

DO WE REALLY WANT TO PREVENT FUTURE WAR?

Nothing But a League of Nations Can Do It. Is America Ready to Do Her Part? What It Involves.

That wars in the future cannot be prevented unless the world forms a League of Nations is the belief of the statesmen of Europe and America; of Premier Lloyd George, of ex-Premier Asquith, of Lord Grey, of President Wilson.

President Wilson and Lord Grey have both declared that if the League is not formed at the peace settlement it is never likely to be.

This is the greatest task ever undertaken by statesmen. Premier Clemenceau says, "It is more difficult to make the peace than it was to win the victory."

America's voice can decide this issue, asking nothing for herself but that there shall be **NO MORE WAR.**

You cannot have the League of Nations and its immeasurable benefits for nothing: it cannot be all gain and no giving.

America must know what it is that she must give and do.

The statement of principles here published represents the considered judgment of a group of American business men, lawyers and students of international affairs, after many months of study and discussion.

Statement of Principles

THE object of this Society is to promote a more general realization and support by the public of the conditions indispensable to the success, at the Peace Conference and thereafter, of American aims and policy as outlined by President Wilson.

The particular aims, such as the liberation of Belgium, Serbia, Poland and Bohemia, and their future protection from aggression, and America's own future security on land and sea, are dependent upon the realization of the more general aim of a sounder future international order, the corner-stone of which must be a League of Nations.

The purposes of such a League are to achieve for all peoples, great and small:

- (1) Security: the due protection of national existence.
- (2) Equality of economic opportunity.

Remove Motives for Aggression

BOTH these purposes demand for their accomplishment profound changes in the spirit and principles of the older international statecraft. The underlying assumption heretofore has been that a nation's security and prosperity rest chiefly upon its own strength and resources. Such an assumption has been used to justify statesmen in attempting, on the ground of the supreme need for national security, to increase their own nation's power and resources by insistence upon strategic frontiers, territory with raw material, outlets to the sea, even though that course does violence to the security and prosperity of others. Under any system in which adequate defense rests upon individual preponderance of power the security of one must involve the insecurity of another, and must inevitably give rise to covert or overt competitions for power and territory dangerous to peace and destructive to justice.

Under such a system of competitive as opposed to co-operative nationalism the smaller nationalities can never be really secure. Obviously Belgians, Jugoslavs, Poles, Czechoslovaks will not be secure if they have to depend upon their own individual, unaided strength. International commitments of some kind there must be. The price of secure nationality is some degree of internationalism.

The fundamental principle underlying the League of Nations is that the security and rights of each member shall rest upon the strength of the whole League, pledged to uphold by their combined power international arrangements ensuring fair treatment for all.

New Rules of International Conduct

The first concern of a League of Nations is to find out what those arrangements should be, what rules of international life will ensure justice to all, how far the old international law or practice must be modified to secure that end. It is to the interest of the entire world that every nation should attain its maximum economic development, provided it does not prevent a similar development of other nations. The realization of this aim depends upon a gradually increasing freedom of mutual exchange, with its resulting economic interdependence. It is certain, for instance, that if anything approaching equality of economic opportunity as between great and small, powerful and weak, is to be obtained, the following must be guaranteed for all on equal terms:

(a) No State shall accord to one neighbor privileges not accorded to others—this principle to apply to the purchase of raw material as well as to access to markets. Equality of economic opportunity does not mean the abolition of all tariffs or the abolition of the right of self-governing States to determine whether Free Trade or Protection is to their best interests.

(b) States exercising authority in nonself-governing territories shall not exercise that power as a means of securing a privileged economic position for their own nationals; economic opportunity in such territories shall be open to all peoples on equal terms, the peoples of nations possessing no such territories being in the same position economically as those that possess great subject empires. Investments and concessions in backward countries should be placed under international control.

(c) Goods and persons of the citizens of all States should be transported on equal terms on international rivers, canals, straits or railroads.

(d) Landlocked States must be guaranteed access to the sea on equal terms both by equality of treatment on communications running through other States, and by the use of seaports.

How Will the Rules Be Amended From Time to Time?

THE first task is legislative in its nature. The problem is to modify the conditions that lead to war. It will be quite inadequate to establish courts of arbitration or of law if they have to arbitrate or judge on the basis of the old laws and practices. These have proved insufficient.

It is obvious that any plan ensuring national security and equality of economic opportunity will involve a limitation of national sovereignty. It is here particularly that the success of the League will demand the doing of the "unprecedented things" mentioned by President Wilson. States possessing ports that are the natural outlet of a hinterland occupied by another people will perhaps regard it as an intolerable invasion of their independence if their sovereignty over those ports is not absolute but limited by the obligation to permit of their use by a foreign and possibly rival people on equal terms. States possessing territories in Africa or Asia inhabited by populations in a backward state of development have generally heretofore looked for privileged and preferential treatment of their own industry and commerce in those territories. Great interests will be challenged, some sacrifice of national pride demanded, and the hostility of political factions in some countries will be aroused.

Yet if, after the war, States are to be shut out from the sea; if rapidly expanding populations find themselves excluded from raw materials indispensable to their prosperity; if the privileges and preferences enjoyed by States with overseas territories place the less powerful States at a disadvantage, we shall have re-established potent motives for that competition for political power which, in the past, has been so large an element in the causation of war and the subjugation of weaker peoples. The ideal of the security of all nations and "equality of opportunity" will have failed of realization.

In the Next Few Weeks—or Never

BOTH President Wilson and Lord Grey have insisted that the creation of a League of Nations must be an integral part of the settlement itself. Both have indeed declared that if it is not established at that settlement, it is never likely to be.

