ Andrzej Werner, book review in *International Journal on World Peace*, Vol. 3, No. 3, July-September 1986, pp. 123-129, at p. 124.

¹⁹ For a concise biography, see the entry on him by J. H. Rombach in Josephson, *Biographical Dictionary*, o.c., p. 47. He had established a local branch of the first Dutch peace society in 1871. In his obituary notice, Alfred H. Fried referred to Baart de la Faille as the 'Altmeister' of the Dutch peace movement. Cf. *Die Friedens-Warte*, Vol. 20, No. 2, February 1918, p. 59.

Nicholas II, it is said, has been greatly moved by the monumental book of M. de Bloch.' Baart de la Faille's last candidate was his countryman, the anti-war painter, Jan ten Kate.²⁰

Baart de la Faille justified his selections with brief but effective accounts of the merits of each candidate, paying special attention in every case to relate the work of the candidate to the categories of peace work specified by Nobel. The Dutchman's great knowledge of the peace movement, and ability to judge the most meritorious candidates, is suggested by the fact that the first four of his six suggestions (as well as Ducommun) were honoured with the Nobel prize in the early years of its existence. On the same basis it can be assumed that Bloch - had he lived - would have been a strong contender, too, for one of the early prizes.

The fourth nomination for Bloch was made by Count Costantino Nigra, the Italian ambassador in Vienna. He was an outstanding diplomat with long experience in various European capitals. He had led his country's delegation at the 1899 Hague Peace Conference where he much impressed his colleagues. Nigra also attended Bloch's public lectures at The Hague and expressed great interest in them.²¹ In a short letter, dated 20th March, he wrote: "As a member of the Italian Parliament, and as a delegate of Italy to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, my vote for the Nobel prize is as follows: An honorary prize to H.M. the Emperor of Russia, Nicholas II; the monetary prize to be divided between Mr. Frédéric Passy, Paris; Mad. Bertha Suttner, Vienna; Mr. Bloch, the noted author against war." He refrained from enclosing documentation regarding his candidates, he wrote, since the Committee was certainly aware of their merits. He concluded his letter, written in Italian, by expressing his belief that the noble role played by the Italian peace movement would lead the Norwegian Committee to treat the Italian language on a par with the Scandinavian, German, English, and French languages.

The same comments made above about the qualities of the nominator being

²⁰ He was in touch with Bloch and several of his paintings - including a large canvas, *War on War*, which contained portraits of leading peace activists (including Bloch) seen meeting against the background of a battlefield - were on display in the museum which Bloch established in Lucerne and which was opened in 1902 (see below). Baart de la Faille's was not the only nomination in 1901 for ten Kate. One of several other nominators, the Liège professor Jules Sauvenière, included in his submission a recent publication on the artist by H. Hoeben, entitled *Un Artiste pour le Droit et l'Humanité* (Antwerp: Impr. J. Kenis, 1900, pp. 38). Hoeben wrote, "Whereas his Excellency Minister [sic], Professor [sic] and Count Bloch shows how eloquently figures can be used to wage war against war, another man has appeared on the scene who, in a very different manner, attempts to arrive at the same goal and to achieve the same effects, through the expression of his ideas in colours" (p. 25). For a concise biography of ten Kate, see the entry by J. H. Rombach in Josephson, o.c., pp. 933-934. Ten Kate can be regarded as the Dutch Vereshchagin. The painter of, i.a., *Apotheosis of War*, was also nominated for the first Nobel peace prize. A concise biography of him by Folke T. Kihlstedt is in *ibid.*, pp. 984-985. Although several other prominent painters and graphic artists have been nominated during the century, the Nobel Committee has so far not honoured any artistic anti-war or peace efforts. In 1995, on the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese artists Iri and Toshi Maruki were nominated. The famous Hiroshima Panels, together with other large anti-war paintings, are permanently exhibited in the Maruki Gallery in Saitama.

²¹ See Bertha von Suttner's several (favourable) references to Nigra regarding his work during the conference in her *Memoirs*, o.c., Vol. 2, *passim*. His interest in Bloch's lectures is mentioned at p. 289.

reflected in the excellence of the candidates submitted, and the prospects of Bloch as a future laureate, also apply here. If only three names could be put forward of the most meritorious peace workers alive at the start of the 20th century, it would be hard to improve on Nigra's selection. The inclusion of Bloch is as deserving as it is remarkable. Unlike Passy or von Suttner, who had been active in the cause since 1867 and 1889, respectively (and who were founders of the first peace societies in their countries), Bloch's public involvement in the peace movement only occurred in the late 1890s. Then, his early death prevented him from building up a long and distinguished career as a peace activist. It is a measure of his impact and distinction that he rose to such heights of recognition in little more than three years, from the moment of the publication of his great work. Of course, his alleged influence on the Tsar in the calling of the First Hague Peace Conference, and his activities in The Hague during that conference, are major factors which help to explain this phenomenon. Sandi E. Cooper rightly noted that Bloch's "multivolume study of war and its probable impact brought instant celebrity".²² Little more than a year after Nigra wrote his letter, Passy and von Suttner were the main speakers during the opening ceremony of the International Museum of War and Peace in Lucerne where they praised the late founder.²³

