

POWER

in

International Government

by

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AMONG those fighting totalitarian aggression no dissenting voice can be heard as to the necessity for a new effort in the direction of international organization. Even among the Tory refugees, the conservative politicians in exile, no group or outstanding individual can be found advocating a return to the pre-1914 policies of alliance and power alignment. This is, however, about all on which agreement is general.

As soon as one proceeds from generalities to the concrete questions, the cleavage appears. There are those who still believe that a kind of League of Nations without any coercive attributes is about the best arrangement men can hope for. There are those who advocate an improved League, leaving, however, its essential characteristics untouched. This body of opinion has the most impressive rostrum of adherents and advocates; most of the former League officials belong to it and the great majority of the teachers of international law and international affairs at American universities. Moreover, there are theoretical regionalists or *de facto* regionalists, like the adherents of Federal Union. Most of the federalists are regionalists, but not all regionalists are federalists. There exists an infinite number of variations and combinations of opinion. A serious

"It was, in truth, an attempt to make a middle way where there was no room for a middle way, to effect a compromise between two things which do not admit of a compromise, resistance and non-resistance."

—MACAULAY

attempt must be made first to clarify fundamentals and then to find a common ground if possible. For we must realize that our speculations may have a considerable influence upon the concrete shape of the future international order, as similar speculations in the years 1916-17 had upon the shaping of the League of Nations Covenant.

An obstacle to the clarification of the fundamental questions is to be found in a false sentimentality for the League of Nations. Exaggerated importance is attached by some of the most genuine adherents of a stable international order to the legal survival of the League of Nations, to the continuity of international organization. We are told that so and so many people are still employed by the League, that so and so many countries retain their membership, that certain League services are still functioning, certain studies still being continued. No possible objection could be taken to such statements were they not accompanied by a kind of pathetic pride that the League was still operative and its machinery ready for the major tasks of international administration.

The League has failed, and it has not failed only because of the ill will of the countries and the weakness and lack of courage of the majority of the statesmen. It has failed also be-

cause of some constitutional defects inherent in the League of Nations Covenant. If we seriously wish to prepare the ground for a workable international machine, we must get away from the patterns of the recent past. We must begin thinking and arguing from scratch.

The Covenant is the typical product of Protestant Anglo-Saxon psychology as applied to international affairs. This has more fatally determined the fate of the first great experiment in international government than is usually recognized. It has decisively influenced the role assigned to power in the international organization of 1920 and with this the most important single factor in the success of international government. It has sometimes been asserted that the League Covenant suffered from an undervaluation of the power-factor in international affairs. This is not quite correct. The tragic defect lies not in an underestimation of power as such, but in a pathetic belief in the effectiveness of a certain type of power; not in a misinterpretation of the role of power used, but of the place to which it should be strategically applied in international government.

The Covenant is based upon the axiomatic belief that moral forces would prevail in any future international crisis. It is this over-emphasis on the decisive character of moral sanctions against technical organization of collective security which constitutes the fatal weakness of the Geneva system. Those responsible for the drafting of the Covenant believed that aggression had been so utterly compromised by the World War 1914-18 that no country would possibly revert again to it in our era. If contrary to all rational probability, any country were to embark again upon a policy of aggression, public opinion would so violently react against the statesmen responsible for such policies that the intended aggression could not be consummated. If, nevertheless, a country were to revert to aggression, public opinion of all the other countries would automatically line up against the aggressor. There would inevitably be a common front of all peace loving humanity; the aggression would be overwhelmingly crushed. The whole group of articles of the Covenant, X-XVI, dealing with this contingency, rests upon such hypothesis. It explains the comparatively slight importance which men like Wilson and Cecil (to take the two chief exponents of the psychology of Geneva) attributed to the question of sovereignty, to hard and fast advance-rules govern-

ing the League in a crisis, to the automatism of sanctions. Since they believed in a common endeavor to crush the would-be-aggressor, they saw no primordial necessity of any advance cession of sovereignty.