The reason is obvious. If the League is not a political reality at the time that the territorial readjustments come to be discussed; if, as in the past, nations must look for their future security chiefly to their own strength and resources, then inevitably, in the name of the needs of national defense, there will be claims for strategic frontiers and territories with raw material which do violence to the principle of nationality. Afterward those who suffer from such violations would be opposed to the League of Nations because it would consecrate the injustice of which they would be the victims. A refusal to trust to the League of Nations, and a demand for "material" guarantees for future safety, will set up that very ferment which will afterward be appealed to as proof that the League could not succeed because men did not trust it. A bold "Act of Political Faith" in the League will justify itself by making the League a success; but, equally, lack of faith will justify itself by ruining the League.

Just as the general acceptance of the principles of the League must precede the territorial settlement, so must it precede attempts to reduce armaments. The League should not be, in the first stage, a proposal to relinquish arms, but to combine them; it should be an agreement upon the methods by which they can be used in common for common security. The League of Nations is not an alternative to the use of force, but the organization of force to the end that it may be effective for our common protection.

If nations can be brought to realize that they can in truth look to the League as the main guaranty of political security and economic opportunity, that those things do not demand unwilling provinces as sources of man power or raw material, nor seaports as a condition of economic development, then one of the main obstacles to the liberation of subject nationalities will have been removed, and the solution of the specific problems of Poland, Alsace-Lorraine, Bohemia, Jugoslavia, and the self-determination of the peoples of Turkey and Russia, will have been enormously facilitated.

We Have It—in Part—Now

THE administrative machinery of a workable internationalism already exists in rudimentary form. The international bodies that have already been established by the Allied belligerents—who now number over a score—to deal with their combined military resources, shipping and transport, food, raw materials, and finance, have been accorded immense powers. Any of these activities—particularly those relating to the international control of raw material and shipping—will have to be continued during the very considerable period of demobilization and reconstruction which will follow the war. Problems of demobilization and civil re-employment particularly will demand the efficient representation of Labor and Liberal elements of the various States. With international commissions, and exercising the same control over

Why a New "League of Nations" Society?

Because the war has shown that if a League of Nations is to be effective, the earlier conceptions of its scope must be expanded.

The plan for a League of Nations which first naturally suggests itself is that of an Alliance of Governments using its combined power to compel submission of international differences to arbitration, or a Court of Law or Council of Conciliation.

Why is this inadequate?

The combination or alliance of force is indispensable. But it cannot last or work effectively without very considerable changes in the principles, rules or practice by which Courts and Arbitration Boards heretofore have been obliged to decide. Great difficulties are likely to arise in securing agreement on those changes unless the public is familiarized with the need of making them, and unless effective organs for the task—which mean an international legislative body of some kind—are provided. This conception of the League of Nations as the instrument by which the peoples shall change the conditions which lead to war has too often been made subsidiary to the conceptions of it as an Alliance of Governments for enforcing respect of the status quo.

The League of Free Nations Association does not oppose the plans for creating an Alliance of force; many of its members subscribe heartily to them; but it would enlarge those plans, and emphasize and clarify the reasons for so doing.

the economic resources of the world, an international government with powerful sanction will in fact exist.

Not Democratic Now

THE international machinery will need democratization as well as progressive differentiation of function. If the League of Nations is not to develop into an immense bureaucratic union of Governments instead of a democratic union of peoples, the elements of (a) complete publicity and (b) effective popular representation must be insisted upon. The first of these is implicit in the principle, so emphasized by President Wilson, that in the future there must be an end to secret diplomacy. The second can only be met by some representation of the peoples in a body with legislative powers over international affairs—which must include minority elements—as distinct from the Governments of the constituent States of the League. It is the principle which has found expression in the American Union as contrasted with the Federated States of the German Empire. If the Government of the United States consisted merely of the representatives of forty-eight States, the Union could never have been maintained on a democratic basis. Happily it consists also of the representatives of a hundred million people. The new international government must make the same provision and deliberately aim to see that all the great parties and groups in the various States obtain representation.

The assurance of the political, civil, religious and cultural rights of minorities within States is an even more difficult problem. But genuinely democratic parliamentary institutions in the League, ensuring some expression of minority opinion as well as complete publicity, will be a strong deterrent if not a complete assurance against tyrannical treatment of minorities within its constituent States.

A Real Union of the Peoples

Indispensable to the success of American policy are at least the following:

*A universal association of nations—
Based upon the principle that the security of each shall rest upon the strength of the whole—*

Pledged to uphold international arrangements giving equality of political right and economic opportunity—

*Based upon a constitution democratic in character—
Possessing a central council or parliament as truly representative as possible of all the political parties in the constituent nations—*

Open to any nation, and only such nation, whose government is responsible to the people.

The formation of such an association should be an integral part of the settlement itself and its territorial problems, and not distinct therefrom.

It should prohibit the formation of minor leagues or special covenants, or special economic combinations, boycotts, or exclusions.

Differences between members should be submitted to its judicial bodies.

Its administrative machinery should be built up from the inter-allied bodies already in existence, expanded into international bodies differentiated in function and democratized in constitution.

The effective sanction of the association should not be alone the combined military power of the whole used as an instrument of repression, but such use of the world-wide control of economic resources as would make it more advantageous for a state to become and remain a member of the association and to co-operate with it, than to challenge it.

All the principles above outlined are merely an extension of the principles that have been woven into the fabric of our own national life.

At a time when deep-seated forces of reaction would hamper a democratic solution and assert the old schemes of competitive militarism, of economic wars after the war, of division and bitterness and unhealed sores, such as will breed further wars and rob this one of its great culmination, we call on all liberal-minded men to stand behind the principles which the President has enunciated, and we invite them to join in fellowship with us for their realization.

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