The fifth nomination, sent to the Committee on 25th March, was by Dr. Franz J. Kasparek. He was Professor of International law at the University of Cracow, and a member of the Institute of International Law, and in this dual capacity he wanted to present to the Committee "the Russian Councillor of State Johann von Bloch, resident in Warsaw". Written in German, and running to more than three pages, Kasparek's was the most extensive presentation of Bloch as a candidate for the Nobel peace prize. It provided not only a brief summary of his various accomplishments, but also a case for the unique position occupied by Bloch in the peace movement of his time. We shall quote Kasparek's nomination in extenso:

"The merits of this famous savant and outstanding philanthropist for the cause of peace are so significant that my proposal appears justified. Foremost, Mr. Bloch published in 1899 a work comprising six volumes concerning *War* from a technical, economic and political point of view in French, German, Polish and Russian and in this way has rendered the cause of peace an inestimable service. The expositions of the author were made accessible to a wider public through the extract 'Evolution de la guerre et de la paix' published by Paul Dupont in Paris in 1899. Moreover, Mr. Bloch has been an astute observer of the most important political events of the day, and has decisively shown the inadmissibility of war as a means of resolving these questions.

Mr. Bloch gave interesting lectures in The Hague on the occasion of the Peace

²² Sandi E. Cooper, *Patriotic Pacifism: Waging War on War in Europe, 1815-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 82).

²³ Their speeches were printed in both German and French editions: B. von Suttner & Frédéric Passy, *Johann von Bloch und sein Werk: Gedenkblatt zur Einweihung des Internationalen Kriegs- und Friedensmuseums in Luzern* (Luzern: Gutenberg, 1902); the French edition was published by Paul Dupont in Paris the same year.

Conference in The Hague in 1899 (Impossibilités techniques et économiques d'une guerre entre grandes puissances); furthermore, in 1900 he published a most interesting study, "Conséquences probables tant politiques qu'économiques d'une guerre entre grandes puissances".

At the Paris Exhibition in 1900 Bloch's works and their graphic representations occupied a special room in the Palais des Congrès (Swiss section).

It must be mentioned, lastly, that Bloch is the initiator and founder of the War and Peace Museum which was established in Lucerne in 1900; its purpose, following Art. 3 of the statutes, is to promote the peace idea through artefacts (which have been donated by Mr. Bloch in accordance with an agreement dated 31st October 1900), as well as through the Museum's acquisition of the same, through plastic art and graphic representations, through lectures, etc.

Since I allow myself to send at the same time to the Esteemed Committee the most important books and brochures of Mr. Bloch, and also to include three copies of a memorandum from Mr. Bloch in which he himself develops the leading ideas of his fecund and tireless activity in the service of the idea of peace - I must stress, that it is hardly possible to find someone who has laboured so much, and so expertly, and who has made such material sacrifices (all in the service of a great idea which is recognised as favouring human well-being) as Mr. Johann von Bloch.

In conclusion I must point out the following. Just as modern medicine, through the careful study of illness-inducing bacteria and their development is researching means to destroy them and in this way has achieved important results - so it is the aim of Mr. Bloch through the careful and comprehensive study of war to discover means against the dangers of a war which threatens to destroy all of civilisation. This appears to me to be the only correct way for achieving the goal of a lasting condition of peace - instead of a latent condition of war among the states, as is the case today, and I believe that this is a far more certain way to reach the desired goal than through the empty phrases, declamations, and resolutions of most of the peace congresses which often lack the solid basis for a more profound and serious study.

Taking all these factors into account, it seems to me that the proposal to award the Nobel Prize to Mr. Bloch is fully justified and in accordance with the intentions of the noble founder."

This nomination received the full endorsement of Count Dr. Michael Rostworowski. His one-sentence note, bearing the same date as Dr. Kasparek's letter, seems to have been dispatched together with it. At this time, Rostworowski - scion of an old and distinguished Polish family - had authored several major works in international law and was a member of the prestigious International Law Institute of the Jagiellonian University (whose Rector he would later become). He was to become heavily involved in drawing up the constitution of his country when Poland regained its independence, and during the last ten years of his life was a member of the Permanent Court of International Justice.²⁴

From the above presentation of nominations of Jan Bloch for the first Nobel peace award it can be seen that he was nominated by eminent scholars of international law and international history, a distinguished diplomat, and a leading figure of the organised peace movement. Support for him came not only from a variety of relevant professionals, but

²⁴ For a brief biography, see the entry on him by M. B. Biskupski in Warren F. Kuehl, ed., *Biographical Dictionary of Internationalists* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983, pp. 639-641).

also from a number of European countries.²⁵ It is appropriate and significant that he received strong support from within his own country, then of course still divided and without its independence. More particularly, that support came from a highly regarded Academy, and from prominent individuals at Poland's most ancient and prestigious university.

