

The Quest for Peace yesterday and today [Continuation]

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THE QUEST FOR PEACE YESTERDAY AND TODAY.

Memorial Lecture given by Professor William B. Rappard, of the University of Geneva, Director, Graduate Institute of International Studies, at the David Davies Memorial Institute of International Studies, April, 1954.

(Continuation)

This change, which has taken place since the death of Lord Davies, would certainly have led him to revise many of his previous views. Before the Iron Curtain had divided, or rather had revealed to all the division of, the free from the unfree nations of Europe and of the whole world, the problem of the twentieth century seemed susceptible of much more ambitious and lasting solutions than those which alone appear realizable today. What are these solutions?

It would be most ridiculous in me as an obscure and aged Swiss professor having the undeserved honour to speak in the heart of the British Commonwealth, to appear dogmatically to lay down rules of conduct for those whose power and influence make them primarily responsible for the future of the free world and therefore of peace. May I merely in conclusion, with the diffidence which becomes my station and my nationality, indicate the general lines of development which for that future strike me as desirable, as hopeful and as possible for tomorrow? I shall attempt very briefly to sum up my general hopes under three headings: What should be the most promising attitude of the free world towards itself, towards the unfortunate part of mankind which is temporarily divorced from it, and towards the United Nations?

Let the last come first, as it is certainly not the most important.

When Sir Gladwyn Jebb, who had for four years represented his country with the utmost distinction and success at the Security Council in New York, returned to London, he spoke of his experiences at the annual dinner of the Pilgrims in this city. As reported by the daily press he said:

"Until we arrive at what in effect will be a world state, and that will be a long time yet, we have to realize that the Security Council is useless as an instrument of dealing with any serious aggression."

He added that while he hoped that the United

Nations would "rally the free world in the course of resistance to aggression, and may well do something to deter potential aggression, it is useless for us to count on such action as a major factor in our own security, which can only be achieved in such bodies as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization".

To these simple and virile words, which very accurately express the views to which my own observations have led me, I shall add nothing except my thankful gratification for having found them on lips from which they fall with exceptional authority.

It is refreshing, amidst the constant din of superficial, tendentious comment, hypocritical cant and official optimism, to perceive sounds which ring so true.

Of the many points on which opposing opinions are heard today, there is that of the admission of communist China to the United Nations and therefore to the Security Council. I mention it here not only because it will doubtless be in the centre of international discussions in the coming weeks and months, but also because it admirably illustrates two conflicting views held with equal sincerity by equally freedom and peace-loving nations.

When the American violently take the negative stand and strenuously object to any state "shooting its way" to New York after having openly supported aggression in Korea and in Indo China, they can well point to the Charter. Are the purposes of the United Nations not to "maintain international peace and security" and to suppress "acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace"? And is membership not open only to "peace-loving states which accept the obligations" which flow from those purposes and from that limitation?

When, on the other hand, the United Kingdom, France and other equally free nations insist that the United Nations cannot hope to carry out their less ambitious tasks unless they become universal and especially unless they have in their midst the effective governments of aggressive states, they also can point to the Charter. How, otherwise, can the United Nations hope to be "a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations", if the chief trouble makers are not admitted?

The American attitude is undoubtedly more logical on the part of those perfectionists who have as yet not seen, or at least not admitted, that the United Nations have failed of their main purpose.

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The other is the policy of governments who entertain no illusions and who prefer the probability of some practical advantages to the satisfaction of moral consistency. If the United Nations are held to be a gentlemen's club, the first are right. If they are more comparable to a reformatory, it is the second.

It is certainly not for the citizen of a non-member state to take sides in this controversy.

Troublesome as it may become, it is significant only as part of a much larger and more important problem, that of maintaining union in all essentials, if not unity in every detail, among free states. That I look upon as the real problem of our age. If the United States, the British Commonwealth, France, Federal Germany, Italy, Japan, and the other members of the free world can form a real community, then, and then only, is there a promising prospect for peace and freedom. Then, but then only, can their united will and their combined resources deter, and if need be, repel aggression.

The problem of creating, maintaining and consolidating that community among free nations is assuredly less difficult and less ambitious than that of founding a world state. The latter was the dream Lord Davies and we, all his friends, fondled between the two World Wars. But if events have obliged us, if not permanently to discard that dream, at least to postpone its possible realization until the West and the East can again find some common ground, the task of international union remains. And that task, which involves the same fundamental problems, if not of subordinating national states to a superior will, at least of harmonizing them in something like a federal union, is in itself sufficiently arduous to challenge the boldest and to tax the brains and hearts of the best.

That is the task to which I feel sure Lord Davies would consecrate his courage and his imagination were he still in our midst. To consider it in all its various aspects — political, economic, social, strategic and juridical — would take us far beyond the bounds of this summary conclusion. Who knows if it might not be deemed a worthy theme by the next David Davies Memorial lecturer? All I can say here, and that I say with my full conviction, is that the formation of a close community, call it alliance, union, confederation or federation, among freedom and peace-loving states is not only a condition of welfare, prosperity and perhaps even survival of those states; it is also a necessary step towards the supreme goal of winning over the whole international community to that ideal and to that dispensation.

Our final point deals with our attitude towards that half of the world which denies freedom to its people and therefore assured peace to all.

