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## FEDERAL ILLUSION?

*By the Same Author*

LIGHT ON MOSCOW  
MUST THE WAR SPREAD ?

# *F E D E R A L I L L U S I O N ?*

**AN EXAMINATION OF  
THE PROPOSALS FOR  
FEDERAL UNION**

*by*

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## CHAPTER I

### · INTRODUCTORY

THERE is in Britain, except among the most thoughtless, a feeling of catastrophe. This feeling is natural enough and was not in any way lessened by the unexpected military stagnation and the absence of intensive bombing of great cities like London which marked the early months of the present war.

It is clear that the basis of that feeling lies not in any startling or spectacular events but in the general worsening of all the material and at least some of the spiritual conditions of life, and in the gloom and uncertainty with which the future is surrounded.

Resulting from this feeling of catastrophe, of the impending doom of the civilisation in which we have been born and brought up, there comes another feeling, of longing for a miraculous deliverance from the endless threat or presence of war. There is no one in the black-out or in the trenches who does not look forward to a world whence war and its associated evils shall be banished for ever. Those who, after going through the war of 1914-18, now see successive age groups from 1920 back to the beginning of the century being called up for the armed forces, contemplate with despair and horror the thought of a third or a fourth generation being successively sacrificed to

a third or a fourth world war. There is growing up a real yearning, an insistent demand, for permanent peace.

All the statesmen in the world, in whose power lies the actual decision to make war, praise peace and put it in the foreground of their programme ; no one but Signor Mussolini has a kind word to say for war. Even Japanese militarism, originator of the war that has now spread through three countries of Europe, was wont to explain through its spokesmen of the Tokio Foreign Office that its actions in China were conditioned by its longing for peace. Similarly, since the war spread to Europe, statesmen in their speeches have been careful to insist on their detestation of war and the need of early peace, though they may disguise it in such ambiguous forms as "the war should not last a day longer than is necessary."

#### PEACE, PERMANENT OR TRANSITORY

In any discussion of the means of securing peace, it is as well to be clear about the meaning to be given to the word "peace." The truce or uneasy interval between wars which is all that statesmen and diplomats can give us in these days is fundamentally different from the permanent peace which means that there shall be no more war. I propose to call peace of the kind to which we have grown accustomed of late "transitory peace," and to apply the name of "permanent peace" to the true peace which we mean to achieve.

The present spokesmen of either Britain or

France or Germany conceive of the peace to which they aspire as first of all military victory, compelling the enemy to sue for an armistice, followed by treaty dictation, prize distributions, reparations, and political and strategic safeguards against an early resumption of war. This is but a transitory peace, very different from permanent peace, from the removal of the causes of war; and the distinction must always be kept in mind. For nowadays the advocates of transitory peace frequently try to represent themselves as capable of achieving permanent peace, and seek thus to get the support of those whose longings and aspirations are utterly opposed to war.

This is roughly what happened in the last war, where the clear-cut distinction between the true and the false peace was smeared over, only to be clearly realised by everybody a few years too late. The "Big Five" at Versailles, Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, Signor Orlando, and Marquis Saionji, put themselves forward (albeit with some reluctance on the part of Clemenceau and still greater reluctance on the part of the Japanese) as the apostles of permanent peace. The warmongers in a trice became the peace-mongers.\*

In the tragic circumstances of to-day men are apt to accept eagerly any honest proposals for the achievement of permanent peace, and to welcome them as a real remedy, without testing their

\* A well-known fable of English history can serve as an illustration. When the clash between the interests and aspirations of peasants and landlords reached its climax in the Revolt of 1381, it was the representative of the landlords, King Richard, who spurred his horse forward and said to the peasants, "I will myself be your leader."

validity. They let their critical faculties give way to their longings. This is natural enough, but it is extremely dangerous, for the adoption of false or inadequate remedies will delay the coming of permanent peace and lead the world into worse chaos and further wars.

And there is an additional element of danger in the fact that many people, sincerely anxious to arrive at permanent peace, are at the same time extremely reluctant—however mistakenly—to accept Socialism. Any proposal which appears to them to offer permanent peace without Socialism therefore has a double claim, a double chance of uncritical acceptance, and must for that reason be studied with the greatest care and objectivity.

No proposal, accordingly, should be recognised or adopted unless on a critical examination it proves practicable, that is, capable of being set up and maintained, and capable of achieving permanent peace when it has been set up. A proposal which cannot pass such a test is a dangerous illusion; and it may indeed be worse, for however sincere its advocates may be it is only too likely to be used as a smoke-screen by the old diplomacy, to cover secret treaties, pacts or alliances directed against other powers, schemings for balance of power, or any other of the international operations which have assisted in causing so many wars in the past.

But given these cautions, the agitation for permanent peace is to be welcomed. It would be a sad commentary on the development of the human race if we were to assume that there is no reasonable prospect of ending war. The con-

ception of an ordered world from which war shall have been banished for ever has been coming ever more to the front in modern history : and in this century, despite its terrible bloodshed, and perhaps in part through that bloodshed, the conception may well become an accomplished fact.

#### OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO THE FUTURE

Let our children or our grandchildren look back on us as the men and women who, confronted with the need of thought and action at a vital moment in history, soberly and carefully considered every means that might end the evil days and finally chose the means that led to the ordered and peaceful world in which they will be living.

The main purpose of this book is to examine the proposals which have recently achieved popular notice and favour under the title of "Federal Union," and to see whether they do or do not show the true road to permanent peace. These proposals are not new in essence, but they were re-launched in a new form over a year ago, in time of transitory peace, and have been brought prominently before the general reading public in a book entitled *The Case for Federal Union*, written by the well-known educationist, Mr. W. B. Curry. In examining the Federal Union proposals, I shall deal chiefly but not exclusively with Mr. Curry's book, but I would not like to be thought of as merely writing an "attack" on Mr. Curry or his book. I would be only too happy if I could find myself accepting his or any other proposals as a royal road to permanent peace, and I reject them

after careful study only because I am convinced that the roots of war—of that appalling orgy of cruelty, misery and waste which almost everybody abominates and almost everybody carries on—are too tough to be torn from the ground by proposals which leave our main economic structure undisturbed.

It is possible, I think, to begin by stating Mr. Curry's thesis, in bare but accurate outline, in the form of a syllogism, thus :

Wars continue because of state sovereignty, *i.e.*, of the existence of a number of rival states each completely sovereign and independent ;

Federal Union will abolish state sovereignty ;

Therefore, Federal Union will abolish war.

(The doctrine of "state sovereignty" is in essence this, that each state is a "law unto itself," completely independent of external control, owing no duty or allegiance to any outside power, and deciding for itself all questions of its own conduct as a state.)

I shall have to study the Federal Union proposals, as advanced by Mr. Curry, in greater detail in Chapter VI, but the essence of them is contained in the above syllogism, and the general thesis can be outlined briefly at this stage.

Mr. Curry argues that science and invention have made world order imperative, and that "without it we can have neither peace nor freedom, neither happiness nor prosperity." He holds that a "world community" in the shape of a World Federation, with an elected world parliament, would achieve this end, even with the existing economic system basically unchanged.

"The two main principles" of the movement, it is said in an article in the *World Review*, the organ of the Federal Union Club, are "that there must be an international legislature, and that members of this legislature must be elected by and responsible to the peoples concerned."

"FUNDAMENTALS OF WORLD ORDER"

Mr. Curry states certain "fundamentals of world order," that is, certain functions of government that must be taken away from the existing sovereign states and transferred to a World Federation. Among the various theoretically possible forms of such a Federation, he argues for the superiority of a federal form of world organisation over either the league form or "the super-state." Finally he gives, for purposes of discussion, a worked-out scheme and draft constitution, based on the Constitution of the United States of America.

In any considerations of such proposals as these it would be a mistake to start as though proposals for an organised world were a new thing, unrelated to the past. If we did that, we should find ourselves treading paths already explored by previous generations, without any guidance from their pioneer work or, it may be, from their errors. I propose, therefore, to examine first the historical background of attempts to eliminate war in the period up to 1914, then to go in some detail into the plans and programmes of 1914-18, and the practical performances that followed, including the League of Nations; and lastly to deal with the plans, the prospects, and the difficulties of the present and the future.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL

THE view is commonly held and expressed that war is an obsolete and antiquated method of settling disputes between nations, that it is something surviving from

“ . . . old, unhappy far-off things  
And battles long ago,”

a vestige of feudal days which modern society happens to have not yet discarded. This view is in my opinion wrong, and may lead to grave error, for to think of war as something in any way obsolete or antiquated is to underestimate the gravity of the struggle and effort necessary to get rid of this very up-to-date phenomenon. Wars have kept pace with the development of the modern industrial state. They are horribly modern. The proportionate place they occupy in the life and work of the state and of society is larger, and their destructiveness is much greater, than at most periods of which we have knowledge in the last five hundred years ; so, too, are the virulence and intensity of the evils that bring them about.

Much stress, as will be seen later in this book, is laid by the advocates of Federal Union on independent state sovereignty as causally connected with war. If this were correct, it would



incidentally demonstrate that war is far from being a feudal survival, for it was only with the breakdown of feudalism, and the break-up of the mediæval empire and papacy, that any great importance came to be attributed to state sovereignty. The growth of modern nations and of the modern sovereign state is a matter of the last few hundred years.

It is indeed true to say that there existed in the hierarchic structure of society in the Middle Ages a theoretical basis for permanent peace—though confined to Christendom and drawing its frontiers at Islam and the countries of the heathen—and that it was the growth of the comparatively new national states with their cannibal propensities that shattered the earlier order of Christendom. I have described at length in another book (*Must the War Spread?*) both the very low moral standard prevailing in the relations of modern states, and the true nature of the modern industrial state, and have explained that in such states true power resides to-day in the narrow group of masters of finance and industry, who control the very existence of the working-class masses to whom they concede—or from whom they withhold—even the means of livelihood.

#### THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE

Here I need only remark that, while the early growth of these modern conditions can be traced back to a little before the time of Shakespeare, it is especially in the last century and a half that we

have seen them growing more and more mature. What I may call the cannibal propensities of modern industrial states in this last period were solemnised by the philosophy of "the state as an end in itself," with the relations between states governed by "the law of the jungle." This philosophy received expression in the writings of Hegel, whose outlook was not by any means confined to Prussia, but was represented in one or another form in practically all our universities in this present century. Hegel put it both clearly and comprehensively :

"With regard to the relations of States among themselves, their sovereignty is the basic principle ; they are in that respect in the state of nature in relation to one another, and their rights are not realised in a general rule which is so constituted as to have power over them but their rights are realised only through their particular wills."

It was also expressed in the standpoints of jurists and was a familiar conception of diplomacy.

Yet precisely during this last century and a half there has been growing side by side with this cannibalism a conception of world unity and of such a community of interest of mankind as might supersede the warring states and usher in permanent peace. For example, Emanuel Kant, founder of German classical philosophy, published almost a century and half ago his plan "for Perpetual Peace" to be attained through an all-inclusive world Federation of Republics with world citizenship ; and at that same time, in the midst of the French Revolution, Anacharsis Clootz advocated a universal Republic. Tennyson

expressed this conception in what used to be an oft-quoted distich :

“ Till the war-drum throb’d no longer, and the battle-  
flags were furl’d  
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.”

What gave rise to this conception of world unity ? Somewhat paradoxically, it was very largely that train of developments of which the modern industrial state is the outcome ; it was the rise of the manufacturing or capitalist class, with its drive to carry trade into all countries of the earth. With the growth of world trade and the opening up of the world market, with the circumnavigation of the globe, the great voyages and the founding of colonies and trading stations, modern history begins ; and with the world market it becomes for the first time easy to conceive of the possibility and the advantages of establishing a world community.

#### NINETEENTH-CENTURY INTERNATIONALISM

The developments of the nineteenth century naturally carried the matter much further. There was a tendency to internationalise both production and exchange, and to break down the barriers between nations who were being steadily brought into closer and closer economic relations. Empires expanded and lesser frontiers were done away with. • The enormous leap forward in transport and communications through railways, steamships and electric telegraphs, together with the rapid growth of overseas investment, brought about a

far-reaching interdependence and a world-wide division of labour. In this way the material basis was laid for a future world community; and the more completely these material conditions for the future world were created, the more hopeful and widespread became the aspirations for a world community.

But this remarkable process witnessed by the last few generations of mankind (for there is no portion of the earth exempt from it, even the attempt of Tibet to stand aloof being shattered by Sir Francis Younghusband's expedition to Lhasa in 1903) did not come upon them in any mild or benign form. On the contrary, progress has been "red in tooth and claw," and has resulted from or been accompanied by robbery, violent annexations and seizure of territory, and subjugation of peoples and of lesser states. So far from showing any tendency in practice towards the elimination of war, this progress has involved an actual increase in the frequency and numbers of wars, as well as in their destructive qualities.

*Thus, while the material conditions were created on which an international theory could be based, the practice of modern industrial states, so far from corresponding to this theory, went to the opposite extreme of anarchy, violence and war. Nor was this an accident; it was inherent in the nature of the modern industrial state and those who held power within it.*

#### INTERNATIONAL LAW

Meantime, however, world trade and intercourse had necessitated the development of certain rules

directed to governing the relations between states both in peace and in war. To these rules, only too often broken, the name was applied of "International Law," although they could not strictly be defined as law, since there was no means of enforcing them as there is of enforcing the laws of a sovereign state. These rules of intercourse and rules of warfare (in some cases including provisions for its mitigation and even on certain lesser issues for its avoidance) developed quite early. Whether because of confusion of terms, or because of a too easy analogy between the relations of individuals and of states, these inchoate rules of intercourse and warfare became linked up with the aspirations for permanent peace. This was so peculiar a development of the last half-century and more that it will be worth our while to examine it in considerable detail.

In the last half-century or, at any rate, in the quarter-century preceding 1914, many proposals for ensuring permanent peace can be traced, as far as their form is concerned, to something very different—namely, the means for ensuring the proper conduct of war (if it is permissible to think of the *proper* conduct of war).

The rise of our present society and the spread of commercial wars in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were accompanied by the gradual formulation of a body of rules of warfare, or rather of the *etiquette of warfare*, corresponding to the laws of chivalry in the Middle Ages; and these rules or etiquette of warfare came to be considered as part of the *Law of Nations*, now called International Law. The Law of Nations dealt with the

relations that existed or ought to exist between states both at peace and in time of war ; when dealing with states at war, it also had to deal with the relation of such states to neutrals. Since there was plenty of material in the shape of war experience to assist in drawing up this Etiquette of Warfare, as well as a great increase in the volume of peace-time relations, there grew up in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a pretty large body of rules and usages of the Law of Nations.

That very learned jurist Sir Frederick Pollock, writing on "The Modern Law of Nations and the Prevention of War," says :

"No such body of rules can be said to have existed before the end of the Middle Ages : there is no doubt that it exists now, or that its extent and importance are increasing. The development of International Law is among the subjects which eminently belong to modern history."

The first use of the term "Law of Nations" in its modern specialised sense is found as far back as the time of Queen Elizabeth, in the works of "that learned and judicious divine, Mr. Richard Hooker." In Book One, Chapter X, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, he states it thus :

"Now besides that law which simply concerneth men as men, and that which belongeth unto them as they are men linked with others in some form of politic society, there is a third kind of law which toucheth all such several bodies politic, so far forth as one of them hath public commerce with another. And this third is the Law of Nations."

•

It is interesting to note that Hooker, in the very

dawning of our modern society, just a hundred years after the discovery of America had opened up the world market, is already expressing the feeling for world unity. For after distinguishing man from the beasts by his power of communications through speech ("the chiefest instrument of human communion") and after remarking on the social nature of mankind ("Civil society doth more content the nature of man than any private kind of solitary living, because in society this good of mutual participation is so much larger than otherwise") old Hooker goes on to say :

"Herewith notwithstanding we are not satisfied, but we covet (if it might be) to have a kind of society and fellowship even with all mankind. Which thing Socrates intending to signify professed himself a citizen, not of this or that commonwealth, but of the world."

#### "FELLOWSHIP WITH ALL MANKIND"

And this "society of fellowship even with all mankind," and the need or desire for it ("we wish after a sort an universal fellowship with all men") Hooker sees manifested in the delight men have not only "to visit foreign countries" but

"yea to be in league of amity with them : and this not only for traffick's sake, or to the end that when many are confederated each may make other the more strong, but for such cause also as moved the Queen of Saba to visit Solomon."

So it seems not only that peaceful trading in the world market led to thoughts of world unity, but also that there was some talk of the establishment

of strong federal bodies, and even of international and scientific intercourse—though it might surprise the Royal Society to find the Queen of Sheba apparently regarded as a pioneer of this activity.

Hooker goes on to deal very briefly with what he knew of the Law of Nations :

“Primary laws of nations are such as concern embassy, such as belong to the courteous entertainment of foreigners and strangers, such as serve for commodious traffick, and the like. Secondary laws in the same kind are such as this present unquiet world is most familiarly acquainted with ; I mean laws of arms, which yet are better known than kept,” and he finally concludes rather quaintly : “But what matter the Law of Nations doth contain I omit to search.”

From the time of the famous Dutchman, Grotius, the Law of Nations has year by year, war by war, had additions made to it, including a number in the present century.

Ever since the days of Emanuel Kant, plans for permanent peace have been brought forward as a result of every great war, especially throughout the later nineteenth century and in this twentieth century. (On earlier occasions it was only the more far-sighted or more sensitive to human suffering who cared to go beyond rejoicings at the making of “peace” in the transitory sense.) The peculiarity, if not the tragedy, is that many of the plans for permanent peace are implicated in the Law of Nations, as it has been expressed in the *etiquette* (or the Queensberry Rules) of warfare. On every occasion of great and prolonged slaughter there have been advocates of permanent peace,



who without enquiring too deeply into the causes of war have seized upon instances in which the Law of Nations seems to have avoided the less serious collisions, or mitigated some of the effects of war, in the hope that by some such means, and without any fundamental alteration of the social structure, permanent peace may be won.

#### THE VOGUE FOR ARBITRATION

One of the most remarkable examples of this was the vogue for Arbitration during the years 1889 to 1914. During this period the various Peace Societies concentrated upon arbitration, drawing from Mr. Bernard Shaw at the end of that period the following comment :

“ Besides these more definite schemes, there is a vast mass of opinion which can be compared only to that of the elder Weller in *Pickwick*. It will be remembered by good Dickensians that when the case of *Bardell v. Pickwick* was entered, Mr. Weller recommended Mr. Pickwick to plead an *alibi* ; and when Mr. Pickwick lost his case, his humble counsellor uttered the famous lamentation, ‘ Why worn’t there an alleybi ? ’ ”

Substitute the word Arbitration for *Alibi*, and you have the state of mind of many thoughtful people of to-day who do not think deeply enough. They know that a war between England and the United States over the “ *Alabama* ” incidents mentioned below was averted by arbitration as a simple and sufficient alternative to war. Since 1899 they have attached a peculiar sanctity to the soil of The Hague, owing to the establishment there of the Hague Court as a permanent

arbitrating body. But it is just this limitation of the Hague to arbitration proceedings, and to quite unauthoritative attempts to codify and establish such "rules of the ring" as war permits, that makes it practically negligible as a pacific agency.

It is interesting to examine how arbitration, amongst the various examples of the application of the Law of Nations, came to have such prominence. Its popularity began largely through an episode of the American Civil War (1862-65), between the United States and the Southern Confederacy. In that war, Great Britain, a neutral country, allowed a privateer commerce-raider, the "*Alabama*," to be fitted and sent out from the Mersey. It did great damage to Northern shipping. The United States protested vigorously. An acrimonious exchange of correspondence took place, a Treaty of Arbitration was signed; and then, ten years after the beginning of the Civil War, an award arising out of this Treaty was given at Geneva against the British Government. A great many of our politicians and diplomats even then considered arbitration a mistake. Mr. Gladstone, defending the Government, applied to the "*Alabama*" the lines of Milton:

"It was that fatal and perfidious Bark  
Built in th'eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,  
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine."