II

THE Anglo-Saxon group of statesmen in Paris, having desperately fought for the creation of the League, having overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles, naturally assumed that the people of the world would enthusiastically and gratefully hail the new peace machinery. They simply could not understand the lukewarm reception which the new creation encountered. They had believed that they were implementing the dreams of the anonymous millions in all the countries, and they found France cynical, though appreciative; Italy friendly in a noncommittal way; most of the other Allies politely complimentary; but hardly anyone enthusiastic, with the sole exception, perhaps, of Czechoslovakia which considered itself duty-bound to salute the League in gratitude to Wilson. Moreover, the statesmen resented the fact that the League was greeted with thinly veiled enmity on the part of the Germans, even by those passionately devoted to the idea of a future peaceful collaboration of the nations. They had naively assumed that Germany would consider the League as the chief extenuating factor of the peace settlement. A Gallup poll, undertaken in the first post-war years, would have shown a most puzzling indifference to the League.

What was the reason for such scepticism? It was by no means due to a dislike of international co-operation or to an unwillingness to participate in international government. It was due rather to the instinctive feeling that the League somehow would not work. The eudaemonism underlying the Covenant, its lack of clearcut prescriptions for action and for sanctions in case of non-co-operation was contrary, not only to the instincts, but to all individual and collective experience of the European nations, and not the European nations alone. The psychology of the Covenant was alien and even puzzling to those who were to be the majority of its members. By its underlying confidence in moral sanctions it presupposed a public opinion active and decisive in international affairs. This hardly existed in England and was non-existent in the majority

of countries, including the European democracies. Even in an indisputably democratic country like France, public opinion in international affairs was far more a correlative of governmental action than in any Anglo-Saxon country. In the majority of countries, however, public opinion was directed from above to an extent that neither Cecil nor Wilson could possibly conceive, for their own political experiences at home afforded them no means whereby this could be gauged. For most nations the League was like a well-meant gift, the giver of which is convinced that it is ardently desired by the recipient, the latter unwilling and unable to show his disappointment to the influential donor.

The attitude, therefore, was one of wait-and-see. Success or failure would obviously depend upon the degree to which the two Anglo-Saxon world powers would identify their policies with the League. The early abstention of America was the first blow. It soon became evident that Great Britain was not prepared to direct or determine the actions of the League except in a negative sense. This passive attitude of expectation on the part of the majority of the League members must by no means be confounded with active antagonism. Most countries, including the Germany of 1925-30 were resolved to make the best of it. The League having been created, no possible hope for a radical recasting could be entertained as even minor amendments were practically excluded by a cumbersome procedure of revision. All the good will existing, therefore, was bound to flow in the direction of the new agency. This potential good will was tremendous and it had to find an outlet. No wonder that it crystallized around the only body created for this special purpose. These were the days when Geneva leaped into a bewildering variety of activities in the political, social, economic, and health fields. Instead of interpreting this as a proof of the existence of an accumulation of good will, the League crusaders saw in it a proof of the excellence of the League itself.

III

AT least part of the peace failure of 1919-39 is attributable to the League itself. I am taking as example the episode gravest in consequences, the Ethiopian tragedy. Here was a clear case of aggression, committed by a regime, a country

as nearly morally isolated as any can and ever will be. All, or nearly all the prerequisites of successful action on behalf of the League were assembled in rare completeness. The Covenant contained in Article XVI stipulations for such a case. The sanctions machinery actually was set into action. It failed. Not because of the unwillingness of the British to apply oil sanctions and the noncommittal attitude of America, not even because of Laval's thinly veiled treachery, much as this had to do with the final outcome. It failed chiefly because of the inadequacy of the stipulations of the Covenant. In spite of hesitations by London, Paris, and Washington, the smaller countries, especially Italy's neighbors and satraps, overwhelmingly desired to stop Italy in Ethiopia. This was not because of Ethiopia by any means. The country meant little or nothing to most of the nations eager to thwart Italy. Its territorial integrity was Hecuba to them. Its sovereignty did not worry the man in the street in Bucharest, Madrid, Sofia, and Belgrade. But there was a violent antagonism against the fascist spirit of aggression. What they feared was the possibility of successful aggression leading to an unwanted increase in the prestige and power of the aggressor. The whole existence of these states was at stake if any aggression were to be successful in Europe.

