A Woman's Hand in

The Fight for World Peace

by Elizabeth Brann

THE conversation at dinner in the dormitory that night centered on the Lindbergh case. Was Hauptmann innocent or guilty? Everyone had an opinion, and for a while ran som notes, wooden ladders and gold certificates were the main topics of interest. Eventually the talk drifted around to our friend Huey from Louisiana, and more opinions flowed freely.

Then, during a pause, the girl who had evidently just read the newspaper before coming down said, "Does anyone know anything about this munitions investigation?"

One person thought there had been some headlines about it in the papers last fall—but what she couldn't remember. Another one said she had slept through a ten-minute discourse on it in public speaking class.

And current events were about to be discarded in favor of Saturday night's formal, when someone else said, "Did you all know that it was a woman who started the ball rolling in this munitions inquiry?"

Here was something interesting! Women weren't generally supposed to let the political problems of the nations rest on masculine shoulders? Everyone was anxious to hear more.

"I'm no authority on the subject," the speaker continued, "for all I know about it is a few facts I've picked up here and there from the papers and periodicals. But it is something so important and far-reaching that governments all over the world have been stirred up by what has been carried on in one room of the Senate Office Building in Washington." And she went on to say it was an American woman who struck the match that kindled the fires in international diplomatic circles.

Mrs. Estelle M. Sternberger, whose official title is executive director of World Peaceways, an international peace organization, is the person at whose door the responsibility can be laid. It was she who persuaded Senator Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota to use his influence towards an investigation by the United States Senate. Senator Nye was at first reluctant to undertake the job, for he knew that such an action was entirely lacking in public interest, and that it would encounter enormous opposition.

But that was where Mrs. Sternberger came in. She believed the most practical way to avoid war is to drag into the open everything that works against world peace and expose it for the education of the public. Her organization had in its possession any number of startling confidential reports about the munitions industries. So it spread its propaganda—through the magazines, the papers, the pulpit, the public schools, and the radio.

And the people were interested. Washington mail men would carry huge sacks of mail from all over the country to the congressional chambers daily. Thousands of inquiries asking what was being done were received with the result that the Senate appropriated the funds to finance an investigation of this extremely profitable business of manufacturing and selling war munitions.

Under Senator Nye's determined leadership, the investigation has covered much harrowed ground since last Sept. 8 when the distinguished senate committee filed into caucus room in the Senate Office Building where many other startling revelations of private graft and greed have been made known to the outside world.

The sum and substance of the inquiry to date is simply this: Munition firms of different nations have been guilty of practicing international pooling, and have cooperated with each other in dividing the world into zones, selling government designs to any commercial firms that would buy, and splitting the profits. Certain parties have even been guilty of specific South American controversies of catering to both participants. And Germany, in direct violation of the Versailles treaty, has not found it difficult to obtain war instruments.

The Du Pont case is an example of what the committee has found all the way around. The Du Pont Company during the recent World War took in $1,250,000,000 with a profit of $250,000,000. They also admitted that they had in their employment during that period an international spy. And Irene Du Pont attempts to defend himself and his three partners with the fact that if it hadn't been for the Du Pont company, the United States would now be a German colony. The Du Pont brothers are not anxious for a plan to end war profits.

Other American manufacturers are not resting easily, either, these days. And what an uproar it has raised among the other Powers. Senator Nye has had his hands full in attempting to smooth the ruffled feathers of international official plumage. When it was revealed that even King George with the Prince of Wales had had a hand in the indiscriminate sale of British munitions, he spent several anxious moments in explaining to the British government that the object of the investigation was to disclose—not to offend.

Graft is an ugly business, but Senator Nye is intent on doing a thorough job. The investigation is not over, even though President Roosevelt has already appointed another committee to draw up a plan to control the arms industry. This, he assures the press, has nothing whatever to do with preparedness.

Both France and England have announced similar investigations of their arms industries for this year. And the munitions problem will be taken up by the league of nations in the next assembly.

Notice the costumes worn by the waitresses at the Farm and Home visitors Dutch Chocolate! Black dresses, Dutch caps and black trays filled with Sniffer cakes, lace and Dutch cookies made up their equipment. The white, gaily-decorated aprons worn over the black dresses were made by the girls in Miss O'Bryan's Textile Design class. These girls used their own batik designs and free hand painted in tempera red, green and yellow to achieve a gay peasant effect. Designs applied in two hours could be washed out in a few minutes!

A striped cloth with an unexpected diagonal stripe through the center makes an effective, bizarre table. 