But the pacifists\* of the time considered that

\* "Pacifist," a word of such recent origin that it first appears in the Supplementary Volume of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (its earliest recorded use being in the year 1901), is now often used to mean an "absolute pacifist," i.e., one who rejects the use of armed force under any circumstances; but it originally covered advocates of any system designed to promote the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

the sacred head of Britain had been ennobled.

There were several other Arbitration Treaties concluded with the United States ; one came in 1892 over the Behring Sea Seal Fisheries, and another over the boundaries between Alaska and Canada. It became for a time almost customary, on questions of disputed boundaries, to refer the matter to the arbitration of a European monarch. Between Britain and Brazil, the King of Italy was invited to arbitrate ; between Chile and the Argentine, King Edward VII arbitrated (on the advice of three of his judges) in 1902. Finally came the attempt to regularise permanent forms of arbitration, which took concrete form at the first Peace Conference of the Powers at the Hague.

#### CONFERENCES AT THE HAGUE

The first peace conference of the Powers at the Hague was a conference called to discuss means of ensuring peace, and not, as most so-called peace conferences, to assign the spoils after a war. It was summoned by the Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, in whose " rescript " dated the 24th August, 1898, the first reason given for holding such a conference was " putting a limit to the progressive development of the present armaments."

The Peace Conference thus summoned met at the Hague in the summer of 1899 and resulted in the Hague Convention, accepted by twenty-six states.\* The hopes for the limitation of armaments expressed in the Tsar's rescript were piously recorded, and the main outcome was the setting up of a Permanent Court of Arbitration.

There was a second Hague Conference in 1907, at which forty-four states attended. All they were able to do was to propose various means of codifying the existing Law of Nations, including provisions for resort to arbitration; and the only positive results were a number of Arbitration Treaties concluded between various Powers, agreeing that on any questions not extremely important they would have recourse to arbitration. Even that was not a new idea, for one of the predecessors of the Tsar of Russia, Alexander I, had proposed as early as 1804, in the midst of the French Revolutionary Wars, that there should be a "League of Mediation and for the framing of a code of the Law of Nations."

The last thing I need mention in this respect is that, following on the second Hague Convention in 1907, there was a Conference of the Powers which resulted in the Declaration of London of 1909. That Conference was concerned with the special question of the rules governing maritime warfare, and particularly the relations between belligerents and neutrals; it was designed to favour the latter as against the former, it being thought at that time that Britain was likely to be neutral in future wars. The House of Lords (with what some people by 1914 held to be marvellous foresight) refused to ratify the Declaration of London, so that in the war of 1914-18 the British Government had a relatively free hand in international law against the neutral powers as regards maritime warfare.

Up to 1914, therefore, methods for prevention of war, as advocated by many pacifists, were

essentially based upon or adapted to the etiquette of warfare, embodied in the Law of Nations. The Law of Nations itself consisted of the more or less authoritative opinions of a succession of writers, together with various treaties and the recorded facts of the behaviour of states to one another.

#### ARBITRATION IS NOT ENOUGH

The optimistic insistence on arbitration as a means of ending war shows, in the light of after events, that those who aspired to achieve permanent peace had given insufficient thought to the problem of the causes of war, had seen merely certain ways in which particular wars appeared to have been avoided, and had jumped to the conclusion that the development of this one branch of the etiquette of warfare should be sufficient to establish permanent peace. They had obviously no conception of the extraordinary difficulties that were bound to beset every attempt to abolish war, due to the deeply-rooted conflicts of interest between rival states that may at any time lead to war. The great volume of human effort, skill and courage that has been expended, so far in vain, in attempts to establish permanent peace, should have served to these—and should serve to other—enthusiasts as a demonstration of the depth and toughness of the problems confronting the seekers after peace.

•

#### THE SOCIALIST ATTITUDE

I must consider at this stage the development of the Socialist attitude to the question of peace. I

claim that Socialists were able from an early stage to see more clearly than others the causes of war, and the necessity for removing those causes ; that their diagnosis was right, and that their remedy will prevail ; and their pronouncements, which I now turn to quote, provide a remarkably up-to-date statement of the thesis that Socialism and only Socialism will end war and ensure peace.

Socialists, investigating the causes of war, formulated long ago their views as to what measures would finally remove these causes and what measures (like arbitration) could provide no more than alleviation or mitigation in particular cases. This standpoint is to be found in the writings of the founders of Socialism and has also been set forth in the decisions of Congresses of Socialist Parties, Trade Unions, etc. Of all these congresses, by far the most authoritative in the quarter of a century that preceded the war of 1914-18 were the congresses held by the Socialist International. This body, which under that title lasted for twenty-five years, was regarded as in direct line of succession to the short-lived but extremely significant International Association of Working Men, founded in 1864, in whose governing body the leaders of the British Trade Unions played an important part.

The Socialist International held three general congresses in the first decade of the century. That held at Copenhagen in 1910 must be remembered by members of the English delegation 'who are still alive ; probably a majority of the Ministers in the first, if not in the second British Labour Government, and certainly a majority of the then

leading figures of the Labour Party and its Socialist constituent bodies, had been present at and had actively participated in that Congress. Every country of Europe and of North America was represented; and in those days there was a Socialist, Social-Democratic or Labour Party in practically every country in Europe, including the smallest. Some of them, like the German Social-Democrats and the Italian Socialist Party, dated from the third or fourth quarter of the nineteenth century, while others, like the British Labour Party and the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, had only begun to function in the opening years of this century. The Socialist International was fully representative both of parties and of personalities.

This representative and highly authoritative International Socialist Congress laid down the main guiding lines of policy on the most important and most pressing problems, amongst which were the question of how to avoid war and achieve real peace. From the first the movement had been concerned with the struggle against war, as may be seen by the decisions taken at its Brussels Congress held in 1891. The question, however, took on a new urgency with the acuter rivalry of the European Powers in the first years of the century. The formation of the Anglo-French Entente in 1904 had appeared to lock Germany out from any say in the settlement of the Moroccan question. By 1905 the tension had reached the point where the German Government (some said the Kaiser Wilhelm personally) was able to force the resignation of M. Delcassé, the Foreign

Minister of France, in much the same way as it appeared to most people that Signor Mussolini in 1938 was able to force the resignation of Mr. Anthony Eden, the Foreign Secretary of Great Britain. A temporary settlement was reached at the Conference of Algeciras in 1906 ; but this was of such a nature, and the rebuff to German pretensions so clear, that from that time onwards the near prospect of a European war became and remained a feature of international life.

With the formation in the following year of the Triple Entente of Britain, France and Tsarist Russia, the two sides were obviously and menacingly ranged for eventual conflict. It was at this stage, when the Algeciras Conference and the subsequent negotiations had revealed to all the sharp outlines of the future armed struggle, that the International Socialist Congress, meeting at Stuttgart in 1907, laid down what was universally accepted as the policy of Socialism.

#### THE STUTTGART RESOLUTION

The Stuttgart resolution began with the statement :

“ The Congress confirms the Resolutions adopted by previous International Congresses against militarism and imperialism and declares once more that the struggle against militarism cannot be separated from the socialist class struggle in general. . . . ”

Then after explaining that war was the result of struggle for markets in which the subjugation of foreign peoples and countries played a prominent part, it continued :



" Wars between capitalist states are, as a rule, the outcome of their competition on the world market, for each state seeks not only to secure its existing markets, but also to conquer new ones. . . ."

Additional reasons for war were given as militarism and national prejudices. Militarism, " one of the chief instruments of bourgeois class rule and of the economic and political subjugation of the working class," ran an incessant competition in armaments, and the armaments race was thus not something accidental but a derivation from militarism, which in its turn derived from the way in which the modern industrial state is organised and ruled.

On the fostering of war by national prejudices, the resolution expressed the view that these prejudices are systematically cultivated among civilised peoples " in the interest of the ruling classes," for the purpose of " distracting the proletarian masses from their own class tasks." The resolution adds that it also distracts the masses " from their duties of international solidarity."

After this insistence on the impossibility of dealing with militarism and its consequences by any method other than that of Socialist struggle, and this partial analysis of the main and subsidiary causes of wars between modern industrial states, the Resolution draws the conclusion that " wars therefore are part of the very nature of capitalism."

From this comes the further conclusion that wars " will cease only when the capitalist system is abolished," and it is submitted that the burden and sacrifice of blood and treasure will impel the

peoples to abolish the whole system and with it the cause of war. It is then emphasised that "the proletariat . . . is a natural opponent of war." On the one hand, the burden of war falls on the working class, from which most of the soldiers come ; on the other hand, war is in direct contradiction to the highest aim of that class, which is stated to be "the creation of an economic order on a Socialist basis which will bring about the solidarity of all peoples."

The Resolution then sets forth the measures to be taken against war in general by the working class and particularly by its Parliamentary representatives. They are (i) to combat naval and military armaments with all their might ; (ii) to refuse the means for these armaments ; (iii) "to work for the education of the working-class youth in the spirit of the brotherhood of nations and of socialism while developing their class consciousness," and (iv) to press for democratic organisation of the Army and the substitution of a militia for the standing army (as a guarantee against offensive war and to ease the overcoming of national antagonisms).

#### WAR RESISTANCE

The Resolution next asserts the duty of the Socialist International "to co-ordinate and increase to the utmost the efforts of the working class against war," which efforts will, of course, differ with the varying circumstances of each country and cannot be stated with rigidity. Examples were then cited from the previous nine years of measures taken by trade unionists and

Socialists to prevent wars, and also to use "the convulsions of society," which are caused by war, "for the emancipation of the working class." It draws the conclusion that the working class will be the more successful in the future to the extent that its spirit is prepared "by a corresponding action" and the "Labour Parties of the various countries are spurred on and co-ordinated by the International." It shows, too, that use can be made of arbitration to reduce armaments and that the money expended in armaments can then be used "for cultural purposes."

After these general measures the Resolution concludes with two operative clauses, which I quote in full :

"If a war threatens to break out, it is the duty of the working classes and their parliamentary representatives in the countries involved, supported by the co-ordinating activity of the International Socialist Bureau, to exert every effort in order to prevent the outbreak of war by the means they consider most effective, which naturally vary according to the sharpening of the class struggle and the sharpening of the general political situation.

"In case war should break out anyway, it is their duty to intervene in favour of its speedy termination and with all their powers to utilize the economic and political crisis created by the war to rouse the masses and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule."

It is not necessary for me to go into the subsequent resolutions passed at the Congress of Copenhagen in 1910 and at the Special Congress, held at Basel at the end of 1912, expressly to discuss the war danger; for the point of view expressed remained unchanged. In fact, the

extremely lengthy and exhaustive Basel resolution opened with the two last paragraphs which I have quoted. As opposed to any Liberal or purely pacifist proposals this remained unchallenged as the Socialist standpoint.

(This standpoint was so fully accepted that it is on record that in August, 1914, when the German *Vorwaerts* reported that the German Social-Democrats had departed from it and declared in favour of the war, it appeared incredible to many, and in one case (that of Lenin) it was assumed at first that the Kaiser's Government had issued a forged version of the German party's newspaper. This departure, and that which happened in the cases of the French, British, Austrian, Russian and other parties, belongs to the history of events of 1914-18 with which I am not here primarily concerned.)

#### MR. CURRY STATES THE CAUSES OF WAR

Mr. Curry himself, in his book (at pp. 110-111), states some of the causes of modern wars in words which are not unacceptable to Socialists. He writes :

“ A modern industrial state is organised in such a way that much of what it produces must be exported. This, of course, is not undesirable, since it depends on the specialisation which accompanies technical advance and is simply an advanced case of the division of labour. The exports are of two kinds ; export of consumable commodities in return for which other consumable commodities are imported, and export of capital. In the case of the export of consumable commodities, the

capitalist often finds that most of the developed markets are partially closed by means of tariffs and, for this and other reasons, he may seek for markets in the undeveloped countries. This tends to bring him into conflict with the competing capitalists of other countries, and the capitalists of each country both desire a monopoly of the market for themselves and fear to have it closed against them by its becoming the monopoly of some conflicting group. In this way, there arises a scramble for spheres of influence, and each capitalist group plays upon the nationalism of its own country in order that the developing market may either become a Protectorate or be openly annexed on some pretext or other."

All that Mr. Curry says is fully confirmed by the experience of the forty years before the war of 1914-18 as well as by recent events. Indeed the transformation of Africa in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century from the "Dark Continent" to a congeries of European colonies and protectorates is a clear illustration. Mr. Curry goes on :

"In the case of the export of capital goods, the case is somewhat different. Let us suppose that it consists in the building by a British firm of a railway in undeveloped country. The firm in question has now a serious interest in the political stability of the country, since it has to consider the safety both of the invested capital and of the interest on that capital. In case of trouble or political disturbances, these will be imperilled, and accordingly, it represents at home that, since British capital is involved, it is the duty of the British Government to protect it. Nationalist feeling usually responds, and the appropriate interference takes place."

All that I need add is to emphasise the enormous

increase in importance of over-seas investment, that is, of the export of capital goods, precisely in this last half-century. In the case of Britain alone a total figure of over-seas investment of £4,000,000,000 was mentioned in Parliament by Mr. Lloyd George as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the spring of 1915.

Finally, Mr. Curry says :

“ There is yet a third way in which nationalism and commercialism react, namely in regard to raw materials. Much of the raw material required for a modern industry comes from abroad, and the industrial interests involved never feel secure until the source of the raw materials is under the political control of their own country. In cases where the raw material is of great strategic importance, as in the case of oil, it is easy and natural for commercial interests to secure the co-operation and support of the Government. The scramble for the control of raw materials is therefore a fruitful cause of international conflict. It was the desire for the control of raw materials which led the victorious nations to be so anxious to become trustees for civilisation in the mandated territories after the last war. Spheres of influence may, therefore, serve the triple purpose of being markets for consumable commodities, places where capital developments of a remunerative sort may go on, and a source of important raw materials.”

It is important, too, to understand that, with the same inevitability that Capitalism involves war, Socialism involves peace, that is to say, war is impossible between Socialist states. For them the causes of war are automatically eliminated ; they have nothing to quarrel about.

They cannot quarrel over exports, over the question whether the products of one state shall

or shall not be allowed to enter into and compete in the markets of another state ; not only is there no private interest over which to quarrel, but the Socialist system of producing what the people need and enabling the people to buy it eliminates the whole element of scarcity of markets. There is no need to fight for markets when you are your own market, and you are producing all you can consume, and consuming all you produce. Under such circumstances, the question whether some particular product does or does not pass from one state to another neither affects the profits of rich men nor makes poor men starve ; it is merely a matter of convenience for the peoples of two states who, whatever happens, will have both occupation and livelihood.

Equally little could such states quarrel with one another over the " right " to exploit colonial races or colonial territories. No races and no territories will be " colonial," and there will be no room and no need for any exploitation, which will be against both the principles and the interests of the Socialist states. There will be no owners of private capital seeking political or financial control over fields of investment or of cheap labour.

Nor will raw materials be war-mongers any more. At present, they lead to war partly through the rivalry for profits, partly from scarcity (when the industrial rulers quarrel as to who is to get them), and partly from glut (when the industrial rulers quarrel as to who is to have the sadly diminished profits that are all they can hope for). Profit rivalry will be a thing of the past ; scarcity will be cured by that joy of Socialists, that night-

mare of Capitalists, the removal of restrictions on production ; and glut (almost impossible to imagine for a long time to come, with the enormously increased consumption under a Socialist régime), will be painlessly cured by diminishing the production of the commodity involved, and turning productive capacity into other channels, with no risk of exposing anyone to the horrors of unemployment.

The arguments on the causes and cure of war are necessarily a little long and complex, but I think that they can be summed up fairly briefly in a few sentences :

We cannot bring wars to an end by a series of checks and counterchecks against possible aggression ; it is no good propping up a world that is standing on its apex. We must put it on its base, by eliminating the causes of war.

The causes of war are economic ; states fight to keep or to win markets and fields of investment, to distribute or redistribute the spoils of Imperialist exploitation of colonial territories. All over the modern world we have multiplied the power of production, but at the same time have so limited purchasing power that most of us cannot buy the things we want. So, for those who seek to gain profits by selling those things to us, the opportunity to sell—which is called a market—has become something precious, something which they cannot afford to lose ; equally little can they afford to surrender any colonial advantages. And those who control our industries, who are much the same as those who control our governments, are willing to fight each other for these precious



markets and colonies, as primitive men fight for water when water is scarce. They fight with quotas and tariffs, with prohibitions and trade agreements; and in the end they fight with shells and bullets and the bodies of working men.

These motives for fighting, these causes of war, will disappear when markets are no longer made artificially precious, and purchasing power is as great as productive capacity. When states need no longer fight to give their manufacturers the chance to sell at a profit, when the present colonial territories and peoples are no longer exploited on Imperialist lines, when profit-seeking is eliminated and we are producing enough for everybody, there will be no more motive to fight for markets or colonies than there is to fight for water when there is no drought.

## CHAPTER III

1914-18

THE war of 1914-18, looked at apart from its immediate causes, arose essentially from the nature of the modern industrial state, which I have already described. By 1914, there were over half a dozen of these large states, each representing an enormous aggregation of power, each faced by powerful rivals. In a world of limited size, and under the conditions that had then developed, a clash in the near future between some or all of them was inevitable, although the necessities of war propaganda required that the position should be put before the public in a very different guise at the outbreak of the war, when both its causes and its objects were presented in a variety of slogans. It was "a war for the freedom of small nations," "a war for the sanctity of treaties," "a war to end wars," "a war to end militarism"—though it should have been obvious that the war, representing the triumph of militarism, could hardly be expected to put an end to it. It was "a war to establish public law and order in Europe," "a war for democracy," "a war to uphold and extend the Law of Nations."

But it was not long before other problems than those of popularising the war arose, and Governments and others had to concern themselves with what was likely to happen when hostilities ceased ;

and at this stage there arose a rather complicated series of developments, bearing on the history of the movements akin to Federal Union, which I shall try to describe as simply as possible.

In the first place, plans were being drawn up by Governments for the future arrangements of Europe and other continents. These tended on the whole to be of the same form in general (though not, of course, in detail) as the "Holy Alliance"\* of Austria, Russia and Prussia, established after the French Wars, a century and a quarter ago.

#### OUR FOREIGN OFFICE THINKS OF PEACE

Mr. Lloyd George, in his *War Memoirs*, quotes an interesting example of this type of plan. It was prepared in the British Foreign Office, in the form in which he quotes it, in the autumn of 1916, and is called the "Memorandum on Territorial Settlement." It begins by laying down the principle of nationality as one of "the governing factors in the

\* The "Holy Alliance," though described by the British Foreign Secretary of the time as a piece of "sublime mysticism and nonsense," was a very real thing. The kernel of it was the linking up of the monarchs of Continental Europe in the effort to maintain the *status quo* and to prevent any movement of a national nature (such as those of Italians against the Austrians and of the South Americans against the Spanish monarchy) or for democracy amongst their subjects. The loftiest sentiments were expressed by Tsar Alexander I, who was one of the chief promoters of the Alliance. In practice it was the blackest reaction in Europe. It is interesting to note that Britain, as the country of the new manufacturing class, tended to break up the Holy Alliance by the favour it extended to Garibaldi in Italy, to the insurgents in South America, and even in the eighteenth-thirties to the liberal movement in the Iberian Peninsula. It is also interesting that in 1914-18 the British Government was again inclined to welcome a combination of Governments against any disturbing factor within the countries of Europe.

consideration of territorial arrangements after the war." This principle of nationality meant that each nation should be organised in its own national state and that state frontiers should correspond to the boundaries of nationalities. It gained great prominence on account of the propagandist insistence in August, 1914, that the *casus belli* was not the conflicting interests of the Triple Entente and the Central Empires but the "rights of small nationalities," violated at that time by the German invasion of Belgium (and later violated in Greece by the Allies). But it was really the corollary to a century of British policy, at any rate from the time of Canning, in which Britain was looked to by the subject nations of Europe as more likely than, say, the Russian Tsar, to be their champion.

