

himself, apart from God, is no less amazing in its impious madness than attempting to build a sky-scraper that will land its passengers by elevator in paradise.

"Man," says Horace Bushnell, "is most impressive in his ruins." You have only to visit such a monument as the Roman wall to realize that. Impressive it must have been in the days of its building, but not nearly so impressive as now. It is hung with mystery.

So it is with all man's ruins. Made by man, they have ceased to belong to him. They belong to the ages and are adopted into the family of time.

Man tames the horse and rides him to battle. He invents the gasoline engine to drive a tank. He rides under the sea to drown women and children. He conquers the air to murder babies.

I have always contended that before embarking on any of these international undertakings involving treaties with outside powers we should consider the more important things that concern the British empire. As I said at the time the late Mr. Curtin and Mr. Fraser were here, if we want internationalism we can find room for it first within our own empire. The first essentials that should precede these international agreements are the questions that affect the welfare of the empire, such as preferential trade, defence, and migration within the commonwealth. We must solve these problems first, because it is useless to expect harmony in our empire with regard to foreign affairs unless we give our attention to basic principles. The United States and Great Britain have got along very well together in the war, and it is most essential now that they should cooperate in time of peace. I have pointed out before that it is not a wise thing for Canada to join in pan-American union or undertakings, but if over the heads of the other dominions Canada thus commits herself, she has made a mistake and taken a retrograde step which might lead to the dissolution of the British empire. I have also pointed out on previous occasions that in the last four hundred years the security of the world has depended upon the supremacy of Britain on the seas.

This San Francisco agreement, I would point out, comes after the agreement that Great Britain entered into with Russia. At the time of Yalta, Mr. Churchill, on behalf of the mother country, entered into that bilateral agreement, the high contracting parties being Britain and the Soviet Republic. These two powers made a ten-year security contract which is outside this particular agreement. So did the United States. They made an agreement which does not come within the four corners of the San Francisco agreement.

The same thing happened in 1920. No sooner had the League of Nations started to function at that time than the great powers

began to cast about for possible allies with whom they could enter into treaties. In other words, they simply cast aside the covenants to which they had agreed. A great historian, H. A. L. Fisher, in his "History of Europe," has said:

The League of Nations can be no better than the member states which compose it. If they wish for peace the league provides machinery by which peace may be better secured and maintained, but league or no league, a state which is resolved on war can always have it.

What then of San Francisco? Is it ground on which a greater prospect of success can obtain than in the past three failures of three similar leagues of nations? It is argued here and outside the house with great eloquence by those who believe in it that the united nations should form a world organization as set out in the charter, as a gesture or symbol of cooperation among nations, a new heaven and a new earth. I have taken the trouble to look up the congressional record to read the debates that took place in the United States senate with reference to the charter. I find that the view was taken there that while it may be of little use it might do harm, and so they voted to set it up as a thing to be desired but not as an instrument to eliminate war. That argument therefore falls to the ground "so long as nations are free to act as their interest, guided by justice, shall counsel," as George Washington declared in 1796. If their national sovereignty is neither compromised, restricted nor interfered with, this new charter falls to the ground and is not binding on anyone a party to it, because it leaves all to cooperate or not. No nation is bound to observe it if it interferes with its own national security and any one of the Big Five can veto it in the security council. The United States and others are willing to be in this charter and in this new league if it does not interfere with their own national sovereignty; but if it interferes with their own sovereignty and autonomy, or programme, then they will not remain in it. Thus the security council is of no effect and no nation of the Big Five is to be bound by it.

The only difference between the league of 1920 and this one is that in the old league the general assembly could deal with all these matters. The new league proposed by the Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco meetings sets up what is called a security council, but it applies only to and is over the small states; it does not apply to the larger five at all, because each one can veto any adverse decision. France will always be a great nation, because of its long connection with the mother country; but the French people were not included at Yalta because of their lack of