



World Order

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WORLD ORDER ¹

LIONEL CURTIS

IN opening this discussion of " World Order " I may be allowed to mention the train of events which led me to deal with so large a subject. In January 1900 I reached South Africa with the British Army, and remained there, when war was over, to take a hand in the tasks of reconstruction which followed. By signing the Peace of Vereeniging in June 1902, the Boer leaders surrendered the independence of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, after fighting the whole might of the British Empire for nearly three years with heroic courage and endurance. The two conquered republics were then organised as Crown Colonies, under governments composed of officials who took their orders from the British High Commissioner, Lord Milner. Between these two inland colonies and the sea lay the Cape Colony and Natal, each under governments responsible to electorates. These four colonial governments were all composed of men distinctively British in sympathy; yet the ink was scarcely dry on the Peace of Vereeniging before they were all at each other's throats, over customs and railway rates, native policy, and a large variety of other contentious subjects. Lord Milner induced them all to accept a customs convention, but only by making concessions to the self-governing colonies, such as no Minister responsible to electorates in the Transvaal and Orange Free State could possibly have made. An open rupture between these four British governments was, at times, only prevented by Lord Milner's authority, backed by his great prestige.

In 1905 Lord Selborne succeeded Lord Milner. In 1906 a Liberal Government had come into power in England with an overwhelming majority, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman announced his intention of granting responsible government to the Transvaal and Free State as soon as constitutions and electoral rolls could be framed. I thought at the time that this step was right, and think so now in the light of after events. Yet we on the spot were aware, as I think that Liberal Ministers in Whitehall were not, that electoral governments in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony would at once collide with the governments in the

¹ Address given at Chatham House on February 21st, 1939; Mr. Ernest Bevin in the Chair.

Cape and Natal, and that in a country where rifles went off with remarkable ease.

In view of these dangers Lord Selborne commissioned a small group of officials to prepare a survey of the whole situation under his guidance, and I was told off to visit the neighbouring governments and report. I was introduced to Ministers at Bloemfontein, Capetown and Pietermaritzburg, who impressed me as honest and public-spirited men. I was shocked, however, to find that each of these four governments had the worst opinion of all the others. Each of the four seemed to think of the other three as conscious villains, which I knew they were not. There must, we began to feel, be something wrong with a system which made perfectly decent men think so meanly one of another. We thus began to suspect that the troubles from which we were suffering were due to defects in the system, rather than to vice in the men who were trying to work it.

At this juncture it occurred to us that a study of conditions which followed the American War of Independence might throw some light on our own situation. Oliver's life of Hamilton, which appeared at this time, led us to read *The Federalist*, a series of pamphlets published in 1787 by Hamilton, Madison and Jay in New York, when acceptance or rejection of the federal constitution drafted at Philadelphia hung in the balance. From the pages of *The Federalist* we learned that during the War of Independence the thirteen colonies had bound themselves together by Articles of Confederation which described themselves in terms as "an indissoluble compact." But, none the less, by repeated failures to abide by their compacts, the thirteen sovereign States had reduced the system to anarchy. The coastal States were taxing the traffic which passed through their ports to the inland States. Here was one of the troubles by which we were faced in South Africa. The Confederate Government of the United States had failed to execute the treaties it had made with Great Britain and Spain. For, in order to execute those treaties, the Confederate Government had to call on this or that sovereign State to take some particular action, and the State so called on had left that action untaken. In the field of finance there was utter confusion. During the War the Confederate Government had raised loans from patriotic Americans, and also from France and Holland. To pay the interest due to its creditors the Confederate Government had to apply to the thirteen sovereign legislatures to vote contributions on a scale set out in the "indissoluble compact." A number of States had failed to vote their allotted

quotas. The Confederate Government was in default to its creditors, the whole system was bankrupt and the United States threatened with anarchy.

The failure of sovereign States to fulfil their compacts had thus been proved by actual experience in America. The Federalists showed that the same results had followed in Greece, in Germany, in Switzerland and wherever attempts had been made to establish a stable society on the basis of compacts between sovereign States. They drew the momentous conclusion that a stable society cannot be so founded, and further explained why this must be so. When a sovereign State failed to fulfil its compact when called on to do so by a Confederate Government, the only remedy to which that Government could resort was to call on the sovereign States which had fulfilled their compacts to coerce the defaulting State by making war on it. A confederacy could in fact operate only by virtue of continuous civil wars. Their particular application of these general conclusions to the case before them was that the thirteen sovereign States of America, by virtue of the Articles of Confederation, must fail to attain their declared object of preserving peace as between the States or of presenting a united front to the world without. The remedy, they showed, for this state of affairs was contained in the constitution drawn up by the Congress of Philadelphia. The Federal Government must derive its authority, not from the States, but direct from the people themselves who composed the States, and must also be able to enforce obedience to that authority on persons who disobeyed it.