The memorandum, however, "hedges" a bit on questions of principle. With an eye on Italy it mentions that "our Allies, apart from any promises which we may have made to them, may put forward claims conflicting with the principle of nationality." Its introduction ends on this sublime "balance of power" note :

"Lastly, we should not push the principle of nationality so far as unduly to strengthen any State which is likely to be a cause of danger to European peace in the future."

The Memorandum then describes the plans for territorial settlement, with the details of which we are not concerned, and continues :

"We have attempted to draw up a scheme which is not confined to the promotion alone of British interests as regards either territorial acquisitions or the establishment of British spheres of influence. We have tried to work out

a scheme that promises permanency ; we have aimed at a reconstruction of the map of Europe intended to secure a lasting peace."

It goes on to treat of the arrest of the armaments race " by means of general arbitration treaties and the consequent reduction of standing armies and navies."

#### NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The conclusion is reached that disarmament will be possible if Germany is defeated and the German people can be brought to agree. It is only then, in quite a subsidiary way, in the middle of a paragraph, that the notion of the League of Nations is touched upon :

" Another element, of course, but a less effective one, will be the creation of a League of Nations. . . . We are under no illusion, however, that such an instrument will become really effective until nations have learnt to subordinate their personal and individual ambitions and dreams for the benefit of the community of nations. . . . This consideration brings up the question of whether it will be possible to secure the adhesion of the United States of America."

In the second place, just as Emanuel Kant in 1795 had put forward his plan for perpetual peace, so every sort and variety of plan for the same end was put forward in the first three years of that war. They varied from somewhat simple expansions of the Sixth Commandment to highly complicated, if not fundamental, provisions for solving the problem. They were put forward in all sincerity

and earnestness, but they did not and could not prevent the outbreak of a second war of the scale of 1914-1918 in less than a quarter of a century. Prominent among them were plans of the League of Nations type, and there were also, naturally enough, developments from the Arbitration plans and extensions of the Hague Convention schemes that had been current in the first decade of the century. Their complete failure, now so tragically demonstrated, serves to emphasise the depth and seriousness of the problem, and to suggest that only Socialism's radical cure, the fundamental alteration of the system of which the constant repetition of such horrors and tragedies is an integral part, can ever bring us peace.

#### SOVIET RUSSIA MAKES PEACE

In the third place, in the autumn of 1917, when these plans had been under discussion for over two years, the world was startled by an example of the practical application to one large country of the policy for the ending of war that had been laid down as mentioned above by the International Socialist Congresses. The Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (the Bolsheviks) had followed *au pied de la lettre* the Socialist policy and was now putting it into force. These steps naturally influenced and affected, in either a sympathetic or a hostile direction, all other plans and proposals. The concrete form in which they were expressed is shown by the Soviet "Decree on Peace" of the 7th-8th November, 1917, from which I quote some passages :

"The workers' and peasants' government created by the revolution of November 6th-7th and backed by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just and democratic peace.

"By a just, or democratic, peace, for which the vast majority of the working and toiling classes of all belligerent countries, exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving, a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the Tsarist monarchy—by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (*i.e.*, the seizure of foreign lands, or the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and indemnities.

"The government of Russia calls upon all the belligerent nations to conclude such a peace immediately, and expresses its readiness to take the most resolute measures without the least delay pending the final ratification of the conditions of this peace by plenipotentiary assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations.

"In accordance with the sense of justice of democracy in general, and of the toiling classes in particular, the government interprets the annexation, or seizure, of foreign lands as meaning the incorporation into a large and powerful state of a small or feeble nation without the definitely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the degree of development, or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to, or forcibly retained within, the frontiers of the given state, and, finally, irrespective of whether the nation inhabits Europe or distant, overseas countries.

"If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained within the boundaries of a given state, if, in spite of its

expressed desire—no matter whether that desire is expressed in the press, at popular meetings, in party decisions, or in protests and revolts against national oppression—it is not permitted the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating, or generally of the stronger nation, without the least pressure being brought to bear upon it, such incorporation is annexation, *i.e.*, seizure and coercion.

“The Government considers that it would be the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war for the purpose of dividing up among the strong and rich nations the feeble nationalities seized by them, and solemnly declares its determination to sign immediately conditions of peace terminating this war on the conditions indicated, which are equally just for all peoples without exception. . . .

“The Government proposes to all the governments and peoples of the belligerent countries to conclude an immediate armistice : . . . for a period long enough to permit the conclusion of negotiations for peace with the participation of the representatives of all peoples and nations involved in or compelled to take part in the war, without exception, and the summoning of plenipotentiary assemblies of the representatives of the peoples of all countries for the final ratification of the terms of peace.

“While addressing this proposal for peace to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, the Provisional Workers’ and Peasants’ Government of Russia appeals in particular to the class conscious workers of the three most advanced nations of mankind, the largest states participating in the present war, namely, Great Britain, France and Germany. The workers of these countries have made the greatest contributions to the cause of progress and socialism ;



they have furnished the great examples of the Chartist movement in England, a number of revolutions of world and historic importance made by the French proletariat, and, finally, the heroic struggle against the Anti-Socialist Law in Germany and the example shown to the workers of the whole world in the protracted, persistent and disciplined work of creating mass proletarian organisations in Germany. All these examples of proletarian heroism and historical creative work serve as a pledge that the workers of the countries mentioned will understand the duty that now lies upon them of emancipating mankind from the horrors of war and its consequences. For these workers, by comprehensive, determined, and supremely energetic action, can help us to bring to a successful conclusion the cause of peace, and at the same time the cause of the emancipation of the toiling and exploited masses of the population from all forms of slavery and all forms of exploitation."

#### PRESIDENT WILSON'S FOURTEEN POINTS

In the fourth place, there came those very important proposals, the Fourteen Points of President Wilson. These arose in a sense directly out of the Russian proposals just quoted, which had created a profound impression upon the working classes in various countries. As Mr. Lloyd George wrote in his book on the Peace Treaties :

"The attitude of the Workers' Government in Russia was having a very disturbing effect on the artisans in our workshops. . . . It was therefore deemed desirable to make a full carefully-prepared and authentic statement of Allied War Aims so as to reassure the public."

To meet the situation thus created, which ought to have led to a Socialist world, President Wilson, gathering up from many sources the various non-Socialist schemes that were being brought forward, formulated peace aims in his Congressional Address of the 8th January, 1918. In this Address he paid great attention to the Russian proposals, and to a large extent hinged his Address upon them. At the same time he succeeded in presenting an official plan for settlement-after-war, apparently embracing all the aspirations which had found expression in the numerous peace proposals of the first three years of the war.

#### “ DISHING ” THE BOLSHEVIKS

These very important efforts to draw the plan of the Bolsheviks, which was in essence fundamentally opposed to any other proposals, into the orbit of his policy, or at the least to neutralise it, met with considerable success among the peoples of the Allied powers, although of course they did nothing for permanent peace. The success is thus described by Mr. Winston Churchill in *The Aftermath* :

“ His words had carried comfort to every Allied people, and had been most helpful in silencing subversive peace propaganda in all forms.”

In any case, of course, the Fourteen Points came to constitute so important a point of departure for future policies and treaties that they call for examination here in a little detail.

They began by a reference to the discussions proceeding at Brest Litovsk between the Russian

representatives and the representatives of the Central Powers. The President said :

“ The Russian representatives presented not only a perfectly definite statement of the principles upon which they would be willing to conclude peace, but also an equally definite programme of the concrete application of those principles. The representatives of the Central Powers on their part presented an outline of settlement which, if much less definite, seemed susceptible of liberal interpretation, until their specific programme of practical terms was added. . . .

“ The Russian representatives have insisted very justly, very wisely, and in the true spirit of modern democracy, that the conferences they have been holding with Teutonic and Turkish statesmen should be held within open, not closed, doors, and all the world has been the audience, as was desired. . . .”

But, he went on to say, in some ways the representatives of the Central Powers had challenged the Allies as to what the war was being carried on for, and so he—President Wilson—would explain. He then continued with the warmest and friendliest references to the Russian people :

“ There is, moreover, a voice calling for these definitions of principle and of purpose which is, it seems to me, more thrilling and more compelling than any of the many thrilling voices with which the troubled air of the world is filled. It is the voice of the Russian people. They are prostrate and all but helpless, it would seem, before the grim power of Germany, which has hitherto known no relenting and no pity. Their power apparently is shattered. And yet their soul is not subservient. They will not yield either in principle or in action. Their conception of what is right, of what is humane and honorable for them to accept, has been stated with a

frankness, a largeness of view, a generosity of spirit, a universal human sympathy, which must challenge the admiration of every friend of mankind; and they have refused to compound their ideals or desert others that they themselves may be safe. . . . Whether their present leaders believe it or not, it is our heartfelt desire and hope that some way may be opened whereby we may be privileged to assist the people of Russia to attain their utmost hope of liberty and ordered peace. . . .”

#### OPEN DIPLOMACY

He then took up the explanation of the Points.  
*seriatim* :

“ *Point 1.*—Open covenants for peace openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.”

This point was no doubt adopted from the Bolsheviks, who had already put it forward at Brest-Litovsk. President Wilson did not, of course, succeed in making it a reality, and the most vital decisions were definitely taken by the “ Big Five ” meeting in secret conclave during the sessions preliminary to the Versailles Peace Conference.

“ *Point 2.*—Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas outside territorial waters alike in peace and war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.”

This point was aimed *against* the British Government, which had not yet ratified the Declaration of London and which indeed for 250 years had been taking an extraordinarily wide

view of the rights of a belligerent in maritime warfare, a view which expanded in its width with the expansion of the British Empire and British sea power. It was indeed precisely around the question of maritime warfare and the rights of freedom of navigation in times of war that the U.S.A. had gone to war with Great Britain in 1812, during the Napoleonic wars.

"*Point 3.*—The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance."

This point sounds very encouraging, but unfortunately the key phrase proved to be the qualifying words, "so far as possible"; no concrete proposals were put forward at the Peace Conference for any reduction of tariffs by Britain or France, or any other powers—least of all of the extraordinarily high American tariff.\*

\* It is remarkable that twenty-two years later, in March, 1940, Mr. Sumner Welles, visiting on behalf of President Roosevelt the belligerent countries of Europe and Fascist Italy, should have submitted the following memorandum to the French Finance Minister, which in its nineteenth-century reliance on nothing more than Free Trade as a basis for lasting peace recalls the atmosphere of the Fourteen Points:

"The essentials of the economic foreign policy of the U.S.A. are the following:

"1. Sound commercial and international relations are an indispensable foundation for the welfare of nations as well as for lasting peace.

"International trade can only play this part efficaciously if it allows each nation to have normal access to the resources of the whole world—not only to those which are confined within its own boundaries—and find an issue for the excess of its production. This is on the basis of non-discriminating treatment.

"2. International trade cannot be prosperous if its course is diverted or obstructed by attempted bilateral exclusive or discriminative agreements. It cannot prosper if its course is stopped by barriers of excessive tariffs, regulations and exchange control.

"All of these barriers are instruments of economical war. Recent

## REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS

" *Point 4.*—Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety."

National armaments have a great deal to do with domestic safety. Six years after the Russian Tsar had made this same point in 1898 came the Russo-Japanese War. In the period of comparative but transitory peace which followed the Versailles Treaty, the governments of the "victorious" powers actually increased their national armaments. Point 4, however, was carried out to the extent that the *German Army* was reduced to 100,000 men, and the use of aeroplanes, submarines and a General Staff was forbidden.

" *Point 5.*—A free, open-minded and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the Government whose title is to be determined."

experiences have clearly proved their destructive results on international commerce in peace time—followed by their depressive influence on the standard of living and the general economic welfare between nations, as well as their power for creating international hostility, animosity and conflicts.

" 3. If at the end of the present hostilities the world must be reconstructed on foundations of stability and peace, eliminating suspicion and fear and opening the way to economical progress, the methods of the procedure of international commerce must be reconstructed on a sound basis.

" This will necessitate the gradual elimination of excessive and unreasonable barriers which impede the traffic of goods beyond international frontiers; the acceptance of the rule of non-discrimination by the application of the principle of favourite nation in commercial treatment, and the creation in the domain of exchange and credit of the conditions necessary for the multilateral function of trade methods."

Adequate comment on this in the light of subsequent events is difficult; it must have sounded comforting to the colonial peoples at the time, and they are at times inconsiderate enough to remind us of it.

#### THE ACID TEST

*“Point 6.*—The evacuation of all Russian territory, and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy, and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.”

The Allies having accepted this, with the rest of the fourteen points, the “Acid Test” came into play almost immediately. In the April of that year, 1918, the British Government occupied a Russian port. By the summer British, American, Japanese and other forces had been landed on Russian territory and the long-drawn-out wars of intervention, waged with great determination and little success in the hope of destroying the new Socialist state, were in full swing.

Points 7, 8, 9 and 10 need not be dealt with in

detail. They concern adjustment of frontiers, including Alsace-Lorraine, the Tyrol, the Dodecanese Islands, Belgium, Turkey and Austro-Hungary.

Point 11 covered the Balkan States, and Points 12 and 13 dealt with the sovereignty of nationalities under Turkish rule and with Poland.

The most important point, and the most interesting for our purposes, was of course the last :

*“ Point 14.—A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states.*

*“ In regard to these essential rectifications of wrong and assertions of right we feel ourselves to be intimate partners of all the Governments and peoples associated together against the Imperialists. We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end. For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved, but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace, such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war, which this programme does remove. . . .”*

All those who had been putting forward a variety of more or less similar schemes rallied round the Fourteen Points of President Wilson ; but their schemes foundered on the rocks of “ realism,” occupied by the greater victorious powers, and the Treaty of Versailles took the shape we all know and regret. It is important, however, to realise that the various movements for permanent peace were swept up into these fourteen points, and for a time shared their fate.



## CHAPTER IV

### VERSAILLES AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THE Treaty of Versailles, as all the other treaties concluded at the end of the war, adopted as its first section the Covenant of the League of Nations, which began with the following words :

#### “THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

In order to promote international co-operation  
and to achieve international peace and  
security

by the acceptance of obligations not to resort  
to war,

by the prescription of open, just and honour-  
able relations between nations,

by the firm establishment of the understand-  
ings of international law as the actual rule  
of conduct among Governments, and

by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous  
respect for all treaty obligations in the  
dealings of organised peoples with one  
another,

Agree to this Covenant of the League of  
Nations.”

Article I began by providing that the original members (note the phrase) of the League of Nations should be the signatories named in the

Annex to the Covenant and also such other states as should accept the Covenant without reservations.

The Annex runs :

*Original Members of the League of Nations*

*Signatories of the Treaty of Peace*

U.S.A.	Cuba	Panama
Belgium	Ecuador	Peru
Bolivia	France	Poland
Brazil	Greece	Portugal
British Empire	Guatemala	Rumania
Canada	Haiti	Serb-Croat-Slovene
Australia	Honduras	State
South Africa	Hedjaz	Siam
New Zealand	Italy	Czecho-Slovakia
India	Japan	Uruguay
China	Liberia	
	Nicaragua	

*States invited to accede to the Covenant*

Argentine Republic	Norway	Sweden
Chili	Paraguay	Switzerland
Colombia	Persia	Venezuela
Denmark	Salvador	
Netherlands	Spain	

The Annex does not include such signatories of the Treaties of Peace as Germany, Austria, Hungary, or Bulgaria. The Powers listed in the first part of the Annex were simply the well-known "Allied and Associated Powers."

It was, of course, extremely discouraging, for those who regarded the Fourteen Points as of high validity, that the Covenant of the League of Nations, which was supposed to embody the Points

in substance and spirit, should begin with the exclusion of all the defeated Powers.

Of the thirteen states invited to accede to the Covenant, as mentioned in the Annex just quoted, six were South American states, and significantly did not include Mexico, with which President Wilson at that time had a serious quarrel. They did not, of course, include the Soviet Republics, which had no status in international law and were not to achieve such status for some years later.

#### THE LEAGUE AND THE COLONIAL PROBLEM

It is unnecessary to go through the whole Covenant, but it is interesting to see how the colonial problem was dealt with. The question of colonies, covered by Point 5 of the Fourteen Points, was carried over into Article 22 of the Covenant, which runs :

“To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation, and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

“The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience, or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing

to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League. . . .

"A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates."

The different stages of development of the hopes and tragedies of the peace-makers should be noticed, for they are useful as warnings when one comes to estimate the prospects of future success of the various proposals brought together in the name of Federal Union. First of all, the new plans for permanent peace, that grew up when the old plans were shattered by the world war, are gathered up in the Fourteen Points. Then the Fourteen Points are elaborated into the Covenant of the League of Nations and the other parts of the Treaty of Versailles and the sister Treaties.

The next stage is the operation of these Treaties, which were supposed to have made a final settlement and to have ensured as nearly as possible permanent peace ; and this in turn leads up to the inevitable destruction of that settlement and of all peace by the forces of our economic system in crisis.

It is unnecessary to set out in detail the history of the League of Nations ; we must face the bitter truth that from its birth it was destined to function to the advantage of the main Allied Powers which had formed it, and to become an instrument for securing their principal interests. These interests were the protection and maintenance of the imperialist system, whereby a few powerful empires exploited colonial peoples and colonial

areas as fields of investment and as sources of raw materials and cheap labour ; indeed, one may put it more broadly and say that these interests were the protection and maintenance of the whole economic system of which imperialism forms a part.

Only to a very small extent was the League able to do anything for the maintenance of peace, and it never functioned as had been expected or hoped. Save in December, 1939, it did not even act as an effective counter-revolutionary body, as had been hoped by certain international reactionaries ; and it is impossible to regard it as having any more effect in the main international field than the provision of machinery of some slight value for the prevention of war, in the same way as the Hague Convention. The British and French Governments, particularly since 1934, treated it rather in the way Uncle treated the Two Princes in the Tower—they smothered it, merely resurrecting the body for a moment in December, 1939.

#### WHY THE LEAGUE FAILED

Why did the League fail ? It is important to study this question, for the high hopes built on the League conception during the war years a quarter of a century ago are very similar to those now cherished by the supporters of Federal Union, and it may well be that the same germs of failure are carried in both.

The advocates of Federal Union give as their explanation of the failure of the League that it was not strong enough, and did not cut down the

unlimited sovereign powers of the independent states. This argument might be thought to tend in the opposite direction, for if the antagonisms of the modern industrial states prevented the League of Nations from fulfilling what were relatively restricted functions, then *a fortiori* they would prevent the formation of any true Federal Union under the present economic system. But the reasons for the League's failure, the reasons why it was bound to fail, require fuller consideration.

One must begin the examination of the League's history by remembering that in the course of its twenty years' history it has not been one thing, but several things. Inevitably the League functioned at the outset as an instrument of its creators and as an expression of their policy. Two main objects of that policy were to hold down the defeated rival Germany and prevent it becoming ever again an economic or military rival of France and Britain, and to put an end to the Socialist Soviet Republics that had taken the place of the Empire of the Tsars.

For the first of these objects, the Inter-Allied Reparations Commission was a better instrument than the League of Nations. With regard to the second, the League differed so little in its policy from the policy of the Great Powers that it was bound to be regarded as an anti-revolutionary group under the guidance of the Supreme Allied Council.

The League remained as originally constituted for the first seven years of its existence. During this period, it was made the medium by which

some disputes were settled, *e.g.*, the dispute over Corfu, but in no case were these disputes of any greater magnitude than previous disputes that had been settled by the Concert of Europe—*i.e.*, by agreement between the Great Powers. The antagonism between the major Powers remained, and the Disarmament provisions of the Covenant were simply ignored.