Bloch's Memorandum to the Nobel Committee

The most interesting (and intriguing) of all the nominations concerning Bloch is undoubtedly the one by Kasperek - not only because of the trouble which he took to make out a reasoned case on behalf of his candidate, but especially because of the apparent involvement of Bloch himself in the preparation of this particular nomination. In his letter, Kasperek referred to three copies of a memorandum prepared by Bloch which - together with copies of several of his publications - were submitted to the Nobel Committee. Indeed, in the Protocol for 1901 (cf. above), the entry for Kasperek makes mention of '3 machine-written [typed] copies, "Les problèmes de la Paix et le Prix Nobel". The following, pertinent, details have been added to the Protocol entry by a different hand at a later date: "This manuscript was sent by professor K. von Kostanecki, Cracow, son-in-law [of Bloch] 19.3.1902." It therefore appears that through the latter, who was a colleague of Kasperek, Bloch had his personal memorandum included in Kasperek's submission to the Nobel Committee. Two copies of this memorandum are indeed preserved in its archives and a brief description and analysis of this interesting document follows.

From the outset it should be noted that the inclusion of this memorandum, and the address it contained by its author to the Committee, did not necessarily strengthen Bloch's candidacy. The Committee tends to be weary of self-promotion.²⁶ The statutes of the Nobel Foundation state, inter alia, that "Personal applications for the award of a prize

²⁵ In view of the above, it is most surprising to read the following letter, written in 1975 by the then Director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute in answer to a query: "According to the records of the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament Jean de Bloch was never nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. His name does not appear in any of the documents in our archives from 1901 and 1902 ... There is of course a possibility that his friends intended to nominate him, but his death in January 1902 prevented them from doing so. - The library of the Norwegian Nobel Institute keeps many of the books and articles written by 'Johann von Bloch'." Tim Greve to Michael Bloch, 2nd January 1975. Letter in possession of the author.

²⁶ See, for instance, Ivar Libæk's assertion that Fredrik Bajer's "campaign for himself may have impaired his chances of being awarded the prize". *The Nobel Peace Prize*, o.c., pp. 25-27. This is a reference to the Danish peace leader's involvement in efforts to obtain the prize from the start. Elsewhere Libæk has written: "In the Nobel Institute archive, no candidate's peace work is better documented than that of Fredrik Bajer. Bajer submitted his qualifications in files ordered by year from 1864 to 1901, adding more material later." Cf. Øivind Stenersen, Ivar Libæk & Asle Sveen, *The Nobel Peace Prize: One Hundred Years for Peace* (Oslo: Cappelen, 2001, p. 59). He would eventually be successful in 1908. This book, and Irwin Abrams' *The Nobel Peace Prize and the Laureates: An illustrated biographical history 1901- 2001* (Nantucket, MA: Science History Publications, 2001) are the most thorough and reliable, as well as recent, histories of the prize.

shall not be considered”.²⁷ It seems that the two copies of the document preserved in the archives are carbon copies. They are not exactly identical as regards some of the page numbers, or the corrections made in the text, although the discrepancies are minor and few in number. One copy is, inevitably, somewhat clearer than the other. On the whole, the best copy of the document is very legible, with only a few faint pages. It is 80 pages long, written in French, and headed *Introduction. Les Problèmes de la Paix, et le Prix Nobel pour la Fraternité des Peuples et la réduction des Armées Permanentes* [The Problems of Peace, and the Nobel Prize for Fraternity among Peoples and the reduction of Standing Armies]. It was clearly compiled in some haste, and largely the result of a “cut and paste” exercise, with no attempts made to cover this up. The “seams” are also evident in the pagination: from page 16 onwards, the pages of the various sections which follow (and which originally appear to have been written for other purposes, mainly publication) have been re-numbered so as to form one continuous sequence. The document is more than presentable, despite the facts that it is lacking somewhat in uniformity, and showing many small corrections in Bloch's hand, starting with the title (where Paix Nobel was changed into Prix Nobel).

