

surely be possible in the less difficult and dangerous conditions of peace. The hope was genuine and pervasive. It inspired everyone, certainly in the western world, who had anything to do with the problems of international organization. I know of no more compelling and indeed poignant expression of the confidence which illuminated our efforts for peace in those days than a passage from Robert Sherwood's recent book, "Roosevelt and Hopkins". It is to be found on page 870 and it is an account by Sherwood of a remark which Hopkins made concerning the Yalta Conference. Hopkins words are:

"We really believed in our hearts that this was the dawn of the new day we had all been praying for and talking about for so many years. We were absolutely certain that we had won the first great victory of the peace -- and, by 'we', I mean all of us, the whole civilized human race. The Russians had proved that they could be reasonable and far-seeing and there wasn't any doubt in the minds of the President or any of us that we could live with them and get along with them peacefully for as far into the future as any of us could imagine."

Perhaps if we had remembered our history better we would have given less easy rein to our hopes. Wars, after all, often create more problems than they solve, particularly when the emergencies are so great that men act in desperation to save their very lives, having little time for long term calculations. We had set ourselves the necessary task of destroying the military power of two of the world's great nations, Germany and Japan. There was neither much nor great desire in the press of securing our own salvation to consider the vortex in world affairs that would be created by the vacuums left by the obliteration of these two powers. Nor could we in those strenuous days reflect upon the persistent way in which ancient ambitions and rivalries are maintained even in periods of national emergency and disaster. We should perhaps have recalled the fact that for three centuries the expanding power of the political organization that originated in Moscow has been pressing westward in Europe. We should have remembered that earlier in history Russian armies had been in Berlin and even Paris, and that the presence of Russian armies now upon the Elbe is an expression of similar forces in Russian policy. Now, however, something worse and more sinister has been added. As a result of our historical studies we should also have shown greater concern about the smashing destructive force of a great revolutionary idea when it falls into the hands of political leaders who are determined to use it in the national interests of one state and of their own ruthless and totalitarian rule. In any event, we must now admit that in our plans for post-war international organization, we set our sights too high for immediate achievement. The objective of universal collective security which was written into the Charter of the United Nations did not correspond, we know now, to the realities of the political situation that quickly emerged from the turbulence of the post-war period.

In these circumstances, we are under an obligation to reassess the commitment which we have made in establishing and joining the United Nations. I cannot think of a better environment or a better occasion in which to attempt such a re-evaluation. I hope that in doing so I may help to set up a kind of chain reaction which will have the effect of making available for people like me in public office the advantage of the considered judgment of this and other academic communities.

In making this reassessment the first question we must ask is whether it was a mistake to establish the United Nations as a universal organization, and equally a mistake to try to maintain it on a universal basis. Or to put the question in another way, should