#### LEAGUE POWERS IN CONFLICT

The interests of the Great Powers were still frequently in conflict. France had built up a system of alliances and understandings stretching from Belgium on the west of Germany to Poland on the east, with the countries of the Little Entente (Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Yugo-Slavia) on the south. These not only served to clamp down Germany, but gave France a predominance that was irksome to the British Government. The League had been heralded by impassioned references to principles of self-determination ; but in practice it was found that these were applied only when they served to break up those states with which the Allies had been at war, or to which they were hostile.

Moreover, even in this restricted application of principles, there were jealousies and quarrels between the Allies, which the League was unable to prevent. The representatives of the various Great Powers at Geneva were really representative of those industrial and financial interests which were in a position of power within each of these states, and these interests were bound to find themselves in conflict. Had the League started

off with the principle that it was no longer possible to leave such power in the hands of a few rich men, who must surrender it by the institution of common ownership of the means of life, then the League need not have failed.

During this first period the Allies found the two objects of holding down Germany and getting rid of the Bolshevik state equally unattainable. They had "bitten off more than they could chew." This was finally recognised after the invasion of the Ruhr by the Poincaré Government of France. In place of the mythical prospects of a huge (unfixed) amount of reparations, which was used for giving political leverage to the Allies, the Dawes Plan of economic vassalage of Germany was instituted with the help of American bankers; and at the same time the Allies, having been defeated by the Red Army, were compelled to grant recognition to the Soviet Union.

The next stage was the stage of Locarno. This was hailed as an extension of the peace possibilities inherent in the Covenant of the League of Nations. Actually, however, as has happened with almost all alliances in the past, the Locarno Pacts, while purporting to guarantee peace amongst the states within the pacts, were at the same time directed against those outside them—and in the first place against the U.S.S.R.

Thus, in the second seven years of the League, from 1926 onwards, the attempt was made to form a grouping of Britain, France, Germany and Italy presaging the Four-Power Pact within the framework of the League of Nations. This meant that the League, though not to the same extent as



before, had still to subserve the anti-Soviet purposes of France and Britain, whose statesmen on more than one occasion voiced their anti-Soviet aims.

During this period the League was able to settle some minor disputes, but in the case of the war between Bolivia and Paraguay it proved incapable of intervening effectively. The reason for this was that the Great Powers, jealous of one another and careful only of their own interests, were not prepared to take any common action other than that involved in the future if and when a "Four-Power Pact," with its implications against the Soviet Union, came to fruition.

#### DISARMING DISARMAMENT

A particularly glaring example of this is furnished by the inability to agree upon disarmament, plans for which the Council of the League was bound by Article 8 of the Covenant of the League to initiate. The Preparatory Commission for this purpose did not even meet till 1927 and when the delegates of the U.S.S.R.—for non-members of the League participated in this question—put forward a plan for immediate general and total disarmament, this was forthwith rejected. In that same year, 1927, there met at Geneva a Tripartite Naval Conference of Britain, Japan and the U.S.A. to discuss limitation of naval armaments. The Conference broke up in total and irremediable failure; and though Lord Robert Cecil (Viscount Cecil) thereupon resigned from the Tory Cabinet, which in his opinion bore a responsibility for this

failure, the real reason, known to many at the time and afterwards made public in a Congressional enquiry in the U.S.A., was that the British Government, like the other two governments, had bowed to the will of the armament manufacturers. Here, too, the interests of the "captains of industry and finance" had prevented any agreement being reached.

#### THE LEAGUE IN DECLINE

The last seven years of the League saw its gradual collapse. The first causes of this were to be found in the attitude of the British Government towards the invasion of Manchuria by Japan. Sir John Simon, then Foreign Secretary, defended the Japanese at Geneva and protected them from the application of sanctions; there were some who said that in London it was hoped that the seizure of Manchuria would prove the beginning of a Japanese drive against the U.S.S.R. All that was done was to set up the Lytton Commission, which passed a report mildly unfavourable to Japan but recommended no action. Japan nevertheless took umbrage and left the League; the process of disintegration had begun. When the German Government found that it could not receive equality of status as had been demanded, it too left the League and started the process of unilateral alteration of the Treaty of Versailles.

At this moment there came the possibility of a renewal of life for the League. With Japan and Germany outside, it became possible for the League to be endowed with a new element. The

approach by M. Barthou to the Soviet Union was received favourably and in September, 1934, the U.S.S.R. entered the League. From this time onwards there was the possibility that the League might serve as machinery, though not of a very potent kind, for the prevention of war. This possibility, however, was completely negated by the attitude of the British National Government, which took every possible step to weaken or ignore the League of Nations. In 1935 the Government at first entertained the view that, *from the standpoint of British interests*, it did not matter if Italian Fascism seized Abyssinia. Later, following on the Peace Ballot, the Government changed its tune and agreed at Geneva to the imposition of sanctions upon Italy. But the sanctions were not allowed to include such measures as the stoppage of oil supplies, which might have resulted in an overthrow of Mussolini's Government. This attitude culminated in the unsavoury episode of the Hoare-Laval pact; and by the autumn of 1936 the British Government was moving to condone the Italian Fascist aggression.

#### CONDONING NAZI AGGRESSION

Even this misbehaviour was less disastrous than the British Government's policy of condoning the aggressions of Nazi Germany. This policy, which came into prominence with the Anglo-German Naval Treaty of 1935, developed further in 1936 when Hitler marched into the demilitarised Rhineland. Quite apart from the question whether the Treaty of Versailles should have been altered or

not, unilateral infringements of it naturally brought about situations which were provided for in the Covenant : and we may be sure that if the British Government had been willing, the League machinery could readily have been set in action. But it was not willing : and the machinery rusted. In the Spanish civil war of 1936 to 1938 the Government initiated the "Non-Intervention" Committee which supplanted the League of Nations, and when the Spanish Republican Government was at last able to bring up its case at Geneva, the British Government was unwilling to exercise any influence that might have made the League effective.

#### THE BLACK YEAR OF 1938

In the dreadful year 1938, in connection with Austria and Czecho-Slovakia, the British Government, which was strongly in favour of Hitler's claims, saw to it that no part was played by the League of Nations ; and the proposal of the Soviet Union in September, 1938, to raise the Czecho-Slovak question at Geneva had a cold reception in London. In 1939 the succession of events in Czecho-Slovakia, Albania, Memelland, and Poland were dealt with directly by the British Government which never seems to have even dreamt of submitting these questions to the League of Nations.

In all these last six years, the interests of the City of London and its relations with Nazi Germany appear to have been too delicate to be exposed to the public view at Geneva, where the

Socialist State of the U.S.S.R. was now an active participant.

It is plain that what prevented the League from functioning effectively, even in the limited field which was the most that its powers would have permitted, was not anything inherent in the League form of organisation, but everything inherent in the capitalist structure of society. I shall come back to this point in later chapters.

## CHAPTER V

### THE LIMITS OF FEDERATION

BEFORE we come to deal with the proposals for Federal Union, we must study the conditions under which federation of states can be successfully attempted ; and it is best to begin with an explanation of the conception of " federation " for the benefit of British readers, who often have a difficulty in understanding it which is not felt by those brought up under federal constitutions, like the Americans and Russians. Britain lives under a unitary constitution ; that is to say, all the " sovereign " functions, the essential functions of government, are in the same hands. Whether it be called Parliament, or " the King in Parliament," its essence is that the same sovereign power, the same legislative body, possesses and exercises all the power in the state. One and the same sovereign Parliament passes Acts establishing the Dominion of Canada or the Commonwealth of Australia, Acts regulating street traffic, or Acts empowering a municipal corporation to spend money on advertisements. It may, of course, delegate to a County Council subsidiary powers of government ; but it can recall these powers by virtue of its own sovereign power, which it holds for itself and does not share or abandon. This is so familiar to us in Britain that we hardly notice it ; but a federal system is essentially different, and even those who are professionally concerned with the working of

laws and constitutions require considerable mental effort to understand it.

In a federation, the sovereign powers are distributed ; two, or ten, or forty-eight, or as many sovereign states as may happen to wish to federate, divide up their sovereign powers and functions by arrangement with one another, each retaining some of them for itself and putting the rest into a common pool to be held and exercised by the federated (or " federal ") state which is thus set up. The Swiss Confederation, the United States of Brazil, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, are all states of this kind, as was the old German Reich of 1871-1933. In some cases, the *federal* state is a " strong " one, that is to say, it has in its own hands so much of the sovereign powers of the federating or constituent states that the latter seem relatively unimportant, whilst in other cases the federated state is relatively weak, the constituent states retaining a large part of their sovereign powers and jealously guarding against every infringement of those powers by the federal state. (An interesting illustration, which will come as a surprise to many, is that in federal Germany, when the war of 1914-18 broke out, there was no German army ; that is to say, the armed forces against which Great Britain and France fought for so long in that war were the armies of the various constituent " semi-sovereign " states of the federated German Reich ; they were co-ordinated with great thoroughness by a federal " Great General Staff," but they remained the armies of the constituent states.)

## NOT ALL STATES CAN UNITE

It will, I think, be plain to everyone who considers the nature of federation that it is not any and every group of states that will be willing or able to federate, effectively or even ineffectively. There are a good many conditions to be fulfilled before a federation can be formed, or can be or remain a reality. The nature of these conditions can well be illustrated by reference to the writers on constitutional law, for the difficulties and limitations of federation as seen by constitutional lawyers are not merely technical and legal but real and practical. The late Professor Dicey, a lawyer of great distinction, free from any suspicion of Left-Wing tendencies, and acknowledged to be one of the outstanding British constitutional writers, described the position at pp. 136-143 of the Eighth Edition (1927) of his *Introduction to the study of the Law of the Constitution* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd.). It may be useful to quote certain passages, which show not only the conditions of successful federation but also something of the machinery involved :

“ A federal state requires for its formation two conditions.

“ There must exist, in the first place, a body of countries such as the Cantons of Switzerland, the Colonies of America, or the Provinces of Canada, so closely connected by locality, by history, by race, or the like, as to be capable of bearing, in the eyes of their inhabitants, an impress of common nationality. . . .

“ A second condition absolutely essential to the found-



ing of a federal system is the existence of a very peculiar state of sentiment among the inhabitants of the countries which it is proposed to unite. They must desire union, and must not desire unity. If there be no desire to unite, there is clearly no basis for federalism; the wild scheme entertained (it is said) under the Commonwealth of forming a union between the English Republic and the United Provinces was one of those dreams which may haunt the imagination of politicians but can never be transformed into fact. If, on the other hand, there be a desire for unity, the wish will naturally find its satisfaction, not under a federal, but under a unitarian constitution. . . .

“ A federal state is a political contrivance intended to reconcile national unity and power with the maintenance of ‘ state rights ’. The end aimed at fixes the essential character of federalism. For the method by which Federalism attempts to reconcile the apparently inconsistent claims of national sovereignty and of state sovereignty consists of the formation of a constitution under which the ordinary powers of sovereignty are elaborately divided between the common or national government and the separate states.”

Professor Dicey goes on to explain that from the distribution of powers under a common constitution between the federation and the constituent states there flow the three leading characteristics of completely developed federalism, firstly, the supremacy of the constitution, secondly, the distribution of the different powers of government among bodies with limited and co-ordinate authority, and thirdly the authority of the Courts to act as interpreters of the constitution.

## SUPREMACY OF THE CONSTITUTION

"A federal state," he adds, "derives its existence from the constitution, just as a corporation derives its existence from the grant by which it is created. Hence, every power, executive legislative or judicial, whether it belong to the nation or to the individual states, is subordinate to and controlled by the constitution. . . . This doctrine of the supremacy of the constitution is familiar to every American, but in England even trained lawyers find a difficulty in following it out to its legitimate consequences. The difficulty arises from the fact that under the English constitution no principle is recognised which bears any real resemblance to the doctrine (essential to federalism) that the Constitution constitutes the 'supreme law of the land.'

"The foundations of a federal state are a complicated contract. This compact contains a variety of terms which have been agreed to, and generally after mature deliberation, by the States which make up the confederacy. . . . The articles of the treaty, or in other words of the constitution, must . . . be reduced to writing. The constitution must be a written document, and, if possible, a written document of which the terms are open to no misapprehension. . . .

"The distribution of powers is an essential feature of federalism. The object for which a federal state is formed involves a division of authority between the national government and the separate States. The powers given to the nation form in effect so many limitations upon the authority of the separate States, and as it is not intended that the central government should have the opportunity of encroaching upon the rights retained by the States, its sphere of action necessarily becomes the object of rigorous definition."

All these statements of Professor Dicey are, I think, as fully applicable to the wider federation now advocated as they are and have been to federations actually attempted or carried through.

#### REVERENCE FOR LAW

Professor Dicey gives a further warning at p. 175 :

“ That a federal system again can flourish only among communities imbued with a legal spirit and trained to reverence the law is as certain as can be any conclusion of political speculation. Federalism substitutes litigation for legislation, and none but a law-fearing people will be inclined to regard the decision of a suit as equivalent to the enactment of a law. . . .

“ One may well doubt whether there are many states to be found where the mass of the people would leave so much political influence to the Courts. Yet any nation who cannot acquiesce in the finality of possibly mistaken judgments is hardly fit to form part of a federal state.”

Earlier in his book, he had made this significant observation :

“ A true federal government is based on the division of powers. It means the constant effort of statesmanship to balance one state of the confederacy against another.”

This analysis, although purely legal, gives a pretty accurate picture of the difficulties which must be faced in any attempt at the practical application of federal principles to the world of to-day ; these difficulties I discuss below. But for any complete view of federalism, it would be necessary to implement (and in part to correct) Dicey's analysis by a historical approach. For each federated state has grown up in historical circumstances peculiar to itself, which indeed have been its *raison d'être*. For example, the United States of America were formed in the circumstances not only of common aims in a revolutionary war, but of a rising capitalist economy, which demanded for its proper functioning both a national market and a national state. This gave, in those peculiar circumstances, unlikely to recur under the existing economic system, a common outlook ; but it did not carry any implication that the rest of the world, with whom the American manufacturers and merchants of a century and a half ago were in keen competition, could or should amicably federate with it. Indeed the extension of American sway over what is now the area of the U.S.A. by no means proceeded in the idyllic manner which a casual reader of Federal Union publications might imagine. The extermination of the greater part of the Red Indians, the acquisition of French and Spanish territories, and the formation of new states out of Mexico were by no means a smooth process, not to mention the period of the civil war in the eighteen-sixties.

It is in the light of these explanations of the true nature of the limitations and possibilities of

federation, and of the dangers of too easy acceptance of attractive but not necessarily genuine cures for a desperate disease, that one must turn to the consideration of the proposals for Federal Union.

## CHAPTER VI

### FEDERAL UNION PROPOSALS

IT is now time to consider in more detail the proposals grouped under the name of Federal Union ; they are many and varied in detail and in presentation, but all the varieties have certain common features, and I shall I think cover the essential points if I deal with the case as it is put forward by Mr. Curry, whose book has obtained wide circulation and represents to the man in the street the most concrete form of Federal Union proposals.

It is probably unnecessary, and it would certainly be impracticable without writing at undue length, to examine all the detailed arguments with which Federal Union is introduced, or to study at all minutely the political philosophy—an eclectic liberalism—which lies behind it. What is important is to give careful consideration to (i) the main argument in support of the proposals, (ii) the selection of the sovereign powers which would have to be ceded to the federated state, and (iii) the actual scheme put forward for initiating or introducing Federal Union. The first two matters will be considered in this chapter, and the last in Chapter VII.

The main argument is at times a little vague and elusive, but the essence of it is plain enough, and very simple. Mr. Curry, beginning with

the postulate that war must be eliminated, which must command universal agreement, asserts that the world is at present in a state of anarchy, and urgently needs a political organisation ; and that for this anarchy, which breeds war, there must be substituted a world community, with its own organs of administration.

He simplifies the problem by treating anarchy as crystallised or manifested in unrestricted state sovereignty, and it is thus a fair representation, I think, of his case to put it in the form of the syllogism which I gave above, in Chapter I, namely :

Wars continue because of state sovereignty, *i.e.*, of the existence of a number of rival states each completely sovereign and independent :

Federal Union will abolish state sovereignty ;

Therefore, Federal Union will abolish war.

#### STATE SOVEREIGNTY—SCAPEGOAT OR CAUSE

My comments on this first point, the main argument, can be given briefly. That the world is in a state of anarchy, few would deny ; but it seems fallacious to suggest that that anarchy is the real source of war. The anarchy we see is merely one of the results of the economic system, and wars, if we isolate them for a moment from the general anarchy of which they are part, are another result of the same cause. The economic system produces anarchy because it is of its essence that private enterprise should be left free to develop what activities and developments it wishes, on the basis of profit and without regard to the real needs of the community ; and

the same economic system produces wars because it creates conflicts between powerful groups of private interests, too fierce and deep in the long run for solution by any means less decisive and terrible than war. In short, the present world anarchy is a reflection of the economic and social system, and those who attribute it to anything else are mistaking an effect for a cause.

The main argument, that to substitute a world community for this anarchy will end war, could thus be answered simply by pointing out that, since anarchy is not the true cause of war, one is seeking to eliminate a false cause, leaving the real one untouched. The argument that wars continue because of state sovereignty, although I must consider it a little later in this chapter, by an examination of concrete instances, is in truth merely a repetition of the same fallacy of assuming an effect to be a cause.

Thus at the beginning it is impossible to accept Mr. Curry's premise as correct ; and if the premise is not accepted, the rest of his syllogism falls to the ground ; but it may be here said that, in picking out state sovereignty as the root of all evil, the advocates of Federal Union are merely selecting as a scapegoat one result or one manifestation of the radical evil. The contention that wars continue because of state sovereignty, and that the elimination of state sovereignty will therefore bring wars to an end, bears a tragic resemblance to the argument that prevailed before 1914, when hopes were built on arbitration, namely, that wars occur because there is no peaceful means of settling disputes between states,



that arbitration furnishes such a means, and that therefore arbitration will end war. The sad answer in either case is that this happy result will only be achieved if the potential belligerents will genuinely accept the arbitration, or the federation, and that they will not and cannot do this whilst the root causes of war persist and keep them apart and in conflict.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF POWERS

I come now to the second point, the manner of the distribution of the sovereign powers. Before examining this, I should mention again that, of the three possible forms which the proposed world community might take, the super-state, the league form, and the single federated state to which existing states would cede the portions of their sovereignty, Mr. Curry selects as the most desirable the third form, for reasons which I need not discuss or criticise.

Under his proposals, this federal state would possess an elected legislature, and the particular sovereign functions which in his view should be surrendered by the constituent states to the federal state are (i) foreign policy ; (ii) armed forces ; (iii) economic relations between states (*e.g.*, tariffs) ; (iv) international finance (markets, raw materials, capital export) ; (v) colonies ; (vi) communications (posts, telegraphs, shipping) ; (vii) currency ; (viii) migration ; (ix) world guarantee against state censorships.

This distribution of functions corresponds in the main to that to be found in practice in most

existing governments having a federal constitution. It follows the distribution laid down in the United States Constitution, over a century and a half ago, as from time to time subsequently amended. Indeed, *Union Now*, the book quoted so extensively by Mr. Curry, which was written in the early part of 1939 by Mr. Clarence K. Streit, an American journalist who had been stationed for some time in Europe, was expressly based on the Constitution of the U.S.A.

To test the validity and practicability of the Federal Union proposals in the light of this distribution of functions, it will be sufficient to consider two or three of the functions proposed to be surrendered to the federation. Let me begin with "the economic relations between States," which it is suggested "must be governed by an organ of the world community" (Curry, p. 108). Mr. Curry asserts, with perfect correctness, that international trade is a species of warfare; "the spirit of tariffs," he says "is the spirit of warfare, and from such a spirit it is useless to expect a peaceful world." And he goes on to propose that such a spirit should be exorcised. But how? Whence comes this spirit? Why is it that no general agreement can be reached on tariffs, and why has the nineteenth-century prevalence of free trade over a wide area given place to the present predominance of tariffs and tariff warfare?