On the basis of the original pagination, it is possible to “dissect” the memorandum into several sections. Following an introduction, and his criticisms of the peace movement (referred to above), about two dozen pages are devoted to a summary of his great work and the comments its publication elicited. The reader has to wait until page 50, for the first sub-heading or title section to appear. It concerns the Lucerne museum (pp. 50-54). This is followed by a titled section on the war in the Transvaal (pp. 55-57). The next section is headed, “The reduction of service in standing armies as the first step towards their suppression” (pp. 58-68). The last heading, “Conclusions”, appears on page 68. From internal evidence it is clear that this section was written late in 1900, after the 9th Universal Peace Congress in Paris to which Bloch refers. It would seem that the memorandum is comprised of various lengthy extracts from previous publications or writings by Bloch, together with new material. A more detailed study of the memorandum, and its comparison with several of Bloch's recent publications, might shed light on its precise genealogy. We shall limit ourselves here to a consideration of the opening and concluding pages of the memorandum. They contain Bloch's justification for writing the document and shed interesting light on his ideas concerning the Nobel Peace Prize, and will be quoted at length. Bloch started his memorandum by referring to Nobel's will and quoting the relevant passage about the peace prize. He continued:

"The choice of the work to which the prize will be attributed appears at this moment when the nations are suffering from 'the folly of numbers in regards to armaments' - in the words spoken in full Parliament by Chancellor Caprivi - of enormous importance.

²⁷ See § 7 of the Statutes. They are reprinted in The Nobel Foundation, ed., *Nobel*, o.c., pp. 583-604, and have also been issued separately by the Nobel Foundation: Nobelstiftelsen, *Statutes of the Nobel Foundation* (Stockholm, 1988; the latest edition dates from 1994).

According to the will, this prize can recompense various kinds of activities but all tending to the same useful goal. Even so, the appreciation of the diverse merits can vary greatly. Therefore, the choice which will be made by the judges of the Nobel prize²⁸ is an act of some significance. It will define the general outlook of those who have been instituted as experts in the question; it will define the evaluation of the efforts which are believed to serve most fruitfully for the present and the future the will of the testator which, as we have mentioned, is to encourage the most efficient movement against the scourge of militarism. Because fraternity among peoples implies suppression or reduction of armies and the promotion of peace congresses is but one of the means to achieve the goal mentioned above.

Certainly, the instituted experts possess the highest possible competence to distinguish between the principal or the essential, and the accidental. Nevertheless, it seems that some supplementary clarifications would not be without use in view of the fact that great transformations concerning the question have occurred in recent times and continue to occur as a result of the events of the War in the Transvaal. In consequence, there has to be an absolute change in the methods of promoting the peace idea.

In order to evaluate a remedy, one must above all else recognise the way in which the illness presents itself under its new forms.

This is the reason why it is extremely difficult for individuals who have not devoted themselves during many years to specialised investigations concerning war and peace to pronounce on the question of how to know which of the goals indicated by the testator is, in the present conditions, the most important one.

Today we are not only witnessing a crisis and a transformation, but also decisive modifications in the conditions of the struggle for²⁹ the fraternity of peoples.

Should the moral-ethical side, which up to now has been at the forefront, keep its place, or should other factors replace it?

Are there no new forces which have emerged and which are in need of being protected and encouraged, given that they can counteract war, this antithesis of the fraternity of peoples, which the testator intends through his legacy?

The situation of the judges in respect of this question is all the more difficult because they can consult specialists only in a very incomplete manner.

The great majority of military [experts], as regards technical questions, has not yet had the time to shed the shackles which are keeping its mind captive. Moreover, this majority remains strangers as regards questions of an economic nature affecting war. Diplomats and leaders of political parties do not have the time to occupy themselves with these questions, and this is also true for statesmen who are in office and for governors themselves.

These are the reasons which have forced me to speak out on the question - notwithstanding the difficult position in which I have been put by the proposals of the Cracow Academy and the honourable professors who are urging you to bestow the prize on the works which I have published and on the activity which I have been able to engage in.

Ten years of work and experience have led me to the conviction that a vote by the judges on the Nobel prize can be of such an importance that it would constitute an act of treason against humanity³⁰ not to provide the clarifications which I find necessary."

Irrespective of the merits of Bloch's argument as put forward in the opening pages of his

²⁸ The original says, *paix Nobel* but this appears, as in the title of the document, to be a mistake. As noted above, Bloch corrected the mistake in the title.

²⁹ The original says 'against' but in the light of the context, including the sentence which follows, this is clearly a mistake.

³⁰ Bloch wrote *lèse-humanité* and thereby seems to have coined a most felicitous phrase (cf. p. 4).

memorandum, it has to be admitted that for the members of the Nobel Committee this might well have appeared as no more than a case of special pleading, no different from what other candidates, and those who nominated them, were engaged in at the same time. Moreover, Bloch's reservations about the expertise of the Committee members - notwithstanding his deferential and diplomatic language - might have further irritated them.

In the last pages of his concluding section, in which Bloch proposes a new strategy for the peace movement, he points out the urgency of the situation and the need to concentrate all efforts on informing public opinion about the danger which the armed peace represents and in this way exert influence on governments. When the house is on fire, he writes, there is no point sitting around philosophizing and discussing all manner of issues - except the ways to extinguish the fire. *Primo vivere!* (p. 76).

