

We must seek to avoid that mischievous fallacy which at times in the past led many people to make excuses for the inaction of their own governments on the ground that the question at issue was one for the League to settle. More cannot come out of any international organization than its members are ready to put into it.

Here, in the last hours of the League, we must pay tribute to what was done in Geneva. We must applaud the great men who strove to make the acceptance of the Covenant the beginning of a new era in the relations of country to country. Some of that select and gallant band are here today. Much was accomplished in many fields, in the two tortuous, tumultuous decades between the wars.

Now in 1946 we have less confidence that the Charter will succeed than we had in 1919 that the Covenant would succeed. Those who have lived through the terrors and glories of two great wars are bound to be disillusioned. Disillusionment, in its literal sense of the absence of illusions, is a good thing. It should mean that we see more clearly, not that we have lost hope. In the ancient and gloomy Greek legend, when Pandora's box was opened only hope remained inside to sustain mankind through the trials of life. Certainly in the last seven years a Pandora's box of evils to plague the human race has been loosed on the world. We must nevertheless, keep the hope and faith of the founders of the League of Nations that we can, by concerted effort, banish from the earth the most irrational of human pursuits, the waging of war.