Until one knows why tariffs and similar restrictions, which every state imposes and nearly every statesman condemns, have become so universal and almost irremovable, the argument

that they can be got rid of by the establishment of a federal state cannot rest on any firm foundation.

#### TARIFFS AS WEAPONS

Very little reflection shows that in truth these restrictions form an integral part of the weapons of the economic warfare raging between the ruling groups in the modern industrial states ; and it is really impossible to conceive, without a completely reconstructed economy such as is not contemplated by the advocates of Federal Union, that the immensely powerful and widespread interests which depend on these restrictions for the prosperity of their industries in, say, the United States of America, would submit at the behest of a federal state and against their own desires—for that is what the surrender of sovereignty involves—to laying those industries bare to foreign competition. The mere differences of labour costs, introducing an element of inequality of competition, and so threatening the standards of living of the richer countries, are enough to show this impossibility.

This question was indeed, it may be recalled, put and answered some seven years ago, in circumstances not wholly dissimilar, when it confronted the World Economic Conference. At this, the most extensive gathering of representatives of states ever held, which was opened in the summer of 1933, the delegates devoted much time and many speeches to the problem, and in the end were unable to reach any common ground. The Conference was a monumental fiasco,

because it attempted, as Federal Union attempts, to leave untouched the existing economic structure, and at the same time to alleviate its evils by measures conflicting fundamentally with powerful interests within that structure. No such measures can achieve their object, for these interests will not concede to negotiation advantages which they would go to war to maintain if they could not maintain them otherwise. The reason in short is inherent in the whole nature of a modern industrial state. As I have explained, the development of the modern industrial state has reached a point where power based on ownership of the means of life has fallen into the hands of a comparatively small group of extremely rich men. Their interests are predominant, and more and more effectively influence the economic and political activities of their countries. Tariff struggles arise from the rivalry of interests between one group of rulers and another ; it is not merely a question of " a spirit of rivalry," which might evaporate or be exorcised ; it is the rivalry of deep and inescapable conflict, expressed in higher or lower prices and profits, in bankruptcies on the one hand and bigger aggregations of capital on the other.

#### PRIVATE POWER MEANS PUBLIC WAR

The more that power falls within each state into the hands of the millionaires, the greater and more dangerous is the conflict between their interests and those of their fellow millionaires in other states—a conflict which may persist for

years, in the shape of tariff fights and other economic clashes, merging finally, as we have seen in this century, into one destructive war after another. This is the essence of modern industrial states and of the relations between them, as demonstrated by the experience of the last four decades. Against this hideous tragedy there is only one road to victory; the reality within each State must be altered, and must give place to a wholly new reality, from which will follow as a consequence entirely different international relations.

The next "surrendered function" which I might usefully select for examination is that of currency. It provides a useful illustration of the present international anarchy, of the tough nature of the problem, and of the insufficiency with which it is treated by the advocates of Federal Union. I do not propose to enter into the whole question of money, which is both the measure used in exchange and the means of carrying through exchange—it has provided problems to perplex governments for long enough before our modern industrial states grew up—but I must touch to some extent upon the part it has played in some of the inter-State struggles of the last twenty years. I am driven to the conclusion that in this section of the problem Mr. Curry allows himself to treat a fundamental difficulty too superficially. For him a national currency is "merely a nuisance" and the fluctuations of money "mere foolishness." I may quote in full the dozen lines in which he disposes of it :

“Seventhly, there must be international control of currency. National currencies serve no useful purpose whatsoever. They are merely a nuisance. Before the war\* they were a very much mitigated nuisance, since the international gold standard was to all intents and purposes an international currency. Nowadays, when the gold standard is a thing of the past, travel and trade and every economic affair demanding a measure of foresight are impeded and frustrated by the fact that no one knows from one day to the next what his money will be worth in other parts of the world. In an interdependent world this is mere foolishness. The control of currency is therefore one of the prime functions of world government.” (P. 114.)

#### CURRENCY—NUISANCE OR WEAPON

As an expression of irritation, this passage commends itself to the man in the street, and especially to all who have suffered annoyance or loss from the present condition of the currencies ; but as a piece of reasoning in favour of the practicability and value of Federal Union it does not carry us very far. It is right and natural that Mr. Curry finds it absurd for one State to have quarrelsome relations with another ; but this is only the beginning. Currency difficulties cannot be eliminated by legislating about exchange rates, or by introducing a common coinage. One must face the fact that one group may have more money, more foreign exchange, than another, and may use that power for political or economic ends.

It is essential to investigate how the ~~conditions~~ conditions

\* I.e., the war of 1914-18 ; the present conflict began after Mr. Curry wrote his book.

which Mr. Curry rightly finds to be absurd, that is, repugnant to human reason, have come into existence, to discover the cause of the evil, and to proceed to the removal of that cause by its cure. I feel that Mr. Curry does not do this.

On examination of the passage just quoted, it becomes clear that he looks at the problem from the standpoint of its effect on the individual traveller or trader ; the problem of currency as a weapon in the conflicts between competing groups of the holders of power in each country is not examined. Yet this is the most serious feature of the currency question. Let us recall, for example, the currency war between the French Government under Raymond Poincaré and the German Government in the year 1923 when, in order to exact reparations, French troops were marched into the Ruhr, cutting off this important industrial district from the rest of Germany and thereby inflicting upon an already strained economy injuries which brought about an enormous inflation of German currency. The German mark, which before the last war was worth a small fraction less than a shilling, and in the years immediately following that war was worth around an English penny, fell in the year of the Ruhr invasion from week to week, until one could get first a million marks for a pound, and then 100,000,000, and then 1,000,000,000, until the price of a meal was reckoned in thousands of million of marks, and until the danger of revolution grew so rapidly that American and British financiers stepped in and restored the currency, in order to reach a

transitory settlement of the quarrel. But the quarrel itself arose from the nature of capitalism.

#### WORLD ECONOMIC FIASCO

Moreover, the fiasco of the World Economic Conference of 1933, already mentioned, was derived in part from problems of currency. Before the Conference, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, then Prime Minister in the National Government, travelled to the United States of America to discuss matters with the newly installed United States President, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Discussion was certainly necessary, for world trade had shrunk to a third of what it had been four years earlier, before the world economic crisis began in the autumn of 1929. But as Mr. MacDonald was sailing past the Statue of Liberty into New York Harbour, President Roosevelt proclaimed that the gold content of the dollar would be reduced to not less than 50 cents, and thereby enabled American exports to find their markets. This was a declaration of currency war between the two countries. The struggle between the pound and the dollar, *i.e.*, between the group of British "captains of Industry and of Finance," and the corresponding group in the U.S.A., became very fierce for a time.

These are only two examples, out of the many which might have been given, of the conflict of currencies arising from the nature of capitalism, from these huge aggregations of power in the modern industrial state.



A practical test of the reality of Federal Union may be made by asking whether, if in one form or another the federal state directed that the exchange rate, or exchange relations generally, between the U.S.A. and Britain was to be this, or that, showing an advantage to the industries of the one country or the other, there would be any real prospect of the country thus prejudiced acquiescing in the handicapping or destruction of its industries? More fundamentally, one should ask what prospect would there be of either country even surrendering its sovereignty into a federal state so as to make such a measure possible.

#### THE FRANC HAS A STING IN ITS TAIL

One other example showing how power is exercised within the State was seen in the behaviour of the ruling groups in France in the years 1936-37. It is perhaps not generally realised that the flight from the franc at that time was not a panic movement but a deliberate policy. The French Front Populaire had brought a great electoral victory in the summer of 1936; and this in turn was followed immediately by the gains of the 40-hour week, holidays with pay, terms of collective bargaining, and similar industrial advances. It was in order to halt and if possible reverse this tendency to social improvement that certain rich people in France deliberately took measures to upset the currency of their country and make its value fall heavily in relation to sterling and to the United States dollar.

This was a typical example of political depreciation of currency, carried out in this instance in order to negate certain social achievements which did not harmonise with the interests of a handful of rich and powerful men. The question of currency is far from being "merely a nuisance." It is one of the main weapons of a grim battle that we have watched (if our eyes have been open) for the last twenty years and more. It is one of the realities with which we have to reckon, and which cannot be dismissed as "mere foolishness." When the ruling group in a state is asked to surrender to a federal state powers which it might otherwise use to maintain its strength over "left" tendencies in its own country, its refusal will be at least as emphatic as if it were asked to surrender powers which it might need against rival groups in other states.

#### FREE MIGRATION FOR ALL ?

Another function of government allotted to the federal state by the advocates of Federal Union is that of migration, "the problem of the movements of population." This problem, says Mr. Curry (p. 115), "must come under the control of our World Federation" and the claim is made for "the recognised right for anyone to go anywhere, save for reasons of quarantine, and to be accepted anywhere as a citizen of the world." This, it will be seen, covers all questions of migration, including emigration, immigration, and refugees, questions which have come to notice in very painful forms in recent years. Once again, a little consideration makes one realise how

extremely difficult it is to hope that such a right will be made effective, or that any state will honestly and sincerely surrender the control of such migration to a federal state. How, whilst the present social structure persists, will Australia permit unrestricted immigration from Asiatic countries? How will Eastern Africa accept a flood of immigration from India? Or the United States accept unrestricted Japanese and Chinese entry into its Pacific territories? How indeed will any country accept an influx of cheap labour likely to depress the standards of its own working class. Under the conditions of the present system, there is no answer to these questions.

It may be recalled that the problem arose at the Versailles meetings which elaborated the League of Nations. The representative of Japan, Baron Makino, moved for a recognition of complete racial equality, and was strongly and effectively opposed by Lord Robert Cecil, and by President Wilson. Here, at what might well seem the moment of maximum amity and fraternity between allies, the conflicting interests of the Powers and the consequent development of "race hatred" and "colour bars" (which had shown themselves for long enough, notably in the exclusion of Japanese immigration into California as well as in the British Empire), were potent enough to override the unity of the allies, who on some other matters had reached a transitory stage of quasi-federation. Again and again one is driven back to the point that the nature of the modern industrial state, with its handful of very rich men as the real repository of power,

must itself be radically altered before any World Federation becomes practicable. This is not perhaps a pleasant conclusion, and we may well share the indignation of Mr. Curry at the present plight of refugees and others ; but indignation will be effective only when it finds a way to remove the fundamental causes of indignation.

I have probably carried far enough the consideration of examples drawn from the choice made by Federal Unionists of the functions proper to the federated state. The examination of three at random has shown in each case that the root of the matter is left untouched by any scheme of federation within the existing economic system. The reader can himself or herself consider the other suggested functions and work out what chance there could be, except under a world Socialist system, of any effective federal control of any of these functions.

#### ELECTING A POLYGLOT PARLIAMENT

Before concluding this chapter, it is necessary to examine the nature of the federated legislature contemplated by Mr. Curry. It is, of course, vital to any federation that there should be full and accurate definition not only of functions but also of legislative bodies ; and Mr. Curry contemplates as essential that the federal legislature shall be directly elected. Two aspects of this proposal for electoral democracy require to be considered here. The first is the consideration of the realities of democracy within each state ; the second, that of the true substance of the relations between the respective states.

## DEMOCRACY IN GOLDEN CHAINS

Now, in each of these cases, the advocates of Federal Union rest on an assumption. In the first, the assumption is that elections can be taken at their face value as achieving a more or less ideal democracy, without investigating the conditions under which the elections are carried on ; but in truth it is notorious that only too many of the ostensibly democratic elections and governments in the present-day world are largely fakes. The right to vote, for example, is possessed by millions of German citizens, but no one would pretend that this results in free and unfettered elections or in anything that can be fairly described as democracy ; and there are still many countries where honest management of elections is unknown, and where Government candidates are automatically assured of a majority.

Moreover, these limitations and falsifications are as nothing in comparison to the evil work achieved by the power of wealth to warp and twist the operation of democratic institutions. If there is one outstanding feature of the preponderant influence of the "finance-capital" groups inside a modern state, it is the way in which they can use their power to get the Government of their choice, or, on the rare occasions when they fail to do so, to bend to their own purposes whatever Government is chosen. Take the case of the present Parliament of the French Republic, which depended to begin with upon a Left Wing majority. By the early summer of 1938, M. Daladier, as was shown by his speech

against the social programme of the Popular Front, was acting as the spokesman of the French millionaires against the interests of the trade unionists who had formed the bulk of the Left majority. The "two hundred families," that group of very rich people who hold power in France, had demonstrated that power by organising the flight from the franc : and precisely this currency question which we have seen would baffle a World Federation (on the basis of the present economic system) was also the sign of the power held by the industrial and financial bosses of France. Similar power and similar weapons could largely frustrate the measures of a world legislature or the electoral methods (no matter how pure or how apparently wealth-proof) by which it was chosen. The composition of the Federal legislature would indeed have all the defects of existing parliaments. The candidates in countries with developed electoral machinery would be selected by that machinery, and the ruling interests whose quarrels are interwoven in the causes of war would carry their literally fatal rivalries into the new legislature. In the countries where no such machinery exists, the representation of the ruling interests would be ensured even more directly and surely.

In relation to the second aspect of the proposal, the assumption is that all States in the World Federation are alike, varying only in size and in their geographical and physical and other such features. The distinction of Great Power and Lesser Power, of the big modern industrial State like the United States or Great Britain, and the

“ client ” states which are under their influence, is ignored. Of course, if there were world socialism, this would be accurate enough ; but, as Federal Union is recommended as enabling capitalism to continue, it is unreal to ignore the differences between Great Powers, Lesser Powers and Client States, or to assume that it is of no importance. Just as the luminary Jupiter exercises its gravitational pull upon other planets, not to mention its own moons, so the Great Powers will exercise their gravitational pull upon the Lesser States—“ smaller neutrals,” as they are called to-day—not to mention the direct satellites, so long as capitalism dominates.

Any attempt therefore to think out the composition by election of a world legislature, without reference to the great and greedy aggregations of power which exist in the big states, omits something as essential as what in celestial mechanics used to be called the Force of Gravitation.

There are, thus, some unjustified assumptions and unresolved problems inherent in the apparently simple proposal for an elected legislature of the World Federation.

## CHAPTER VII

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEDERAL STATE,

THOSE who have read so far, and have seen the practical difficulties that obviously beset the Federal Union proposals, will be anxious to know what concrete suggestions are made by the advocates of Federal Union for the formation and introduction of the world federation, which should embrace three score sovereign states and a thousand or more nationalities ; they will want, if I may borrow the language of company formation, to see the prospectus.

As this point Mr. Curry, closely following Mr. Streit, presents us with a surprise and something of a disappointment ; to repeat the metaphor of companies, he forms the preliminary syndicate and not the operating company. He abandons, or rather postpones, the idea of a federation of the world, or of most of the states in the world, and proposes to begin by a Federal Union of fifteen states as original members, as follows :

1. United States of America
2. France
3. Britain
4. Australia
5. New Zealand
6. Union of South Africa
7. Canada
8. Ireland



9. Switzerland
10. Netherlands
11. Belgium
12. Denmark
13. Norway
14. Sweden
15. Finland.

## HALF A LOAF

This must be a severe discouragement even to the most optimistic. At the very least it puts off to a possibly distant future the realisation of a union embracing all states and submitting them all, somehow and in some degree, to a central sovereign control in the interests of permanent peace. At the best it could achieve no more than a slight reduction in the number of fully-sovereign states in the world, leaving the infinitely varied and infinitely malevolent causes of inter-state conflicts and wars still to operate on a large variety of states ; and a little consideration shows that in truth the proposal can produce no more than a new alliance or grouping of states, which even if not deliberately directed against other states left outside the circle of original members is only too likely to develop in that sense.

This proposal surely destroys the whole theory of Federal Union or at the least transforms it into something entirely different. One may perhaps illustrate the matter by an analogy. If a marine architect, confronted with a hull which had in it over 60 gaping holes, large and small, were to put forward a plan for stopping up these holes with some material which might or might not

stand the pressure of water and the stress of storms, the question for critics would be whether the resistant strength of the material was sufficient to make the ship seaworthy, or whether a new hull would have to be built. But, if the architect went on to propound, as a practical measure, that one should begin by stopping up just 15 of these over 60 holes, and let the ship sail in that condition, we should stare at him in amazement, especially if he appeared to regard his new scheme as a method of carrying out his original proposition. Yet it is something like this that has taken place in the development of what began as a proposal for a world community and a world federation.

I must, however, follow the Federal Union proposals to the end, and study the fifteen original states of which the first Federal Union is to be composed, and still more, the states which are to be left out. These latter, being numerically and in some other ways the more important, may be taken first.

To begin with, Germany is omitted. In this respect the proposals are considerably inferior to those made for the League of Nations during the last war, which were understood to include all the belligerents. It is true that when the war was over the proposals were watered down (or "blooded-up") in the peace terms imposed on the vanquished; but the proper comparison for our purposes is between the present proposals and the unofficial League of Nations' plans put forward during the last war.

Secondly, in addition to Germany, the other

main axis powers, Japan and Italy, are excluded. This ensures already that a majority of the Great Powers are to be outside the Federal Union at its beginning.

Thirdly, all the South and Central American States are excluded. While some of these may be considered backward, others are very highly developed. The only reason which seems to cover the exclusion of all of them is that they come under the Monroe Doctrine and form part of the economic hinterland of the U.S.A. In this way, it seems, Washington would be expected by the Federal Unionists to speak for Latin America, in the same way as they would expect London to speak for India and the Middle East ; but if that is the reason, there is not only the difficulty that such a state as the Argentine Republic might well not be content to have its industrial or political interests, or even its destiny, largely disposed of by the U.S.A., but in addition it seems very strange that the five principal Dominions of Great Britain should be included.

Fifthly, the states of the Mediterranean littoral, save for France, are excluded. This is the more remarkable since it was this sheet of water as a uniting force that was taken by Mr. Curry (quoting Mr. Streit) as the prime example and precedent for the geographical basis of the Federal Union.

#### HALF THE WORLD OMITTED

Sixthly, and seventhly, the colonial countries and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are

omitted. These omissions are of such importance for a proper judgment of the scheme that I shall deal with them separately. Here it is only interesting to note that in China, the East Indies, and the U.S.S.R., we have respectively one-quarter, one-sixth and one-eleventh of the human race successively excluded, that is to say, one-half in all.

In the light of these remarkable exclusions, it is necessary to scrutinise the inclusions rather carefully, and when we do so it appears that the fifteen states resolve themselves into three Great Powers, five constituents of one of them, and seven minor states ; the nucleus of the " world community " is thus really no more than ten states. Moreover, each of the seven minor states is to a greater or less extent a client state of one or more of the three Great Powers. In substance, this Union really comes down to the three Great Powers, who alone will count effectively ; this reality is tacitly acknowledged by the Federal Unionists themselves, who stipulate that the constitution of their Union of these fifteen states shall come into force as soon as it is ratified by ten out of the fifteen members, *or by the United Kingdom, the U.S.A. and France.*

Now, if it were not that this federation is introduced as an initial step towards a world community, and if it were simply examined for what it is (and not what it hopes or promises), it would be recognised as simply a somewhat closely-woven three-power-pact, similar to many previous military and diplomatic combinations. Readers of my *Light on Moscow* and *Must the*

*War Spread?* will remember that the Four-Power-Pact of Western European states (which was never nearer fruition than at Munich, in 1938, and which had been pursued, with varying degrees of zeal for some fifteen years previously), was the foremost example of such a combination. In the proposals for a Four-Power-Pact, as in all or most of these pacts of the Great Powers, it was assumed that the neighbouring lesser powers, or a group of them, would fall into line. Indeed, the Locarno Treaties of 1925, which were one of the first expressions of the concept, included not only France and Italy, Great Britain and Germany, but also the lesser powers of Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Poland, the last two having their own arrangements with Rumania and Yugoslavia. In the same way, in the period before the war of 1914-18, there were two three-power pacts, the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy, on the one hand, and the Triple Entente of Great Britain, France and Tsarist Russia on the other, reinforced by the Anglo-Japanese military and naval alliance. In each case, there were satellite powers attached, the list of which lengthened after war had broken out.