He continues: "In this work the assistance of the administrators of the Nobel prize could also be highly useful. It would be very useful if, instead of a single large prize, it were possible to establish a series of events of lesser importance, but which, precisely on account of the various ways in which they can be applied, would serve as encouragement" (p. 77). In addition, he proposes that medals are struck or certificates made to honour the most noteworthy efforts. He then makes a final observation which is worth quoting in full (pp. 78-80), and which highlights Bloch's conviction of the desperate urgency of the situation, and his single-minded pursuit of every possible avenue in order to avert impending catastrophe:

"The donation of Mr. Nobel foresees the distribution of five prizes, of which only one is for the promotion of pacifism.

Certainly the other prizes are fully justified and all workers would deserve to be honoured in the same manner as those who work for the coming of peace, if the times were not what they are. But today there is a case for establishing a difference. We have already shown how great are the dangers which are menacing the civilised world, and that a frightful catastrophe is imminent - as a result of war, or even of the armed peace. It would undermine the very foundations of the existing social order and lead us into a condition of absolute barbarity.

It so happens that the moment is extremely favourable for any kind of action against war: in the first place because the results of the Hague Conference are not remaining without effect, rather the contrary as they extend themselves daily. Also, the war in the Transvaal is providing us with the strongest arguments and, lastly, the peoples are becoming increasingly interested in the vital question of a reduction in military service. There is therefore a unique opportunity for profiting as much as possible from all those favourable conditions. For the other prizes, a similar immediate opportunity, a similar urgency does not exist, as they are only directed towards the beautiful, or abstract morality, or scientific research - most intriguing and useful but of a lesser urgency than the questions which relate to the dangers which we have drawn attention to. *Primo vivere* is an absolute principle.

Since the attribution of the prizes has been fixed once and for all, they must be distributed in accordance with the regulations. However, there is still an opportunity to direct better the efforts of peace workers and to enhance practically the importance of the prize accorded to pacifist efforts.

For this to happen it is only necessary for the judges to be convinced of the truth that the frightful seriousness of the situation has to be brought to the attention of all people, in order for their consciences to be awakened, to be educated, to become aware of the urgency of a solution - and to achieve this outcome, the novel, theatre, poetry, statistical works are very effective means.

The judges for the Nobel prize would render a great service to humanity by adjourning for some time the award for purely abstract or ideal concepts and by indicating that they appreciate and will favour those labours and research efforts which are likely to have practical consequences for combating war and its consequences.

In any case, it is to be hoped - whilst it is not possible in practice to modify the dispositions concerning the prize - it is possible, nevertheless, not to adhere to a narrow routine and to strive to include the above desiderata in the considerations accompanying the attribution of the prizes."

Bloch's arguments and proposals in these concluding pages of his long memorandum are testimony both of his strategic approach to the central question of war avoidance and of his ability to marry the imaginative and the practical. It is not surprising, however, that on this occasion his proposals were without any consequence. As regards the temporary withholding of the other prizes, this would have flatly gone against the key ideas as put forward in the founder's last will and testament. In any case, when the Memorandum was submitted, Nobel's stipulations had already been translated into practical ways and means for administering the prizes. Bloch's wish to have "peace" prevail, in one way or another, over all the prizes was equally a forlorn hope since this, too, went well beyond Nobel's own ideas. Moreover, the relative autonomy of the various prize-awarding bodies (as well as the limited authority of the Nobel Foundation to control or direct their activities) would have constituted a further impediment.

'What if ...?'

As already mentioned above, the high esteem in which Bloch was held by the leaders of the peace movement around the turn of the century suggests that he might well have become a recipient of the Nobel peace prize if he had not died prematurely. This opinion is also widespread today among those who have written about Bloch.³¹ It is the case, however, that his name was not included in the shortlist for 1901. We can only speculate

³¹ Sometimes the opinion is expressed too categorically, for instance: "His premature death prevented him receiving the Nobel Peace Prize proposed by the Polish Academy of Science." Marian Mushkat, "Jan Bloch (1836-1902)", p. 9 in *International Problems*, Vol. 26, No. 1-2 (48), 1987. This is the English summary of an article in Hebrew on "Jan Bloch and Modern Peace Research". The following statement by Walter Schnieper is pure fiction: "Bloch ... if he had not died the year before [sic], would almost certainly have been selected as the first Nobel peace prize laureate instead of Henri Dunant." "Johann von Bloch - fast Friedensnobelpreisträger", p. 41 in *Neue Luzerner Zeitung*, 8 June 2002. The section entitled "The Nobel Prize Committee remembers" in his main article "Friedensburg am Freiheitssee" in the same paper is likewise pure fabrication. This large, illustrated article appeared on the occasion of the programme commemorating the centenary of the opening of Bloch's museum in Lucerne. See also below, especially note 41.

