

regional federation would include a popularly elected parliament with defined though limited legislative powers, a common executive or cabinet, a common foreign policy, a common citizenship, common defence forces, a common currency, a common budget and system of taxation, as well as other features of the central institutions of a federal state.

Those who advocate such schemes of federation, either on a regional or wider basis, do so usually from the highest of motives. They perform, I think, a good and useful service in preparing public opinion for the political changes which will undoubtedly be called for in the future to promote international co-operation. As a practising and I hope practical politician, however, as well as a quondam student of political science, I confess that I sometimes find some of the blueprints of the brave new international world so far removed from the possibilities of the present that it is difficult to consider them in realistic terms. Our ultimate destiny - to safeguard our very existence - may require some form of federalism on a regional or even a wider basis. But meanwhile we have to work with the institutions which exist today and attempt to adapt them for the more ready and efficient and equitable solution of our current problems. This is, I suggest, a necessary and practicable task, and the insistent demand for something more far-reaching to be achieved immediately may at times be an obstacle to its accomplishment.

So I think that normally it is better to proceed to the organization of international action on a step-by-step and functional basis, each step taken after the previous one has been proven to be of value to our peoples, rather than to attempt to bring about, by one great leap, some grandiose plan for union now.

May I suggest in conclusion that, in forming our attitudes towards various schemes for integration and union, and for international organization generally, we keep certain main ideas to the forefront of our thinking.

We should be reluctant, if not unwilling, to press others to make a greater abandonment of their sovereign rights than we are willing to make ourselves. We should also remember that small powers are often more sensitive about their rights than large ones. If they weren't they might not have any. If they are realistic, however, they must also know - these smaller powers - that, by insisting on standing alone or in isolation or neutralism or whatever they may call it, they are not likely to get very far in determining their own fate. Today it is only by working with others that smaller countries can exercise any influence on the big decisions by the big powers which determine their own fate. This should strengthen their belief in international co-operation and international organization. It may also make them insistent on a voice and influence within this co-operation and these organizations, in the effort to recapture some of the control over their own destinies which they may once have possessed and a large part of which, it must be admitted, most of them have now lost.

That is why any international partnership such as NATO, to work effectively and smoothly, must be based on the voluntary participation of its constituent units. That is why the more powerful members should resist any temptation to exercise undue pressure on the others, and also why all the members should refrain from exercising pressure on hesitant or unwilling countries to join the group.