The grouping of Great Britain, France and U.S.A. which is here proposed is indeed no different from what was intended as an integral part of the peace settlement of 1918-19, which only failed to reach fruition because of the repudiation of President Woodrow Wilson's policy by the American Senate.

## ONLY A LABEL

There is, it is plain, nothing but the destination-label of "world community," or "Federal Union," to indicate that the proposed federation is more than a resuscitation of a Versailles grouping, to take the place of the Four-Power Pact whose prospects were shattered when the Munich powers quarrelled.

The suspicion naturally arises, however innocent the advocates of Federal Union may be of any sinister intention, that governments and others may welcome these Federal Union proposals solely for the possibilities which they offer of using a relatively powerful grouping of states as a spearhead against some other state or states.

In this light, it is important to examine the significance of the exclusion of the U.S.S.R. from Federal Union. There are several considerations to be borne in mind. First, the reader should cast his mind back for a year into the uneasy period of transitory peace, and realise that the Federal Union projects which we are now discussing were evolved in the period *after* Munich, but before the beginning of the present war. (The alterations made after the beginning of the present war bore chiefly on points of war aims.)

Secondly, it should be remembered that the Four-Power-Pact proposals, in all their varying forms over fifteen years, were known to be directed in the main against the U.S.S.R., although they could also have provided at times

a nucleus for a combination against the U.S.A.

Thirdly, from the standpoint of what it is now fashionable to call "power politics," this first stage of Federal Union, regarded as a new Three-Power-Pact, would appear by virtue of the exclusion of the U.S.S.R. to be potentially directed against that country, or easily divertible against her. At the same time it contains possibilities, derived from the history of four-power-pact negotiations, of an alliance against Germany.

#### U.S.S.R. IS LEFT OUT

Fourthly, the exclusion of the U.S.S.R. is the more remarkable from the standpoint of federalism because that state itself provides a modern example of a federated Union, and one which is often regarded by Socialists as the forerunner of the United States of the World, a federation of socialist states. Yet this modern example is not only not preferred as an example or "draft" to the eighteenth century constitution of the United States, but is actually not examined at all. To refer to the Union of South Africa, where the majority of the population is deprived of the vote, or to the eighteenth century federalism of the U.S.A., or to the peculiar and specially conditioned Federation of Switzerland, and at the same time to ignore this very remarkable example of Federalism, at once the biggest in scale, the most modern in time and the most thoroughgoing in its practical elaboration, is to deprive the student and the constitutional draftsman of most valuable material. It may be useful

to give here a description in outline of this constitution, which is perhaps particularly appropriate at the present time, when discussions on the Rights of Man and on Federalism are widespread.

In the chapters which make up this fundamental law of the U.S.S.R. the first, giving the Organisation of Society, constitutes a statement of the stage of socialism already reached by the U.S.S.R. The second chapter, The Organisation of the State, begins with the vital Federal provisions. For convenience I give in an Appendix to this chapter portions of these first two Chapters out of the thirteen that make up the Constitution, but I will quote in full here the opening article of the Second Chapter, Article 13, which runs thus :

“ The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a federated State formed on the basis of the voluntary association of the following Soviet Socialist Republics possessing equal rights :

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic  
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Azerbaidjan Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Tadjik Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic.”

Article 14 sets out the subjects that come under Federal jurisdiction, *i.e.*, those in respect



of which sovereignty has been ceded to the Union; and Article 15 lays down that the sovereignty of the Union Republics is restricted only by the limits set forth in Article 14, and that "outside of these limits each republic exercises state power independently."

Here then is an example of a democratic federal constitution with a legislature elected on the basis of universal suffrage, which would well repay a study of all its chapters. Indeed in its Tenth Chapter "The Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens," beginning with the Right to Work, there is food for thought to all who have been discussing Mr. Wells's proposal of a new statement of the Rights of Man—with this difference, that the one is a project, while the other is in operation as a fundamental law.

There is one other article worth noting here, Article 17, which says, "To every Union Republic is reserved the right freely to secede from the U.S.S.R." The importance of this provision is, of course, that it carries out, in contradistinction to most other federal constitutions, the principle of the democratic *right* of nations to *self-determination, including the right of secession*, which before the war was part of the programme of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (the Bolsheviks), and re-asserts it in the most full and formal way. It goes further in this respect than many Federal Union supporters desire; indeed, one of the many problems of Federal Union—if and when it had to face practical application—would be the question of secession. If the right of secession be conceded,

a few states or even one major state, by seceding after the bulk of the states of the world have come into the federation, could largely destroy the effectiveness of the scheme, reinforce or re-create the possibilities of conflict between state and state, or state and federation, and drive the idea of permanent peace into the background. If on the other hand the right of secession be withheld, there is no effective sanction to prevent any fairly important state from leaving the federation when it finds that it has no real feeling of union or communion of interest with its fellow-members, or it is disappointed with federal provisions or decisions as to its share of trade or raw materials, or its tariffs, or as to any one of a hundred other problems !

The omission on the part of Mr. Curry and other advocates of Federal Union to study the most modern and elaborate of federated states, the U.S.S.R., is somewhat remarkable ; and if one repairs the omission and considers that state and its constitution in detail one may become convinced that it provides a convincing demonstration of the thesis that a genuine world federation is possible on a socialist basis and not otherwise.

Mr. Curry does, of course, give an explanation as to why in his view the U.S.S.R. should be excluded from the nuclear 15 states (which as we have seen really amount to the British, French and American empires). His argument is that a beginning has to be made with states in roughly the same stage of political develop-

ment and that, "whether Russia has not yet reached this stage, or has already far surpassed it, is doubtless a matter for discussion." Now, matters for discussion should be discussed; and if the U.S.S.R. proves to have "already far surpassed" these other countries, it may turn out to be an argument for federation on the U.S.S.R. model and not on Mr. Curry's model. The first contemplates the federation of a ring of Socialist states which have eliminated the economic stresses and rivalries that as already mentioned provide the root causes of war, and the second is confined to the federation of a few or many states under the existing system, with its sad record of war-making.

If on full study we conclude that the Socialist state offers the better model, it will certainly affect our attitude, not merely to the question of whether the U.S.S.R. should be included in Federal Union, but even more to Federal Union itself.

Mr. Curry, for his part definitely opposes the inclusion of the U.S.S.R., saying: "Surely it cannot be maintained that the present political and economic system of Russia is suitable for amalgamation with that of the countries still in the stage of liberal capitalism." It differs, he says "in too many important respects" and leaves open for the moment whether it differs for better or worse. Later in his book, however, he makes it clear that he thinks the U.S.S.R. differs for worse, and is not fit for inclusion, being less democratic than the fifteen nuclear States of his Federal Union.

## MR. CURRY'S DILEMMA

I suggest that at this point Mr. Curry's argument is in a dilemma. The U.S.S.R. has plainly the forms of the fullest possible democracy ; and if Mr. Curry should maintain that it has the forms but not the reality of democracy—a point on which I would not agree with him—he is in the difficulty that in respect of his fifteen nuclear states, as I have already mentioned, he has made no attempt to differentiate between form and reality. And, if he does not take any such point, there is no explanation as to why he should brush on one side the full democratic franchise for all over the age of 18 that is found in the U.S.S.R. and prefer, say, the French Republic in which women are not allowed yet to have the vote (even in the days before M. Daladier had disfranchised so many constituencies by removing their elected representatives, who were not to the taste of the French Cabinet). Still less is it to be understood why he should prefer the Union of South Africa, where it is not a question of sex being disfranchised, but of a vast majority of the adult population having no right to vote, and where even the limited suffrage rights earlier enjoyed by the natives of the Cape of Good Hope have been taken away by recent legislation. Even the United States of America, which is to such an extent made the pattern and the model of Federal Union, presents him with considerable difficulties. The United States has been notorious for years for its denial to the negro population of their constitutional rights.

## “ WINKING AT INFRINGEMENTS ”

On this point, Mr. Curry does display some uneasiness, but he finds an astonishing solution for the habitual violation of the constitutional rights of negroes, saying : “ It might even be desirable to wink at certain infringements.” This really awkward line of reasoning seems to run thus :

- (1) The Soviet Union must not be admitted to Federal Union because it is “ different ” ;
- (2) The important difference is that it is less democratic than, say, the United States ;
- (3) But the United States sins against democratic principles ;
- (4) Therefore it is desirable to “ wink at certain infringements ” of democracy in the U.S.A.

Argument on these lines surely carries its own refutation. But on the general question whether the U.S.S.R. can claim the reality of democracy, the advocates of Federal Union who seek to rule it out briefly as undemocratic have no right to pass over in silence the formidable authority of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, in their great study *Soviet Communism : A New Civilisation*. They describe the U.S.S.R. as a “ multiform democracy ” and go on to say “ Soviets and trade unions, co-operative societies and voluntary associations, provide for the personal participation in public affairs of an unprecedented proportion of the entire adult population.” Let me quote their authoritative words in more detail :

"The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics does not consist of a government and a people confronting each other, as all other great societies have hitherto been. It is a highly integrated social organisation in which, over a vast area, each individual man, woman or youth, is expected to participate in three separate capacities ; as a citizen, as a producer, and as a consumer ; to which should be added membership of one or more voluntary organisations intent on bettering the life of the community. . . . In short, the U.S.S.R. is a government instrumented by all the adult inhabitants, organised in a varied array of collectives, having their several distinct functions, and among them carrying on, with a strangely new political economy, nearly the whole wealth production of the country. And when, in addition, we find them evolving a systematic philosophy and a new code of conduct, based upon a novel conception of man's relation to the universe and man's duty to man, we seem to be dealing with something much greater than a constitution. We have, indeed, to ask whether the world may not be witnessing in the U.S.S.R. the emergence of a new civilisation."

This work, which crowned a lifetime of the most serious and painstaking social investigation, including the first full study of English Local Government, and many works on Trade Unionism and Co-operation, is not one which can simply be passed over in silence.

If I may take one other criterion of democracy, which has come very much to the fore in recent years as distinguishing the countries of Liberal capitalism from those of illiberal capitalism, namely the treatment of the Jews, the U.S.S.R. appears as far more democratic. Even in those countries where the Fascist treatment of the Jews

is strongly reprobated, in France, in Britain, in the U.S.A., there is nevertheless a remarkably large amount of anti-semitism. The U.S.S.R. is the only country where anti-semitism has disappeared.

When one remembers further that in capitalist countries the operation of the political machinery of democracy is thwarted in practice to so grave an extent by the power of wealth and in particular of the control of industrial production, the claim of the U.S.S.R. to be a better democracy becomes more formidable than ever.

#### A FALLACIOUS TEST

The truth is that it is difficult to find a less apt or reliable test of qualification for admission as an "original member" than that of the forms of political democracy, at a period of crisis when the best of political democracies may be really a plutocracy and any other than the best must be a hollow sham.

But further study of the history of the formation of the U.S.S.R., apart from the claims of this and of other states to rank as true democracies, really forces one to a more important conclusion, namely that the numerous and fundamental differences between the Socialist country and the countries of Capitalism demonstrate that the characteristics of the Socialist state admit easily enough of a federation of Socialist Republics and ultimately of a world Socialist federation, whilst those of the Capitalist states—liberal or non-

liberal—make it impossible to have a world Capitalist federation. This goes far to prove that Federal Union, conceived as a world community, is an unreal dream, and that in practice it could at the most amount to a “Holy Alliance” of a few great powers and their satellite states.

The genuine federation of equal states which has already been built up from the immense variety of unequally developed peoples that inhabited the Tsarist territories which are now Soviet Russia was only feasible by virtue of the nature of Soviet power. The Revolution of 1917 had proclaimed *and applied* the principle of self-determination, and this, coupled with the doctrine of equality of men and the absence of exploitation of man by man, or race by race, rendered the miracle possible. It even produced the phenomenon that, after the Civil War, certain of the new Republics, which up to that time had been connected only by treaty, on a purely contractual basis, came together (on the initiative of the Transcaucasian Republics) at the end of 1922, and formed the single federal state of the U.S.S.R.

Various circumstances were responsible for this. There were economic needs (resulting from the ravages of the civil wars) which could not be met so long as each republic continued its isolated existence. Secondly, the danger of new attacks from without rendered inevitable the creation of a united front of the republics in face of capitalist encirclement. Finally, as was stated in the preamble to the 1924 Constitution of the U.S.S.R., “the very structure of Soviet government, which is international in its



class nature, impels the labouring masses of the Soviet Republics to unite in one Socialist family."

Here, in this sentence, we have the clue both to the successful existence of the federated state called the U.S.S.R. and to the possible existence of a world *socialist* federation. It is a question of unity "in one socialist family." It is a question of a camp of Socialism, in which, as the above-mentioned preamble could proudly claim, "we have mutual confidence and peace, national freedom and equality, the peaceful co-existence and fraternal collaboration of peoples." Here, incidentally, the criteria of Professor Dicey cited in Chapter V happen to apply very thoroughly to the U.S.S.R. in its origin and development, just as they applied to the eighteenth century origin and development—under the circumstances—of the U.S.A.

On the other hand, the states in ex-Tsarist territories which had been built up on a basis of either liberal or illiberal Capitalism showed no disposition to enter the U.S.S.R. ; nor, had they so desired, could they have been welcomed. The preamble to the Constitution of 1924 laid it down that admission to the Union was "open to all Socialist Soviet Republics, whether now existing or hereafter to arise" ; and it was in accordance with this that the republics of Central Asia were admitted to the Union only *after* they had become Socialist. But a Capitalist country could no more be admitted into this federated state, into this "one socialist family," than a pound of butter could be added to four o'clock.

Within the Capitalist countries, private

property in the means of production and the exploitation of man by man still disunites the peoples, besides antagonising the rival groups of rulers. They are split into hostile sections. There is an attitude, ill-concealed in these later years, of chauvinism, superiority and contempt towards the colonial peoples and other sections of the population. The unequal distribution of the private property in the means of production which forms the basis of Capitalist society fosters enmity, conflict and struggle.

This contrast between the real equal Federalism on the basis of Socialism, and the limited possibilities of federation among capitalist states, presents one of the most formidable obstacles to the realisation of Federal Union under the existing system.

#### THE COLONIAL PROBLEM

Another important test is that of colonial territories. Here there are both formal difficulties and difficulties of fundamental importance.

Dealing first with the formal difficulties, let me take British India as the most important example. She is excluded from the fifteen nuclear states, but in due course, if there were ever to be a world federation, the question of her entry would have to be considered. Would it be Britain or India herself who would agree to throw portions of her sovereignty into the Federation? I suppose that, since the advocates of Federal Union accept the political *status quo*, they would say that it would be for Britain to do this; but

a majority of the Indian electorate would deny any right in Britain to affect the sovereignty of India, which they claim as their own, and the federal state would thus be in the dilemma that it would have either to ignore without just cause or excuse the claim of the Indian people to assert their own sovereignty and decide their own future, or else to run counter to the wishes of Britain, one of the two most powerful constituent states, reluctant no doubt to accept any ruling but its own, or even to remain in a federation which would thus rob it of sovereignty over India. How is such a problem to be solved? Moreover, who will decide when India is sufficiently developed to be ready for admission? Britain and India would surely not agree on this: the former would tend to the view that admission should be delayed, and the latter would assert that she is of full status already. She would have good ground for such an assertion. On the qualifications of devotion to freedom and democracy, she may well claim to be included amongst the first of the fifteen, having had to struggle long to achieve some measure of democracy, and being consequently inclined to value it more highly than many of the inhabitants and most of the governments of the nuclear fifteen. It will be remembered that, at the elections held in India three years ago, an overwhelming majority was given to the Indian National Congress, which has been in the foreground of those who have protested their devotion to liberty and democracy. The majority was stated to be two to one, out of nearly thirty

million voters. If this be so, and if it is compared with the National Government's vote of eleven and a half million against ten million, it would appear that Congress has an overwhelmingly greater right to speak for the people of India than Mr. Neville Chamberlain has to speak for the people of Britain. Moreover, in eight of the eleven provinces of India, governments were formed from the Indian National Congress.

Now Mr. Curry is aware of these formal points and has endeavoured to meet them. He admits the importance of India and China, "between them comprising about half the human race," yet rules them out of his nuclear original states on the ground that "a federal government for all mankind is not immediately practicable." He puts forward a number of solutions for this difficulty of omitting half mankind: but I am not sure that his observations are consonant with one another. He says, "At first sight the answer seems to be, leave them alone." He does not, however, file this petition in "Federal" bankruptcy, but goes on to say they should be secured "freedom from external molestation." So far, so good—even if not very consistent. But he then says, "As regards India, all that is necessary is British good faith." This seems a somewhat optimistic simplification. "Good faith" on the part of a Capitalist government of Britain, unwilling to concede the independence which so many in India demand, will not move many mountains; and to speak of "British good faith" in a book which expressly assumes

permanent peace to be obtainable without Socialism, and thus assumes also that we may continue to have such Governments as those we have experienced recently, is to give very little encouragement to the hopes and aspirations of subject peoples. We may doubt if Federal Union, thus recommended, would find wide acceptance in India.

#### A CRUCIAL POINT

The whole question of the colonies, however, goes much deeper than these formal points, which in the case of India, Mr. Curry meets so easily. The crucial nature of this question is shown by the fact that in all the varieties of Federal Union, including those which see the nuclear states as a West European Federation, the treatment of the colonial question is similar. Those amongst the advocates of Federal Union who would favour the immediate adherence of a non-Fascist Germany to the group of nuclear states also have the same view as the rest about the colonies, namely, to quote Mr. Curry, that "non-self-governing dependencies would be placed under the control of an international commission representative of all the states members of the Federal Union."

Moreover, in the case of all the previous schemes for a Federal Europe, right back to the opening years of the last war, the same outlook is found. Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, the leading authority on "Pan-Europa," which is discussed in Chapter VIII, in his book *Europe Must Unite*, published in English in the spring

of 1940, but written mainly in the summer and autumn of 1939, treats the existing system of exploiting the colonial races as essential to the success of the scheme. After stating his view that, with the European states ranged in perpetual trade conflicts with one another, mass poverty in Europe is incurable, he writes :

" Help can only come from a great European market with four hundred million consumers, *supplemented by the colonies belonging to the European states.*"\* . . . " By this method we could . . . put an end to the distress of millions of *European* men, women and children."

Even regarded in the " pure " form in which it first emerged a quarter of a century ago, when the proposal for a United States of Europe had in it no element of antagonism to Socialist states, which did not then exist, the proposal for a United States of Europe was open to the fatal objection that it was bound to turn into a joint plan for the plunder of the colonies, in which the Great Powers would join together for the more effective protection of their colonial interests.

Now, the fundamental objection to this proposal is easily seen. The nature of a modern industrial state is such that those who hold power within it must strive to get the utmost profit from markets, raw materials, and spheres of investment, as my quotation from Mr. Curry's own statement earlier shows. In such a situation, one of two things must happen. Either the world federation must be based on a change to

\* The italics are mine.

a new economic system (Socialism) in each modern industrial state, in which case the whole situation of the former colonies is completely altered and they become nations and peoples with equal rights, participating in the world Socialist Federation; or else the new Union is not based on Socialism, in which case the consequent changes cannot take place, and the modern industrial states remain as before, with their vassal states, their colonies, markets, and spheres of influence. On this basis, "Half of mankind," indeed considerably more than half, *must* be excluded from equal rights, which of itself involves the final abandonment of any *world* federation plan and the substitution of a mere grouping of a certain number of states.