why this is so. One factor which may well have played a significant role at this stage - the awarding of the first prize - was Bloch's status as a newcomer. Unlike the shortlisted candidates, he had not been involved in the peace movement for any length of time. The ten years which he spent researching his great work would not have counted for much in this respect. It was only after its publication in August 1898, and especially with the Hague Peace Conference commencing the following May, that his name became widely known in the peace movement and that he started to become involved in it. Bloch's career as a peace worker must inevitably have paled when compared to that of several other candidates - foremost among them, Frédéric Passy (the laureate in 1901, with Henry Dunant) who could look back on a career in the peace movement spanning more than three decades. A second, related factor was Bloch's position as an outsider. The last decade of the 19th century had witnessed the emergence of an international peace movement with annual congresses and such organisations as the International Peace Bureau and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The majority of laureates during the first decade of the prize were closely associated with these bodies and the movements they coordinated, and had been active and prominent in them during the preceding decade. This was also the world of at least some of the members of the first Norwegian Nobel Committee.³² Indeed, this was also the milieu which, through Bertha von Suttner, Nobel became somewhat familiar with and which eventually inspired him to found the peace prize.

The shortlist for 1901 contained the names of ten individual as well as three institutional candidates.³³ The individuals came from six different countries, as follows: three from Switzerland (Henry Dunant, Elie Ducommun, Charles Albert Gobat), two from Russia (Leo Tolstói, F. de Martens), two from Great Britain (W.R. Cremer, W.T. Stead), and one each from Belgium (Baron Descamps), France (Frédéric Passy), and Italy (Beniamino Pandolfi). It is perhaps surprising that the shortlist contained no representatives from the peace movement from any of the Scandinavian countries, or Austria, Germany, The Netherlands, or the USA. Five of the ten individuals included in the inaugural shortlist would become Nobel peace laureates. In fact, they did not have to wait long since they were awarded the prize within the first three years. The three institutional candidates were the Institute of International Law, the International Peace Bureau, and the Bureau of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The first two were awarded the prize in 1904 and 1910, respectively, while the last-named organisation was honoured through the award in 1902 to Gobat, its first and long-serving Secretary General.

³² For details, see Libæk, *The Nobel Peace Prize*, o.c., esp. pp. 6-8.

³³ The following details have been taken from the first of the annually printed volumes, mentioned above, which contain the confidential reports commissioned on the shortlisted candidates: Det Norske Stortings Nobelkomité, *Redegjorelse for Nobels Fredspris* [Norwegian Nobel Committee Advisers' Reports], No. 1, 1901 (Kristiania: 1902, pp. 43).

It can thus be seen that during the first decade of the existence of the prize, seven of the thirteen candidates who had appeared on the first shortlist had been awarded the prize. Inclusion in it, one may conclude, was a good predictor of future success. However, not too much importance should be attached to this factor since, for the five years comprising the period from 1905 to 1909, the prizes went to individuals whose names had not featured in the original shortlist (including, notably, Bertha von Suttner). As a result, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, and the USA (as well as Belgium and France) could also boast a Nobel peace laureate before the end of the decade. It is therefore not at all unreasonable to assert that Bloch could equally well have graced that decade's list of laureates if time had been on his side. Even so, it must be recognised that if the Committee during the first decade had wanted to honour an East European (geographical representation appearing to be a consideration, albeit secondary, in their deliberations), Bloch would have faced strong competition from the likes of Tolstoi and, especially, F. de Martens. In fact, the latter was shortlisted in each of the first four years of the prize, while Tolstoi was also shortlisted on several occasions, including during the first two years as well as for the prize in 1909, the year before his death.

That Bloch's sudden death was a great loss for the peace cause was emphasised by Bertha von Suttner in her Nobel acceptance speech, delivered in Kristiania on 18th April 1906. Indeed, she mentioned Bloch in the same breath as Nobel when she observed:

"It remains an incalculable loss to the [peace] movement that men such as Alfred Nobel, Moritz v. Egidy and Johann v. Bloch were taken from it prematurely! Although their works and activities continue beyond the grave, had they still been living in our midst, how greatly would their personal influence and the power of their work have contributed to the acceleration of the movement. With what courage would they have taken up the struggle which at this very moment is waged by militarism to keep the shaky old system going."³⁴

Concluding Observations

In the years following his death, Bloch's name was to appear in several of the detailed reports which the advisers of the Nobel Committee had prepared on shortlisted candidates. Such was the case for the reports on Bertha von Suttner (1903), on the International Peace Bureau (1904), and on Alfred H. Fried (1909) - all Nobel laureates, although not in these particular years when they were candidates and when reports on

