

No doubt it is quite possible to organise international life among capitalist states. But the socialist would maintain two important propositions. Firstly, that private capitalist interests give a great part of the impulse to many of those policies which involve most international disputes, and that a socialist state or even a socialistic government will *eo ipso* be far more accommodating. Secondly, that there is a deep-seated relationship between the maintenance of capitalism and the survival of the nationalistic spirit which is an obstacle on the road to a New Commonwealth. In so far as the day-to-day practice of capitalist life tends to exploit nationalism and to bolster up an outworn conception of state sovereignty, it tends to obscure the more vital problem of organising peace. Only in the assured peace of a New Commonwealth can the socialist ideal be achieved.

T. K.

A YOUNG LIBERAL

THE age is one of uncertainty and frustration. Dogmatism and conviction appear to be things of the past and Youth—leaderless and distracted—knows no security. Occasionally we dream of the world which we should like to build and talk of the social order in which we imagine that the maximum of human happiness can be achieved. But all the time we are haunted by one everlasting terror—the horror of war. Will our generation be called upon to sacrifice our lives for an outworn conception of territorial possession? Are we expected to march blindly to the jingoistic tunes of “Rule Britannia” or “Deutschland über alles”? Is it inevitable that our only purpose in life should be the destruction of our fellow men and that shattering of a civilisation which we have been taught to appreciate? Or is it inevitable that though we be spared the miasma of war, our lives should be crabbed, stultified and impoverished by the constant fear of impending disaster? Is there no escape from war or the dread of war?

To the Liberal, with a boundless faith in progress emanating from an ever-increasing development of human personality, there is only one answer. War is not inevitable. All fear of war between nations can be removed, but we shall achieve this solution only by a constant insistence on the supreme value of individual personality and by applying to states those same fundamental rules of conduct as have procured liberty and freedom from armed conflict within national boundaries. The first of these conditions gives the Liberal that fundamental basis on which he can hope to build a warless world. It is that primary idea that humanity must be regarded as one community. Without that belief in the basic unity of the human race all further plans for avoiding conflict will be of no avail. Liberalism, then, is absolutely opposed to the nationalist conception as a collection of conflicting and combatant communities. To blind ourselves to the existence of national and racial differences would, of course, be ridiculous. But we do say that in these times, when new means of communication of men, goods and ideas have made the world as small as the Athens of Pericles and the France of Napoleon, if the requirements of world peace and prosperity demand world organisation then a mere clinging to national rights of independence and sovereignty must not be allowed to stand in the way of achieving those ends. Surely we have realised by now that it is the reactionary insistence on national independence in an interdependent world that has brought us economically into the throes of depression and politically to the brink of war.

It is, however, with the second condition that THE NEW COMMONWEALTH is primarily concerned, that is, with the

development of that organisation necessary to avoid conflict among nations first as it has been eliminated among individuals. Man in his search for freedom has long since realised that liberty with the right to know, to think, to believe, to speak and to act can only be achieved under the protection of law. Kipling has expressed the Liberal ideal in one line: “Leave to live by no man’s leave, underneath the law.” If nations are to be free from war, that same doctrine must be applied. The anarchy which now prevails must be superseded by the international rule of law, for no permanent peace can be established so long as individual states have to depend for their security and the protection of their rights on their own armed strengths. No state which has any thought for the well-being of its citizens wants armaments for their own sake. They want armaments just sufficient to ensure their own victory in the event of war, that is, a more powerful armament than that of their rivals. In this condition of anarchy the security of each nation depends on the insecurity of its neighbour. The result is an inevitable arms race leading to an inevitable war.

The solution lies in entrusting the security of states to an inter-state authority; in one word, federalism. No mere loose confederation of states such as the present League of Nations, with each state maintaining its own armaments and the power to decide for itself the justice of its own claims, can put an end to nationalist wars. Mere voluntary co-operation of sovereign states is doomed to failure. Had the framers of the Covenant paid more attention to the breakdown of confederation in ancient Greece, in the early fears of the United States and in pre-Bismarckian Germany, they would not have had to wait for the bitter defeat of international morality in Manchuria and Abyssinia.

All history goes to prove that the only way of establishing peace through law is the abandoning of a part of one’s independence, be it of individual freedom or of national sovereignty, and creating a common authority capable of commanding loyalty from all citizens for the purposes of settling all disputes by reference to impartial third party decision and preventing their settlement by a resort to brute force. To this end, the collective principle embodied in the Covenant and in the Kellogg Pact gives us a foundation on which to build. But it is only a foundation. The actual structure and machinery of real federalism has yet to be built. The League or World Authority—call it what you will—must be entrusted with absolute control of all military, naval and aerial power—with the exception of that small amount of force required by each state to maintain internal order. At the same time, the international authority must be equipped with an impartial judiciary, capable of giving awards based solely on equity and justice and independent of the intrigue and self-interest which inevitably colour the decisions of international councils composed of state representatives.

It is for these reasons that modern Liberalism marches shoulder to shoulder with THE NEW COMMONWEALTH in its fight for a new world order in which peace based on justice is maintained by a strengthened League equipped with an Equity Tribunal and an International Police Force.

A large part of the world—that part of it in which democracy and liberty are still revered—is ready for the new unity. Its Youth is conscious of a positive loyalty to world law and world government.

Our task is to build the New Commonwealth and to develop a super-national organisation making for world unity. We shall not fail.

G. E.