This is not world federation, nor any cure for war, as I have explained, and it involves moreover that, unless the colonial peoples are to be taken as voluntarily submitting for ever to subjection and exploitation, and accepting permanent exclusion from the world state, Federal Union must founder on the rock of the colonial problem alone; and the "democratic principle" on which the advocates of Federal Union would base their practical schemes must turn in practice into its exact opposite—into plans which, no matter how many good intentions be expressed, can only make it more difficult for the colonies to be free.

Thus we see one more proof that the attempt to bring about permanent peace by governmental and constitutional changes while retaining the present economic system remains is doomed to

failure. The transformation from our present world to a world of permanent peace can only be brought about by a social change.

#### OIL AND WATER WILL NOT MIX

In conclusion, I may repeat what I have written in Chapter V on the difficulties of union between states of such different outlook and interests. It provides a useful test of the real practicability of Federal Union under the present economic system to examine, however briefly, how any two of the powers could achieve a feeling—as Dicey puts it—in favour of union although not of unity, in the field either of sentiment or of industrial or commercial interests, which would make it possible to federate effectively without the elimination of conflicts of interest which can only be achieved by Socialism. Take the two countries which are in some ways most closely akin, the U.S.A. and Britain; is it possible to conceive of either of them, or of any of the financiers or manufacturers who so largely control them, under the existing methods of restricted production in search of profit, ceding to a new federation—even when they would have their share in the legislature of that federation—the right to raise or lower their tariffs, to alter their currency exchange values, or to take any other of the various measures which might diminish or even cripple the prosperity of some of their industries?

Or one may consider as an example the difficulties arising from the fact that there is not in technique or industry, or capital



organisation, one steady stream of progress at a uniform tempo throughout the modern industrial states. They develop at different levels, or, if at the same level, then at different speeds. Japan, a feudal society eighty years ago, a new rising power forty years ago, a fully developed industrial state twenty years ago, is to-day ruthlessly thrusting Britain and the United States out of the Chinese market and endeavouring to form China into one huge Japanese Colony. In the face of this powerful development, the system of treaties erected twenty years ago fell to pieces ; and what reason have we, amid the ruins of the Versailles Treaty and the Nine-Power-Pact of Washington, to imagine that some other plan for making a stable world can prevent this kind of development—so long as the present economic system remains untouched ? This inequality of development not merely prevents the establishment of stability in the supposed federation of “ democratic ” states, but would provide in practice intolerable strains on the federal state. If, say, the main export markets in cotton goods were divided between Britain and Japan in proportions which represented a roughly just distribution in 1940, and Japan’s productive capacity, or need for foreign exchange, increased so rapidly that she felt compelled to apply to the parliament of the federal state for a larger quota, would she accept a refusal ? Or, if she were granted a large addition, would Great Britain accept the reduction of her own quota that would thus be brought about ? Where, in such practical illustrations as this, is the abolition of war, or its causes ?

## *APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VII*

### *CONSTITUTION OF THE U.S.S.R.*

#### *Chapter I—The Organisation of Society*

ARTICLE I: The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of workers and peasants. . . .

ARTICLE IV: The economic foundation of the U.S.S.R. is the socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the implements and means of production firmly established as a result of the liquidation of the capitalist system of economy, the abolition of private property in the implements and means of production, and the abolition of exploitation of man by man.

ARTICLE V: Socialist property in the U.S.S.R. bears either the form of state property (property of the whole people) or the form of co-operative and collective farm property (property of individual collective farms and property of co-operative associations).

ARTICLE VI: The land, mineral deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, railways, water and air transport, banks, means of communication, large state-organised agricultural enterprises such as state farms, machine and tractor stations and the like, as well as municipal enterprises and the principal dwelling-house properties in the cities and industrial localities, are

state property, that is, the property of the whole people.

ARTICLE VII : Public enterprises in collective farms and co-operative organisations, with their livestock and implements, products raised or manufactured by the collective farms and co-operative organisations, as well as their public structures, constitute the public socialist property of the collective farms and co-operative organisations.

Every collective farm household, in addition to its basic income from the public collective farm enterprise, has for its own use a plot of land attached to the house and, as personal property, an auxiliary establishment on the plot, a house, produce, animals and poultry, and minor agricultural implements—in accordance with the statutes of the agricultural artel.

ARTICLE VIII : The land occupied by collective farms is secured to them for their free use for an unlimited time, that is, for ever.

ARTICLE IX : Alongside the socialist system of economy, which is the predominant form of economy in the U.S.S.R., the law permits small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen based on their personal labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others.

ARTICLE X : The right of personal property of citizens in their income from work and in their savings, in their dwelling-houses and auxiliary household economy, their domestic furniture and utensils and objects of personal use and comfort, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, are protected by law.

ARTICLE XI : The economic life of the U.S.S.R. is determined and directed by the state plan of national economy for the purpose of increasing the public wealth, of steadily raising the material and cultural level of the toilers, and of strengthening the independence of the U.S.S.R. and its power of defence.

ARTICLE XII : In the U.S.S.R. work is the obligation and honourable duty of every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle : " He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

In the U.S.S.R. the principle of socialism is realised : " From each according to his ability, to each according to the work performed."

### *Chapter II—The Organisation of the State*

ARTICLE XIII : The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a federated state, formed on the basis of the voluntary association of the following Soviet Socialist Republics possessing equal rights :

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic  
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Azerbaidjan Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Tadjik Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic  
The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic.

ARTICLE XIV : The jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its

highest organs of power and organs of state administration, covers :

(a) Representation of the Union in international relations, conclusion and ratification of treaties with other states ;

(b) Questions of war and peace ;

(c) Admission of new republics into the U.S.S.R. ;

(d) Supervision over the observance of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. and ensuring that the Constitutions of the Union Republics conform with the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. ;

(e) Ratification of alterations of boundaries between Union Republics ;

(f) Ratification of the formation of new Territories and Regions and also of new Autonomous Republics within the Union Republics ;

(g) Organisation of the defence of the U.S.S.R. and the direction of all the armed forces of the U.S.S.R. ;

(h) Foreign trade on the basis of state monopoly ;

(i) Safeguarding the security of the state ;

(j) Determining the plans of national economy of the U.S.S.R. ;

(k) Approbation of the unified state budget of the U.S.S.R. as well as of the taxes and revenues which go to form the Union, Republican and local budgets ;

(l) Administration of the banks, industrial and agricultural establishments and enterprises and trading enterprises of all-Union importance ;

(m) Administration of transport and communications ;

(*n*) Direction of the monetary and credit system ;

(*o*) Organisation of state insurance ;

(*p*) Contracting and granting loans ;

(*q*) Determining the basic principles of land tenure and tenure of mineral deposits, forests and waters ;

(*r*) Determining the basic principles in the spheres of education and public health ;

(*s*) Organisation of a uniform system of national economic accounting ;

(*t*) Determining the principles of labour legislation ;

(*u*) Legislation governing the judicial system and judicial procedure ; criminal and civil codes ;

(*v*) Laws governing citizenship of the Union ; laws governing the rights of foreigners ;

(*w*) Passing of amnesty acts for the entire Union.

ARTICLE XV : The sovereignty of the Union Republics is restricted only within the limits set forth in Article XIV of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. Outside of these limits, each Union Republic exercises state power independently. The U.S.S.R. protects the sovereign rights of the Union Republics.

ARTICLE XVI : Each Union Republic has its own Constitution, which takes into account the specific features of the Republic and is drawn up in full conformity with the Constitution of the U.S.S.R.

ARTICLE XVII : To every Union Republic is reserved the right freely to secede from the U.S.S.R.

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ARTICLE XVIII : The territory of the Union Republics may not be altered without their consent.

ARTICLE XIX : The laws of the U.S.S.R. have equal force in the territory of all Union Republics.

ARTICLE XX : In the event of a discrepancy between a law of a Union Republic and the law of the Union, the all-Union law prevails.

ARTICLE XXI : Single Union citizenship is established for all citizens of the U.S.S.R.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FEDERAL UNION AS A SMOKE-SCREEN

THERE is no doubt that Federal Union is advocated by the great mass of its supporters, with perfect sincerity, as a means to the establishment of permanent peace ; and at first sight it would seem that the only question for the critic or the student to consider is whether it can achieve that object. If it could, the world would be saved from war. If, on the other hand, it cannot, it might still be thought at first sight that its advocacy does nothing worse than to create a grave obstacle to the winning of permanent peace, by diverting public enthusiasm and energies into the wrong channel, and lulling millions into a sense of false security.\*

But the sad truth is that there are far greater dangers associated with the advocacy of Federal Union, especially when it takes the form of suggesting partial federations such as that of the fifteen nuclear states. Partial combinations of states are only too often calculated to lead to war rather than to peace. They are a familiar feature of the gloomy landscape of power politics, and they have nothing to do with permanent peace. They have indeed in the past always been established for purposes of war rather than of even

\* On this point it is interesting to quote once again from Professor Dicey. Writing some years ago, he said : " Federalism, in short, has at present the vague, and therefore the strong and imaginative, charm which has been possessed at one time throughout Europe by the parliamentary constitutionalism of England and at another by the revolutionary republicanism of France."



transitory peace. At the present time, at this low ebb of international morals, it is only too probable—indeed it is certain—that the major capitalist powers, ever seeking new strength in the growing crisis, new means of rallying their populations behind policies that involve or may lead to war, new devices for averting the advance of Socialism, new weapons to maintain their colonial positions, will unscrupulously exploit for their own selfish and war-like object the goodwill and enthusiasm of the thousands of honest men and women who are supporting Federal Union in the belief that they are thereby working for permanent peace. In the reassuring disguise of instalments of Federal Union, these reactionary governments will build and rebuild their ordinary old-fashioned lethal groupings of powers for imperialist and anti-socialist ends.

Old wolves in new sheep's clothing, they will in reality be directed towards the maintenance of control over colonies and subject populations and against possible developments, whether from the peoples of the colonies or from the mass of the people at home, which might threaten the continued enjoyment by the governing class of their dominant position in the world.

Operations of this nature have already been carried some way, and have led to the creation of combinations bearing the innocent appearance of Federal Union, but really directed to objects remote from peace or from any idealism. Perhaps the most illuminating example is the project for the "United States of Europe," which has been brought forward in various forms during the last twenty-five years. It was a development of the

"Pan-Europa" Movement. In *Europe Must Unite*, Count Coudenhove-Kalergi gives an account of the genesis of the Pan-Europa Movement, which has also at one time or another in the past borne the name of *Federal Union* or *The United States of Europe*. The movement began in 1922. Leading European statesmen attended its first Congress in 1926; and its subsequent Congresses in 1930, 1932, 1935 and 1937 had at one or another a galaxy of support from leading statesmen of a score of countries; one may mention such names as Herriot, Blum, Daladier, Schacht, Benes, Hodza, Titulescu, Venizelos, Nansen, and Stauning.

"THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE"

In 1927, Aristide Briand, then Foreign Minister of France, became the Honorary President of the rapidly-growing Pan-Europa Movement. In 1929 Briand, then "at the zenith of his fame," began an attempt to get the programme, under the label of "The United States of Europe," adopted by the governments of Europe. He advocated it in May, 1930, in a Memorandum to the League of Nations. At first the project, which at this distance of time seems somewhat unreal, made apparent headway, no less than twenty-six European governments expressing approval. The U.S.S.R. was not invited, and it seems clear that the proposal was largely directed against the Soviet Union, as was pointed out by the *Manchester Guardian* at the time, with the remark that M. Briand had "become obsessed with the Communist danger, and the isolation of Russia had become one of the chief aims of his policy."

The movement was, however, brought to a temporary halt at that time by Great Britain, whose Government apparently regarded the development of Pan-Europa as incompatible with the British Empire. *The Times*, in its editorial of the 9th September, 1930, wrote the epitaph :

“ Very few States would care to proceed with the plan if Great Britain were to take no part in it, and therefore in view of British reluctance to have anything to do with an exclusively European political body, nothing in the way of a new political union is in the least likely to arise from the present discussion.”

In *Europe Must Unite*, however, Count Coudenhove-Kalergi records a change in Britain. He writes :

“ The decisive turning point was reached this year\* when the entente with France was converted into a binding military alliance completed by the alliance with Poland, as well as by a series of guarantees for other continental states. By its adoption of this new continental policy Britain, in association with France, has deliberately assumed leadership in the policy of unifying Europe.

“ This evolution was signalised, on the 22nd June, 1939, by the constitution of a British Parliamentary Committee for Pan-Europa with A. Duff Cooper as chairman and Victor Cazalet as secretary, and the following members : L. S. Amery, Sir Edward Grigg, Haden Guest, Geoffrey Mander, Harold Nicolson, and Sir Arthur Salter. Some distinguished non-parliamentary members joined this committee : Sir George Clerk, Stephen King-Hall, Sir Walter Layton, Rennie Smith, Sir Evelyn Wrench. . . .”

It is interesting to notice that the changed attitude in favour of Pan-Europa or Federal Union on the part of British publicists coincides with the

\* *I.e.*, in 1939.

establishment of a close Anglo-French combination in which Britain has the leading part (as mentioned below). There is in this little encouragement for the seeker after permanent peace.

The anti-Socialist bias of the movement seems to be made clear by Coudenhove-Kalergi's activities, given in the following press message :

"The 'European Letters' of Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, which are now appearing in Switzerland, report that Chamberlain and Duff Cooper, and also the leaders of the Labour Party, have spoken in favour of the conception of the 'United States of Europe'; that the leader of the Liberal 'Opposition,' Sir Archibald Sinclair, 'has also been long a convinced Pan-European'; and that in France, 'at our instigation, and on the initiative of our collaborator the author and deputy M. Gastin Riou, a parliamentary Pan-Europe group has been formed in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, which on the very first invitation a third of the two Houses has joined.'

"This indicates, Coudenhove-Kalergi explains, that these representatives of English and French Imperialism 'are turning to the only idea that has not been compromised with the passage of time, the only surviving hope and way of escape.' The true meaning of this solution is clearly stated in the following words : 'The object of the coming peace must be to unite all the peoples of Europe in a strong alliance to protect its eastern frontiers from Bolshevism and the invasion from the Steppes. For this object, Europe needs for at least a generation an alliance with the Far East against this common danger. For it is a question not merely of uniting the European peninsula, but rather of rescuing European culture and consolidating it against all the dangers which threaten it both from within and without'."

(It must not be assumed that the attitudes of

various British politicians are necessarily correctly stated in this message.)

#### SUPREME WAR COUNCIL AS A FEDERAL UNION

During the present war, a somewhat different and much simpler "smoke-screen" Union has begun to take form, in a sort of sublimation of the Supreme War Council. Both Mr. Chamberlain and M. Daladier, whilst reticent in their statements on War Aims, gave certain indications in the first weeks of the war that they were preparing to adopt Federal Union in the same way as British statesmen in the last war were prepared at first to toy with the League of Nations idea and then formally to adopt it at a later stage. Naturally there has been no detailed pronouncement or public scheme. The time is not ripe for that. The indications, however, were given as early as the 3rd November, 1939, by *The Times*, when, in a discussion of the possibilities of Federal Union, it stated the realities of the matter with remarkable directness. Instead of starting with a World Federation and then coming down to a possible combination of a pact of three Great Powers—this type of approach is left to those whom Napoleon Bonaparte used to call "ideologues"—*The Times* goes straight to the facts :

"We have in being to-day, in the Supreme Council of the Inter-Allied High Command, a standing organ of government with a powerful influence over two distinct sovereign States, and a combination of armed forces under unified control. If by common consent these arrangements can be kept functioning after the war, it

would only be necessary to add to the Supreme Council representatives of other States, and to add to the armed forces contingents from ex-neutral and ex-enemy countries in order to have an international organ of government with an international police force at its disposal."

This, like so much of what is happening to-day, is reminiscent of the last war, when there was also, in the last year, an Allied Supreme Council and a Supreme Command. This apparatus continued to function for years after the Armistice while at the same time the Allies held in their grasp the new organisation called the League of Nations.

This time, the proposal is plainly made that the Supreme War Council, with the Franco-British General Staffs, should develop into the new international authority. *The Times* was able to point to various

"successful international commodity schemes which form instruments of orderly development but are also powerful economic weapons—steel, tin, zinc, aluminium, rubber, sugar, tea, meat, and other vital products are already under some form of international control."

It went on to speak of the "enormous latent possibilities" residing in these schemes, which gives a pretty plain hint that the control of raw materials is intended to be used, naturally enough, as one of the weapons in the battle for supremacy after as well as during the war.

#### ANGLO-FRENCH HEGEMONY IS OPEN TO ALL

It is, of course, the fact that by the end of 1939, as a result of three successive agreements, financial

commercial and economic, the two allies had entered into an extremely close union. M. Daladier, speaking in the Senate on the 29th December, 1939, made a cautious combination of "extensible" Federal Union and of the old demand of "guarantees"; he said:

"The Franco-British union is open to all. But I state categorically that, without material and positive guarantees, France will not lay down her arms. Just as I distrust grand theoretical conceptions, so I prefer material guarantees against the return of events such as those which we are suffering from to-day, and so, too, I conceive that a new Europe should have a far wider organisation than that which now exists. It will be necessary to multiply exchanges and perhaps to envisage Federal ties between the various States of Europe."

(The reader should note the phrase "material and positive guarantees." What these guarantees are to be has not yet been disclosed. The phraseology, however, is clearly reminiscent of the last war with its crushing reparations, its dismemberment of the beaten powers, and its bridge-heads and garrisons on the Rhine and elsewhere.)

Mr. Chamberlain travelled the same road but went a little further at the Mansion House on the 9th January, 1940:

"You know this collaboration between France and ourselves for humanitarian purposes is only just another instance of that close, that even intimate, association between us. I cannot help thinking that our experience of this association during the war will prove it to be so valuable that when the war is over neither of us will want to give it up. It might even develop into something wider and deeper, because there is nothing which would do more to facilitate the task of peaceful reconstruction, which has

got to be undertaken at some time—there is nothing which would contribute more towards the permanence of its results—than the extension of Anglo-French collaboration in finance and economics to other nations in Europe, and indeed perhaps to the whole world.”

Here Mr. Chamberlain is getting down in characteristic fashion to brass tacks. “Anglo-French collaboration in finance and economics” is to be extended, perhaps to the whole world, which is really 1919 all over again, with greater possibilities of development.

*The Times*, the next day in its comment, made it unmistakably clear that this Anglo-French alliance is to be a sort of cuckoo’s egg in the nest of Federal Union, or, as it says, of “peace-lovers throughout the world” :

“The British Empire is the first political organism in history in which distinct nations, having the undisputed power to achieve independence at any time, have voluntarily preferred to remain merged. The Anglo-French alliance is the first association of major Powers that has begun the process of setting up a joint administration of matters of common concern. In both of these composite unities might well be found the germ of that larger brotherhood of peoples which peace-lovers throughout the world are seeking. Mr. Chamberlain expressly contemplated the extension of the Anglo-French association to embrace other nations, and perhaps ultimately the whole world. It would be consonant with English notions of the process of history that the ultimate super-national system should thus grow from limited beginnings.”

And, as early as the 28th March, 1940, the ideas of the British Government, thus intelligently anticipated by *The Times*, were developed a further stage in the Declaration of the Supreme

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War Council, issued after their meeting in London on that day. Beginning with mutual undertakings not to negotiate or conclude an armistice or a treaty of peace save by mutual agreement, nor even to discuss peace terms before reaching complete agreement on the conditions necessary to ensure to both France and Britain "an effective and lasting guarantee of their security"—undertakings the scope and significance of which do not call for discussion in this book—the declaration runs on as follows :

" Finally, they undertake to maintain, after the conclusion of peace, a community of action in all spheres for so long as may be necessary to safeguard their security and to effect the reconstruction, with the assistance of other nations, of an international order which will ensure the liberty of peoples, respect for law, and the maintenance of peace in Europe."