³⁴ Bertha von Suttner, "Die Entwicklung der Friedensbewegung", pp. 1-7 in *Les Prix Nobel en 1905* (Stockholm: Impr. Royale, 1907, at p. 3). For an English translation, see "The Evolution of the Peace Movement", pp. 84-90 in Frederick W. Haberman, ed., *Nobel Lectures - Peace* (Amsterdam: Elsevier for the Nobel Foundation, 1972, Vol. 1, at p. 86).

them were drawn up.³⁵ Such references to Bloch indicate the close connections that had existed between him and these (eventually successful) candidates. Likewise, a few days after he died, Bloch's name was mentioned in a letter (dated 10th January 1902) in which Paul Henri d'Estournelles de Constant - laureate in 1909 - made his nomination for that year. His first choice was Bertha von Suttner. He also mentioned Elie Ducommun (joint-winner that year) and went on to say, "I would certainly have added to his name that of M. Jean de Bloch if that great good man [*ce grand homme de bien*] had unfortunately not died a few days ago".³⁶

Also in later years, Nobel peace laureates were to pay their respects to Bloch in their writings. Elie Ducommun, for instance, in *The Probable Consequences of a European War* - which is largely based on Bloch's work to which he makes frequent references - writes that he is making use of the researches "of thinkers and writers of note such as Jean de Bloch, Frédéric Passy, Emile Arnaud, Charles Richet, and other pioneers of the future".³⁷ In the middle of the Great War that Bloch had warned against, Alfred H. Fried noted in his diary, "Eventually, people will admit that Johann von Bloch was right and will erect monuments for him".³⁸

During the First World War, Bloch's name appeared at least on two occasions in nominations, and in a way which was not incidental but central. The statutes of the Nobel Foundation prohibit posthumous awards but Bloch would implicitly have been so honoured if the nominations which had been made on behalf of his International Museum of War and Peace in Lucerne had been successful. Dr. Bucher-Heller, a local lawyer who had supported Bloch's initiative from the beginning and who was president of the museum's governing board during the war years, nominated the museum in 1916, and again in the following year. In doing so, he unwittingly infringed the rule prohibiting self-nominations.

On 19th January 1916 he wrote to the Nobel Committee (on notepaper of the Central Committee of the Swiss Peace Society): "The undersigned, Member of the permanent commission of the International Peace Bureau in Berne, and President of the Swiss Peace Society, permits himself to propose to you: At the next award of the Nobel

³⁵ See *Redegjorelse*, No. 3, 1903, pp. 19-27; No. 4, 1904, pp. 54-60; No. 9, 1909, pp. 30-37.

³⁶ His letter, in the original French, is quoted in Peter van den Dungen, "Le Lauréat du Prix Nobel de la Paix", pp. 219-241 in Roger Durand et al, *Elie Ducommun 1833-1906* (Geneva: Association "Genève: un lieu pour la paix", 2002, at p. 228). Largely through the efforts of Roger Durand, President of the *Société Henry Dunant* in Geneva, the centenaries of the award of the Nobel peace prize to its native citizens Dunant and Ducommun have been celebrated in a major way, demonstrating at the same time how such anniversaries can be used to promote a culture of peace.

³⁷ London: International Arbitration and Peace Association, 1906, p. 5. It appeared in several languages.

³⁸ Alfred H. Fried, *Mein Kriegs-Tagebuch* (Zurich: Max Rascher Verlag, Vol. II, 1919, p. 345). The erection of a monument in central Warsaw is one of the aims of the Jean de Bloch Society (Towarzystwo Jana Gotliba Blocha) in Warsaw. Its President, Dr. Andrzej Werner, reports on the progress of this and other issues in the occasional *Bloch's International Newsletter* (the 15th issue of which appeared in August 2003).

Peace prize you could perhaps give an award to the International War and Peace Museum in Lucerne". He added that for the moment he sent the proposal without motivation since he feared that the sending of it, together with supporting documents, would not reach the Committee before the submission date – "given the present obstacles affecting correspondence owing to the unfortunate war".³⁹

On the 16th February of the following year he wrote, "the undersigned permits himself again this year to mention the International War and Peace Museum (Jean de Bloch Foundation) for the Nobel Prize". This time, Bucher-Heller made it very clear in his letter why he was seeking the prize for his institution: "We would greatly regret if the monument, established by the late Councillor of State Johann von Bloch, would cease to exist because of a lack of support on the part of peace movement organisations. As a result of the war, it is in a very precarious situation, and the Museum's administrative council will be forced to initiate its liquidation if no means for the maintenance of the museum are forthcoming by the autumn of 1917." Since this nomination was made after the 1st February submission date, it was not considered for the prize that year and was entered in the list of nominations for the following year.⁴⁰