Considering the experience of the last thirty years and in view of what all leading Communists have revealed of their own hopes, fears and intentions, it would be folly for the free world not to take them at their word. It would be folly therefore not to make all sacrifices necessary and not to consider all national and collective steps calculated to deter and, if need be, to withstand the aggression from which we cannot hold ourselves immune. That duty, if it overrides all others, does certainly not supersede them. Edith Cavell's noble words, spoken in German captivity during the first World War, "patriotism is not

enough", still have an echo in our ears. Resistance to the Communist menace is certainly not enough either. In fact, if the free world was content blindly to resist the threat of these would-be liquidators behind the Iron Curtain, World War III would indeed, as they predict, be inevitable. The only hope I see for the future of peace resides in the possibilities of some fundamental evolution in the international political state of the unfree world. I am confirmed in that hope when I note how anxious are its present leaders to maintain international tension and national subservience. If that tension subsided, not only for a brief spell, pending awaited concessions, but durably, or if the complete subordination of the governed made way for more political liberty within the U.S.S.R. and its satellites, would its rulers not be forced to adopt other international policies? But if these rulers could point to nothing in the West but to increasing armaments, to ever more and to more perfected military basis all around their frontiers, would it not facilitate their stranglehold on their subjects? Would it not therefore seem opportune to combine with the continuation of the greatest possible unrelaxing vigilance the continuous readiness to take part in individual or collective, commercial, cultural or even athletic meetings?

Whatever one may think of Soviet propaganda and of Soviet economic statistics, the progress in the production and therefore in the material well-being of the Russian population seems certain. Now, does not the course of history show that increasing material

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well-being almost every-where tends to breed enhanced love of political freedom? Is it too cynical to look upon the aspiration towards more liberty as the by-product of a rising standard of living?

If that is at least partly so, does it not shed a ray of light on the present situation? The Russian masses, be it under Czarism or under Communism, have never known any appreciable measure either of material welfare or of political freedom. May they not expect one from the other? And may we not hope that, as they become less indigent, they will become less subservient? And as they become more impatient of police rule and of censorship, may they not grow more sceptical about the myths on which their ignorance has heretofore been fed about the West, about its exploitation of the masses, about capitalism, and about its necessarily aggressive imperialism?

All this may be unwarranted optimism, the poisoned fruit of the very kind of wishful thinking which I have done my best to guard against and to repress in this paper as elsewhere. But even if it be deemed unlikely, it seems to me that the policy of the West should not dismiss it as necessarily untrue. Nothing is to be gained by acting as if the masters of the East were omniscient in declaring war to be inevitable and everything would assuredly be lost if we let ourselves be persuaded that they were as infallible as they are dogmatic.

Those of us who were privileged to enjoy the friendship of Lord David Davies and to share his hopes like to believe that he is with us still. We feel that the outcome of the second World War, the rise of militant and triumphant Communism, and the unsound peace which are its most tragic consequences would have led him to discard, or at least adjourn, certain of the immediate reforms he had advocated with most warmth.

And we have it on the authority of his own written word that "war cannot be eliminated unless it is possible to secure international justice". It is difficult, more difficult perhaps than Lord Davies' admirable intellectual integrity ever suspected, it is in fact impossible to define justice in terms that command the unqualified adhesion of all honest and critical minds. But it is still no less difficult and indeed just as impossible to set up and maintain peace between nations without a general agreement about certain minimum standards of human decency.

Of these standards, the most fundamental is that according to which civilized nations cannot and should not permanently be denied the political régime and the territorial frontiers of their considered and deliberate free choice. That right, which is at the bottom of true democracy within states and which inspires the current liberal evolution of traditional colonialism, is not, be it noted, contested in theory by the leaders of contemporary Communism. But it has no place whatever in the policies practiced by the Soviet Union.

Our supreme hope for the future is that the monstrous dictatorial and inhuman internal colonialism which prevails East of the Iron Curtain to-day may soon, or at least in time, be washed away by the rising tide of human freedom. We see no other political road to the ultimate salvation of mankind.

THE END.

ASCENDING THE MATTERHORN.

An N.S.H. Talk.

The members and friends of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique and the Anglo-Swiss Society had the delightful experience on Monday the 18th of April, to accompany one of the most devoted climbers of the Matterhorn through all the stages of an ascent and descent of this august mountain — with the aid of a quite unique collection of coloured slides. The conferencier was Dr. Joseph Zihler, Catholic pater, who is at present vicarising for Father Lanfranchi at St. Ann's Church, Westminster. Every summer Dr. Zihler returns to Schwarzsee above Zermatt as holiday chaplain at the Chapel of Schwarzsee and the hotel close by. And this gives him an opportunity of climbing the Matterhorn again and again in order not only to admire the majesty of the Alps around but also to obtain snapshots of the most incredibly varied colour changes and moods of the Matterhorn and the grandiose surroundings. Dr. Zihler accompanies the showing of these wonderful slides with a drily humorous commentary which was also much appreciated. The Union Ticinese has arranged for a repeat showing of the slides by Dr. Zihler on May 15th.

Dr. E.

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Pye Limited are to hold a series of demonstrations of industrial and underwater television at the Kongresshaus in Zürich on the 11th., 12th and 13. May. Prominent businessmen from all over Europe have been invited to attend these demonstrations, which are designed to show how the technique of television can be applied to assist production in modern industry. A feature of these demonstrations will be Pye's new underwater television equipment in operation in the Lake of Zurich — the same type of equipment as that now being used by the British Navy. Examples of Pye's standard range of television transmission equipment will also be on show.

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