#### SWALLOWING THE BAIT

It might have been hoped that the advocates of Federal Union would see the dangers of this Anglo-French "company-promotion" of the dove of peace, and realise the immense difference between this combination of two empires, graciously accepting the "assistance" of other nations, and the true federation at which they aim ; but alas, I find the following description of it in an article in *Federal Union News* of February-March, 1940 :

#### " *Anglo-French Beginning*

" In order to fight this war, France and Britain have set up a Supreme War Council, with control over unified

fighting services, unified currency, unified trade policy. This arrangement differs from Federal Union only because there is no common legislature ; at present there is not more than a federal Cabinet (the Supreme War Council). In war-time it may be necessary to put up with such undemocratic methods, and, moreover, we can be sure there will be no ' Cabinet split.' But in peacetime, because the War Cabinet's decisions have to be ratified by separate Parliaments, it would fall apart. A common legislature is essential—one which is separately elected and which is concerned only with these common affairs. If this arrangement brings benefits and increased efficiency for war-making, it will do the same for peacemaking and the task of reconstruction after the war."

The composition of this particular smoke-screen soon becomes apparent. Taking advantage of such a gift as the goodwill of generous-hearted supporters of Federal Union to bamboozle the mass of their peoples, the reactionary and still powerful governing classes in two great Empires will seek to establish as the supreme power in Europe, and as the nucleus of all and any post-war international organisms in Europe, a body which is in fact nothing but themselves, the lineal ideological descendant of those who made the Treaty of Versailles, destroyed the League of Nations, betrayed half a dozen of the smaller nations, and in due course marched their peoples into the world war of 1939- ? What element of peace or idealism, of a federation of equal nations, of a reasonable treatment of enemy peoples, of a welcome to progressive tendencies, is to be found in such a partnership ? In what way will they solve colonial problems, remedy working-class injustices, or eliminate any of the causes of war ?

Or, to turn back to the Declaration of the 28th March, 1940, what element of reality can we find in the idea that a revival of the hegemony of these two Empires can have any different results from those of the last post-war period in the way of creating "an international order" ensuring the liberty of any peoples, or of anyone at all save the rulers of Britain and France? How is it to create "respect for law" in a world in which those Empires have played their part in destroying such respect? How will it establish or maintain peace in a Europe in which all the seeds of war, that have had two such mighty harvests, will be replanted in the same soil and watered by the same hands. "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même—guerre!"

To test the prospects of this scheme for producing peace by vesting supreme power in a partnership of two military Empires in an otherwise unaltered world, one may examine the attitude of this partnership to the questions of colonies and of the position of the working class.

#### INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR BRITISH COLONIES?

On the attitude to colonies, one may learn a little by referring again to *The Times* article of the 3rd November, 1939. *The Times* apparently favoured as a solution of the colonial problem the proposal that there should be international technical and economic services for the colonies, the cost of which would be contributed to by all Powers; but it made it clear that the British colonies were to remain British colonies and the inference seems to be that the other Powers were to assist the British financially in possessing the colonies and

carrying on their political administration. The other Powers had had five years to think over Sir Samuel Hoare's offer at Geneva in 1935 of full co-operation in the supply of raw materials from the colonies, and now *The Times* was apparently telling them the price they would have to pay. This is the only meaning that I can extract from the sentence :

"The colonies, while keeping their valuable existing ties of loyalty, might benefit from pooled resources through the creation of international technical and economic services backed by an international grant-in-aid system."

#### A BRAVE NEW WORLD FOR WORKERS

In the matter of giving justice to the working classes, the French Government has so far given much more illuminating glimpses of the brave new world than has the British. It has already taken the following steps :

Wages are fixed at pre-war levels in main industries ;

compulsory overtime adds 30 and more hours to the week ;

overtime is paid at 60 per cent of normal rates ;  
a national defence levy of 1s. in the £ is collected on all earnings ;

men of 18 to 49 not mobilised are also taxed 3s. in the £ on their wages ;

collective bargaining and the right to strike are abolished ;

several hundred trade union branches have been dissolved and their officials arrested.

If Mr. Chamberlain and his National Govern-

ment have not yet taken similar steps in this country, it is not for want of Tories and other die-hards demanding similar severe measures ; and there are already signs of sinister developments in the direction of reaction and repression.

#### BROTHERS MAY QUARREL

There is, of course, a still further ground for anxiety in this Anglo-French "Federal Partnership." It not merely presents to the outer world the face of a powerful combination of capitalist military powers, but it carries within itself the seeds of internal quarrel and deadlock. In an alliance of two powers, where all decisions must be taken by consent, consent based in the last resort on an estimate of relative strengths, deadlock is easy, and important issues can only be decided in favour of the predominant partner.

The arrangements publicly announced as to the shares to be borne in the joint expenditure in connection with Finland reveal that Britain's share was to be 60 per cent and France 40 ; and a similar proportion is applied in relation to the support of the *émigré* Polish Government. This indicates the respective strengths of the two Powers in finance, and the proportion, I believe, applies equally to economics, material resources, and naval and military strength. It is likely to become more general, and Anglo-French collaboration may thus turn out to be the beginning of a process by which British Imperialism gradually absorbs French Imperialism into its own orbit. In recent years the Dutch Empire has been protected in the East Indies by arrangement with

the British Empire, and is indeed a junior partner on all matters where they have common interests. The same has been true for a much longer period of the relations between the British Empire and the Portuguese Empire. It would, however, be a novel development in world economics and politics for two first-class Powers to enter into a combination where one gradually absorbed the other. This possibility is opened up by the Anglo-French collaboration which *The Times* presents as the germ of the "larger brotherhood of peoples." But it is impossible to conceive of the French ruling class quietly submitting for long to a combination in which they would be almost as powerless as a company director who held 49 per cent of the shares; the "brotherhood" would soon become a desperate family quarrel.

#### FRANCE AS JUNIOR PARTNER ?

This danger is brought into vivid relief by the Declaration of the 28th March, already cited, which gives the impression that the exigencies of the war situation have already forced the French to accept and acknowledge a pretty onerous and closely-bound "junior partnership."

These considerations take us very far from the innocent lovers of peace who propounded Federal Union, and plunge us into a repetition of the frightful position at the end of the last war where the war-mongers assumed in a trice the garments of transitory peace which they proclaimed to be permanent and thereby deceived millions of men of goodwill.

My readers should ponder these facts well and should recall the appalling experience of Mr. H. G.

Wells as recounted by himself both in his recent Penguin Special, *In Search of Hot Water*, and half a dozen years ago in his *Autobiography*. In the latter he said :

“ My estimate of the moral and intellectual forces at large in the world was out. I would not face the frightful truth.

“ The world disaster, now it had come, so overwhelmed my mind that I was obliged to thrust this false interpretation upon it and assert, in spite of my deep and at first unformulated misgivings, that here and now the new world order was in conflict with the old.

“ It took me some months of reluctant realisation to bring my mind to face the unpalatable truth that this ‘ war for civilisation,’ this ‘ war to end war ’ of mine was in fact no better than a consoling fantasy, and that the flaming actuality was simply this, that France, Great Britain and their allied Powers were, in pursuance of their established policies, interests, treaties and secret understandings, after the accepted manner of history and under the direction of their duly constituted military authorities, engaged in war with the allied Central Powers, and that under contemporary conditions no other war was possible.”

#### MR. WELLS ANNOYS FEDERAL UNIONISTS

Mr. H. G. Wells seems to have incurred the wrath of some of the supporters of Federal Union for his opposition. In his book on *The New World Order* he deals with “ the implacable forces that make for the collectivisation of the world or disaster,” and sees the necessary change towards what he describes as a “ Westernised World Socialism ” as a world revolution—though, of course, in a very different sense to that used by Lenin, to which he is strongly opposed.

Mr. Wells’s proposal for “outright world-

socialism, scientifically planned and directed," or in its fuller form "the triangle of Socialism, Law and Knowledge, which frames the revolution which may yet save the world," with its necessary criticism, written in a very kindly manner, of Federal Union, has brought upon him the following somewhat violent attack in *World Review*, the journal of the Federal Union Club :

"It is one of the most curious commentaries on this age that Mr. Wells should be regarded as a political thinker. In his recent book *The New World Order* (note the 'The'), Mr. Wells devotes a great deal of breath to arguing that what the world wants is collectivisation. Mr. Wells does not feel the need to explain what collectivisation is ; he supposes, presumably, that his readers of 1940 are still soaked in the socialism of 1890. But if the reader will admit, simply for the sake of argument, that Mr. Wells's collectivisation would benefit the human race, he will then be interested to learn how Mr. Wells proposes to achieve this end. . . ."

"It is evident from this scheme, as from the whole vast corpus of his published works, that Mr. Wells, far from being a political thinker, does not know what politics are or even that they exist. The fact that man is defended from anarchy only through political institutions, and that the management, preservation and improvement of these institutions requires the highest possible degree of attention and technical skill, is still one that escapes Mr. Wells. And on that we might resign him and his great thoughtless encyclopædias to the casual interest of posterity, had he not in this smaller work seen fit to devote an entire chapter to attacking the federal idea."

(*World Review*, February, 1940.)

The only explanation for this outburst that I can think of is that some of the supporters of Federal Union must be imbued more strongly than they realise with anti-Socialist bias.



## CHAPTER IX

### SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES

IN this chapter I deal with some of the difficulties that emerge from the study both of the general proposals for Federal Union and of the particular scheme for its practical initiation already explained.

I do not propose to repeat or even to summarise the whole of the objections and dangers which I have discussed in earlier chapters, but rather to confine myself to a few points which still deserve some further examination.

I summarise these points as follows :

(1) The proposals are unsound in theory and could never be brought into practical application or operation under the existing social and economic system ;

(2) If the nuclear federation of fifteen states—a complete departure from the hypothetical world federation—were set up, it would be unsatisfactory in itself, and would not be likely ever to succeed in adding any further important constituents ;

(3) The whole conception will be utilized as an argument to persuade many people of goodwill but not of full political consciousness to believe, mistakenly, that permanent peace can be achieved without Socialism, with the result that the realisation of such a peace will be delayed, and further wars will break out ;

(4) If the federated state were ever established,

even in the most complete form imaginable, it could not and would not achieve the aim of establishing permanent peace under the existing system.

On the first point, that of ever bringing the proposals into practical application, I can state my position shortly on the basis of the considerations advanced by Professor Dicey, as explained in Chapter V. The conditions which he postulates for successful federation are, I suggest, wholly lacking; almost without exception, both the fifteen nuclear states and all the principal states of the world are without any real motive, or desire, or common ground for the surrender of any part of their sovereignty in the political, financial, or industrial field. In this period of intermittent war, transitory peace, and perpetual crisis, they are all driven to hold on to every fragment of power they possess for fear of being overwhelmed, and feel themselves day by day less inclined to love their neighbour states as themselves.

#### PROFESSOR DICEY'S TESTS

It will be remembered that Professor Dicey postulates three leading characteristics of federalism; *firstly*, the supremacy of the constitution over all the constituent states as well as over the federation; *secondly*, the distribution of sovereign functions (which I have already fully discussed); and, *thirdly*, the authority of the courts of the federation to interpret the constitution in a fashion binding on the constituent states and on the federation. It will be remembered, too, that he emphasises the very real

difficulties of achieving the peculiar atmosphere essential to federation. "A federal system," as he says, "can flourish only among communities imbued with a legal spirit and trained to reverence the law"; "none but a law-fearing people will be inclined to regard the decision of a suit as equivalent to the enactment of a law"; and "any nation who cannot acquiesce in the finality of possibly mistaken judgments is hardly fit to form part of a federal state."

The somewhat uncommon qualities thus described as necessary to real and successful federation seem sadly remote from anything we know of the major states of to-day, or from any characteristics which they are likely to display under the existing system in any measurable future time. The truth is that their conflicts, and their grounds for conflict, grow ever greater, and their international moral sense ever poorer. Less and less have we any ground to look for any readiness on their part to give up, or to throw into a common pool, any portion of their separate sovereignties; indeed, it is probably impossible for most of them to attempt to do so without economic disaster.

The mere idea of their being willing, in these days of increasingly fanatical nationalism, to accept any treaty-made constitution as definitely binding upon them, when it comes into conflict with their commercial or industrial interests, seems idle. Scarcely any of them gives the faintest indication of being "imbued with a legal spirit," or of being in the least likely to "reverence the law"; and it is tragically laughable to imagine them "acquiescing in the finality" of any decision

seriously prejudicial to their interests. Indeed, they are not likely under any circumstances to accept the judgment of some new constitutional court.

It will be realised that federations have to have somewhat careful and elaborate constitutions, defining the rights of the constituent states. All experience of even simply and genuinely voluntary federations shows that disputes as to these limits and rights must arise at frequent intervals; and it is almost impossible to have such disputes resolved by the executive or the legislature, or to get the constituent states to accept such solutions. The normal, indeed almost the only practical, method is to settle them by litigation before some constitutional court; and federation cannot function properly unless the decisions of such courts are accepted.

Another quotation from Professor Dicey will illustrate the seriousness of this sort of difficulty:

“Whether English electors are now strongly disposed to confide to the decision of judges questions which excite strong political feeling is doubtful. Yet—and this is no insignificant matter—under every federal system there must almost of necessity exist some body of persons who can decide whether the terms of the federal compact have been observed. But if this power be placed in the hands of the Executive, the law will, it may be feared, be made subservient to the will of any political party which is for the moment supreme. If it be placed in the hands of judges, who profess and probably desire to practise judicial impartiality, it may be very difficult to ensure general respect for any decision which contradicts the interests and the principles of a dominant party. Federalism, lastly, creates divided allegiance. This is the most serious and the most inevitable of the weaknesses attaching

to a form of government under which loyalty to a citizen's native state may conflict with loyalty to the whole federated nation."

#### NOT PRACTICAL POLITICS

The truth is that, if one tries to imagine, in terms of practical politics, a world in which any three or four states of any importance are grouped together in a federation even half as intimate as that which binds to one another the cantons of Switzerland or the States of the U.S.A., it becomes clear that one is no longer considering practical politics. A number of illustrations of this argument have been given in the course of the book.

On the second point stated on page 143, it is plain that a federated state of fifteen constituents, containing only three major states, and omitting Germany, the U.S.S.R., the whole of Asia, much of Africa, and the whole of Central and South America, would obviously leave unaffected innumerable possibilities of war, and would be unlikely to show any successes or advantages calculated to encourage other states to join.

#### THE ROAD OF GOOD INTENTIONS

On the third point, I will state at the risk of repetition that the temptation to persuade large sections of the public, well-meaning and unthinking, that they can look for the peace they passionately desire without having to embrace the Socialist doctrines which ingenious and resourceful propagandists have falsely persuaded them to regard as something vaguely unpleasant, is quite

overwhelming to those powerful if limited sections of the ruling class who will go so far as to risk war rather than accept Socialism, because they think that Socialism would diminish their own privilege and wealth.

The fourth point is in some ways the most important. Let us assume, however difficult it may be, that Germany and France and Britain and Italy and the U.S.A., and other states, even without the U.S.S.R., have succeeded outwardly and visibly in forming a federal state, with one polyglot-elected legislature, some sort of supreme court, and all the constitutional apparatus of Washington, or Canberra, or Ottawa, or Berne. Whilst the industrial and economic structure of the world remains as it is, and all these states have their old conflicts of interest, over restricting production to keep up prices, over exports and imports, raw materials and colonies, oil and wheat, *Lebensraum*, unemployment, wealth and poverty, distress and revolution, is it conceivable that the risk of any one of them going to war with another of them would be even perceptibly diminished, let alone abolished? Peace such as reigns between England and Scotland cannot be achieved in Germany, France and Japan by persuading delegates from those countries to pause in their commercial warfare long enough to sign a federal constitution. The suggestion that the industrial states of to-day can seriously co-operate for peace, in a time of crisis such as we have endured for several decades now, is surely rebutted by all the experience of the past half-century or longer. If the possibility of achieving peace were even half as simple as that, Free Trade or Arbitration or the

League of Nations would have achieved a far greater measure of success, and we should not now be at war.

I trust I may be forgiven for comparing the ideal that a number of really "unfederable" states, by merely agreeing to federate, can eliminate wars between themselves as if they had really achieved that identity of interests which lies at the basis of true federation, to the lawyer's story of the "Act for removal of doubts." It is often found in the practice of the English courts that doubts arise as to the exact meaning of some section of an Act of Parliament; and at times these doubts are brought to an end by passing a new Act to define one way or another the meaning of the former one. The story goes that a Parliamentary draftsman, instructed to prepare a bill to remove doubts as to the meaning of an earlier Act, produced a draft bill which ran:

"Whereas doubts have arisen as to the meaning of Section — of the — Act, 19—, now therefore be it enacted . . . that the said doubts shall be and they are hereby removed."

This is not the way to solve problems, great or small.

#### BEWARE OF THE REACTIONARIES

I cannot close this chapter without calling attention once more to the really sinister implications of the enthusiastic support given by reactionaries to Federal Union in the last four or five months. I have already in the previous chapter quoted from Mr. H. G. Wells a passage in which he expresses the mortification he felt when he discovered that his advocacy in 1914-18 of a world

without war had been utilised by reactionaries to serve their own ends. It would indeed be a tragedy if this experience were to be repeated. Mr. Wells himself is not likely to be taken in again, if we may judge by his attitude as expressed in the books he has published since September, 1939 ; and he has refused support to Federal Union, as already explained, on the ground that the proposals are unreal unless provision be made for collectivisation. But when the advocates of Federal Union, so many of whom are earnestly and sincerely desirous of making a great change, proceed as they do to welcome unsuspectingly the dubious support of numerous reactionaries, and to record with approval the " Federal " utterances of Mr. Chamberlain and M. Daladier, I feel they are walking into a trap.

It will be tragic if they realise too late that they have been used as a smoke-screen for the reactionary war aims of the British and French ruling classes ; let them awaken in time, re-examine their own proposals which have brought them within reach of this trap, and give serious attention to the alternative, the Socialist method of establishing permanent peace by the abolition of the fundamental causes of war.



## CONCLUSION

IN the light of the considerations which I have canvassed in this book, I feel the conclusion is inescapable that Federal Union in any guise cannot be established as a reality within the limits of the existing economic structure, either now or in any reasonably near future, and that if it were to be established it would not advance the cause of permanent peace.

It is true, of course, that when states are really federated the danger of war between them, although it does not disappear, becomes comparatively small. This is not, however, due to their being federated ; it arises from the fact that their relations or connections with one another are such as to reduce the causes of friction between them to small proportions, and that there is a high degree of common interest between them. These are the very reasons for which they have found it practicable to federate, and their federation and their friendship are not cause and effect, but effects of the same causes.

Federation or attempted federation of groups of states with no real pre-disposition to union, such as is involved in the proposals for Federal Union, contain no genuine peace-making qualities. Such proposals will solve no economic conflicts, no problems of *Lebensraum* ; they will do nothing to mitigate the unjust distribution of wealth ; they will leave the power of finance on its pedestal ;

they will not touch the methods whereby the tragedy of poverty in plenty is "cured" by destroying the plenty, leaving poverty hand in hand with unemployment ; they provide no means of reconciling the conflicts between higher and lower standards of living, between so-called "superior" races and colonial or coloured peoples ; they pass by the conflict between employer and employed, ruling class and working class, in embarrassed silence. Their merit is the negative one that the study of them brings into relief the vital point that there is no cure for war, any more than there is for any other disease, save the radical cure of removing the causes. Nothing else, no concentration on a single phenomenon like unrestricted sovereignty, picked out for condemnation from the chaotic and wholly "damnable" structure in which it lives, no paper agreement, can avail to achieve permanent peace. That must be won, and can only be won, by eliminating the causes of war by Socialism and by Socialism alone.



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