On both occasions, Bucher-Heller's nomination failed to make the shortlist. In 1916, 6 candidates were shortlisted from a full list comprising 23 candidates. In 1918, 13 candidates were shortlisted, the full list containing 20 names. As is well known, no award was made during the war years, 1914-1918, with the exception of the award to the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1917.⁴¹ The nomination of the Museum during the war years was therefore particularly inauspicious, even though it must be

³⁹ See *Redegjorelse*, 1916, p. 9, entry no. 17. This entry in the list of institutions which had been nominated for the 1916 prize reads: "International War and Peace Museum in Lucerne (founded by Bloch)". A short biography of Franz Bucher-Heller by Urs Zwahlen is in Helmut Donat & Karl Holl, eds., *Die Friedensbewegung: Organisierter Pazifismus in Deutschland, Österreich und in der Schweiz* (Düsseldorf: ECON Taschenbuch Verlag - Hermes Handlexikon, 1983, p. 59. For details of his involvement with the museum, see Delf Bucher et al, *Friedenstauben und Krupp-Kanonen: 100 Jahre Internationales Kriegs- und Friedensmuseum Luzern* (Lucerne: LABA, 2002, esp. pp. 23-25, 28-30, 54).

⁴⁰ See *Redegjorelse*, 1918, p. 9, entry no. 15. We have not yet had an opportunity to consult the letter of motivation as well as supporting documents which Bucher-Heller had sent in 1916, and to which he refers the Committee in his second letter.

⁴¹ It can be regretted that Bucher-Heller's plea remained unanswered, and that Bloch's pioneering institution failed to survive the war. For a history, see the present author's 'The International Museum of War and Peace at Lucerne', pp. 185-202 in *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte/Revue Suisse d'Histoire/Rivista Storica Svizzera*, Vol. 31, 1981. It has recently been translated into Japanese by Chikara Tsuboi and published in Sapporo Gakuin University's journal *Jinbungakkai Kiyō/Journal of the Society of Humanities* (No. 68, September 2000, pp. 91-101 [part 1] and No. 69, March 2001, pp. 91-102 [part 2]). The same journal also published an article by Tsuboi entitled "The Reconstruction of the International Museum of War and Peace in Lucerne: A Visual Approach" (No. 67, March 2000, pp. 93-109, in Japanese). Bloch's lonely innovative effort at public peace education at the start of the twentieth century has been followed by the establishment of many peace museums in Japan after World War II. In June 2002, the centenary of the inauguration of the Lucerne museum was celebrated by a commemorative programme in the city consisting of an exhibition, academic symposium, unveiling of a plaque, war and peace film festival, and historical walk. Cf. "Jan Bloch's Peace Museum in Lucerne Remembered", pp. 4-5 in *Newsletter* of the International Network of Peace Museums, No. 15, October 2002.

admitted that it would never have been a strong contender, given the competition.

It is also of interest to recall here the high esteem in which Bloch was held by Ragnvald Moe, the long-serving secretary of the Norwegian Nobel Committee and director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute (1909-1947). In 1932 he published a valuable study of the peace movement since 1896 under the title “The Nobel Peace Prize and the Norwegian Nobel Institute”.⁴² The author paid homage to Bloch's “vast compilation, in six volumes”. Rather too enthusiastically, he continued that “it had been translated and published in full in all the world languages” (p. 124). (There is only a one-volume summary edition in English). Moe wrote: “The predictions of Bloch, based on studies by military experts and in part, moreover, corresponding to the ideas of Alfred Nobel, have been cruelly confirmed by the war of 1914.”⁴³

Those predictions were unique, and unparalleled in their grounding in empirical data and the consequences which Bloch deduced from them. His monumental study of future war, involvement in the 1899 Hague Peace Conference, and creation of the Lucerne museum are all testimony to Bloch's genius. The fact that these great achievements neither prevented World War I nor were crowned with the inaugural Nobel peace prize does not in any way diminish their significance.

⁴² *Le Prix Nobel de la Paix et l'Institut Nobel Norvégien* (Oslo: H. Aschehoug). The study is perhaps one of the first to offer interesting statistical data on the prize. He indicates, for instance, that in the period 1901-1930, those authorised to do so had nominated 332 different candidates, of which 274 were individuals - including a mere 13 women - and 58 institutions and organisations. Among the individuals were five Poles. At this time, about 770 letters inviting nominations were sent annually. See pp. 78-82.

⁴³ Moe, *Le Prix Nobel*, o.c., p. 125. See also the comments on Moe and Bloch in an excellent article in which Hans Wehberg surveyed the peace movement before the outbreak of war in 1914: “Die Friedensbewegung vor dem Ausbruch des Weltkrieges”, pp. 321-328 in *Die Friedens-Warte*, Vol. 32, November 1932, esp. pp. 322-323. Wehberg writes that more than anyone else at the time, Bloch had emphatically stressed the risk of any war for all participants.

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