These countries were, therefore, ready for a collective action, including if need be, military sanctions, but they were not prepared to take any individual responsibility. The Covenant, unfortunately, left each country a free agent in its decision. They simply could not afford to be individually responsible to the aggressor; moreover, the necessity of individual decision made them subject to blackmail, or opened up vistas of profits from individual bargaining. A system of automatic collective sanctions would have saved them all these troubles. They would have been protected by their collectivity. They would not have faced Rome; Rome would have faced the League. The stipulations of the Covenant reflected the inability of those responsible for its constitution to envisage in practical terms the mechanism of international psychology in a critical situation.

The above is based on the assumption that Italy would have fought, even if the net of sanctions had been more closely woven. In all probability this would not have been the case. Stipulations of automatic, progressively stringent sanctions would, in practice, act in

themselves as a formidable deterrent to aggression. The other alternative, that the powers would not have declared Italy an aggressor if this committed them to compulsory sanctions, would have been extremely regrettable, but it would not have been half as disastrous as sanctions which peter out. It would have implied the cynical abandonment of Ethiopia; it would have shown that the guarantee of territorial integrity contained in Article X of the League was highly problematic; but it would not have shaken to the ground the whole concept of collective security.

IV

WHERE, then, is a way out of the vicious circle constituted by potential aggression, potential collective defense, and failure of collective security? Certainly not in a mere revision of the Covenant, consisting in the suppression of the unanimity rule, in the creation of an international police force, in an amendment of the revision clause embodied in the famous Article XIX, in the compulsory intervention of a Court of International Justice. Whatever improvement this may constitute, it would no more safeguard peace than did the old League. The essential weakness, the placing of confidence in moral sanctions when the functioning of public opinion remains uncertain, would not be abolished. Such a League would still be an attempt to compromise between "resistance and non-resistance". The much-advocated plan of "putting teeth" into the League would invite a new disaster. Force would still be placed in an ex-centric position and not in the center of the future machinery, and thus it would likely be wasted.

The way out is to recognize that international organization must be transformed into international government. An international agency, in order to function in an emergency, must have a power of its own, in advance delegated by the component parts for this purpose and in itself sufficient to crush, if necessary, a maximum of ill will on the part of the greatest number of its members. This can only be achieved if the universal machine is split up in regional bodies. International government can only succeed if its territorial range is limited to such a region or regions as can be effectively controlled by the permanent power at its disposal. This is possible in a federation, if the whole military power is pooled and vested in a central agency. Any

agency whose states retain their military sovereignty and their liberty of action, and only promise *ad hoc* contingents is uncertain in its efficiency. The international agency's size must, therefore, be directly proportionate to the number and size of the countries who are prepared to invest it with full military power. It is, under present circumstances, out of the question, that all the important states of the globe would be prepared to make such sacrifice, even if the United States should come out of the present conflict sufficiently shaken to participate in such a body. But who would be bold enough to assume that the USSR would forego its military autonomy in favor of a majority of capitalist states? That the Latin American countries would voluntarily bind themselves in such a manner? A universal agency cannot at present be also a coercive body. World anarchy will certainly not, in the political and diplomatic field, disappear tomorrow even if this war is fought and won on a planetary basis. The world is not ripe for planetary action in the political field.

What can be controlled are regions, sectors, continents, and territories bound together by some sort of geographical, economic, national, social, spiritual bonds. Europe is one of these regions. It is still the key to the pacification of the world. Europe, not Russia and not Asia, has twice plunged the world into worldwide conflicts within one generation. If Europe can be successfully pacified, one of the chief permanent sources of wars will automatically disappear.

The first question is, of course, why Europe should be considered a unity. It is neither so in an ethnological nor an economic sense. Moreover, it seems psychologically disunited beyond repair. Yet, in spite of the permanent divisions, Europe is essentially one, over and above its violent antagonisms. It is one in its outlook and what the Germans call "*Lebensgefühl*." There is a deep cleavage between the Germans and the majority of the other European nations, but this cleavage is offset by deeper spiritual common traits. If the end of the present conflict brings about the expected collapse of totalitarianism, the common denominator for all things European will reassert itself.

Unable to create a universal enforcement machine, the victors will be forced into organizing Europe as a unit, if for no other reason, in order to escape the necessity of occupying great parts of Europe for an indefinite

period. There are a thousand reasons why the Europeans will never be able to undertake this for themselves. There are a thousand equally valid reasons to believe that, once this step has been enforced upon them, the inhabitants of Europe will do everything to make it work. It is the kind of step they want to have forced upon them from the outside, preferably by America.

Such a European federation, which is the only practical way to neutralize German aggressiveness and to divert the great German qualities to positive endeavors, would imply a central authority with military and economic power. Europe is not too large to make an effective control by its own forces impossible. Once established, the common bonds will assert themselves so overwhelmingly that no power inside or outside will be in a position to destroy the new status. Into the creation of an European federation and perhaps of similar regional organizations in other parts of the world should go the major portion of the creative efforts aiming at pacification of the world.

V

A WORLD organization will certainly be created after this war. It would, however, be dangerous to attempt, as far as political affairs are concerned, anything more ambitious than a purely consultative body.* Such universal machinery will not be able to safeguard or guarantee peace. There must be no guarantees

of territorial integrity; there must be no sanction paragraphs, as there will be no possibilities to enforce sanctions on a world plane; there must be no compulsory jurisdiction, as there would be no policeman to compel the execution. Never must there be again a steep, downward grade of the kind which led from the Manchurian aggression, to the Ethiopian debacle, and to the World War. There must never be belief in security where there is no security, paper guarantees where there are no ready sanctions, hope where all the odds are against its consummation. There is one mortal sin in international organization—the creation of a false sense of security. Better nothing than make-believe. The world will be in a better position to defend itself against dangers it knows, it expects, and it fears, than against the danger of self-deception created by an agency based purely on moral sanctions. The world must never again tread on the thin ice of illusion.

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*The world having become a *de facto* unity in the so-called non-political field, I firmly believe in the possibility of world-wide technical agencies and control. The anti-narcotic work of the League of Nations shows what potentialities of international government exist, without constituting in itself the maximum of what can probably be achieved immediately after the present war. It seems likely that the states will be prepared to make *ad hoc* sacrifices of small sectors of their sovereign rights for specific purposes in clearly determined technical fields. My scepticism regarding planetary action should clearly be understood as applying exclusively to the diplomatic and political sphere, not to international activities in the fields of health and transportation.

IN the interests of the fullest possible discussion of the vital problems of post-war world organization, we present the essay of Mr. Ranshofen-Wertheimer although we are in almost total disagreement with its thesis. Mr. Ranshofen-Wertheimer's article is the typical expression of a purely legalistic and mechanistic conception of international relations. Its lack of faith in the ability of society to establish a properly functioning structure for collective security is due in a great measure to the fact that he ignores the profound influence which the conditions of the last twenty years have exerted upon the thoughts of men. Similarly, his conclusion that the future world organization must be a consultative body is due to the fact that he attributes the failure of the League of Nations to its constitutional defects, whereas it was due to the disregard of its constitutional provisions by those who were pledged to uphold and implement them, as well as to the crisis in internal and international democracy.