These principles were illustrated by Hamilton in the field of finance. When a State failed, as it often did, to pay the Confederate Government its dues, the Confederate Government's only remedy was to call on States which had paid to make war on the State in default. The Federal Government must therefore have power not only to tax individuals but also to collect the tax if necessary by obtaining a writ of distraint from courts of its own, and by sending police of its own to distrain on the goods of defaulting taxpayers. Its police could call, if necessary, on loyal taxpayers to support their authority. Whether the State were to stand or fall would then simply depend upon whether enough citizens could be found who were willing to risk their lives, as well as to pay their taxes, in order to enforce its laws.

A member of the Faculty of Law in Dalhousie University has recently told the readers of the *Canadian Bar Review*¹ that :

¹ *Canadian Bar Review*, Vol. XVI (1938), p. 156.

“ All order, national or international, rests on force or the threat of force.” The fallacy of this popular doctrine can be seen from the case here quoted. Whether the State can exert force to coerce a defaulting taxpayer depends upon whether enough of its citizens will consent to do so in loyalty to the State. When Lincoln called on all citizens loyal to the Union to enforce its law on the seceding States, the issue depended upon how far Americans were willing to risk their lives to enforce the law. Force is no more than an instrument. The power of the State to use that material instrument depends on a spiritual factor, loyalty to the State in the hearts of its citizens. A saying of Admiral Mahan goes to the root of this question : “ The function of force in human affairs is to give moral ideas time to take root.”

I have dwelt on this matter because the Federalists were the first to explain the vital distinction between a system which is really organic and one which is not, between a system which rests on methods of police and one which rests on methods of war. The American Civil War was in essence, and in its results, a police operation.

As we read *The Federalist* more than thirty years ago in South Africa, we found that it threw a flood of light on our own situation. It showed us how systems based on compacts between sovereign States lead to disaster. It showed us that that was the way not to follow. It convinced us that the only effective way of preventing the wars which had scourged the country for fifty years lay in creating a government directly responsible, not to four colonial governments, but to the people of South Africa as a whole. By that way, and by no other, could we hope to substitute methods of police for methods of war.

These results were stated in a memorandum which was closely edited by Lord Selborne and published under his high authority. The remedy he proposed was made possible by the greatness of three men, the Boer Generals Botha and Smuts, and the British leader, Dr. Jameson. But I ask you to realise what it meant to us British, who had fought and beaten the Boers and then ruled them for several years. Responsible government in the Transvaal and Free State meant that Boer Generals were going to rule us in the conquered republics. But the Union meant, and we knew that it meant, that Boer Generals were going to rule the British in the whole of South Africa, including Cape Colony and Natal. In the face of that fact, we got our people to accept the Union, which was ratified in 1909 and came into being in

1910. In those years the shadow of the World War was already lengthening across the landscape. At public meetings we were asked this question: "You are telling us to establish a government for South Africa and then obey it. But what if Germany attacks the Empire and the Imperial Government calls on us to defend it? Suppose at the same time a Boer government, which you are asking us to establish and obey, then declares its neutrality and orders us not to fight. Which of the two governments are we to obey?"

The question was one for which we had no clear answer to give. We found ourselves faced by a conflict of loyalties; and we decided to go back to our old methods of research to find where our ultimate loyalty lay. As I had given my whole time to research for the Union, I now undertook to give my time to answering the question what the British Commonwealth was. It included, I found, one quarter of mankind. But it also included territory on every continent, and sections of every race, of every religion, and of every level of civilisation. It was not merely a quarter of mankind, but a cross-section of human society. I began to see that its problems were soluble only in terms of the world question. And now, after years, I will go so far as to say that no country or community, however small, can really hope to solve its problems except in the light of the world question. By that I mean that if you want to solve your own national questions, you will only do so by first asking, What are the paramount needs of the world as a whole? and by then thinking what your own country can do towards meeting those needs. I was thus led to study the world question.

I must now endeavour to say what that question is. For the last 150 years we men have acquired an ever-increasing control of physical forces; and this control has reacted on human society to change its quantity and also its quality. Mechanisation has greatly increased the number of people who live on this planet. But while it has greatly enlarged the volume of human society, it has changed its character by rendering every part of it closely dependent on every other. What one small country, a Serbia or a Czechoslovakia, does or leaves undone instantly affects the whole of human society. What one individual does, a Mussolini, a Chamberlain, a Hitler, a Roosevelt, may shake the whole structure to its very foundations. We have gained control of physical forces, without acquiring any corresponding control of human forces—that is to say, of ourselves. Socially and economically human society is now one closely integrated unit.

Politically human society is fragmented into some sixty sovereign States. The position is better stated than I can state it by Mr. Foster Dulles on page 102 of his book *War, Peace and Change*. "The world," he writes, "is thus in imagination peopled with some sixty super-beings. These imagined beings are endowed with primitive and conflicting desires. There as yet exists no authority to provide, as between such desires, other solvents than that of might. The 'ethical' solution also fails to operate because group authorities are not deemed to be subject thereto, or to have any duty to each other. The personified States are not endowed with the spirit of sacrifice and renunciation. The 'ethical' principle operates, to be sure, upon the individual group members, and creates a willingness on their part to sacrifice for others. But the 'others' tend more and more to become the personified States to the exclusion of more universal causes."

In a word, each sovereign State tends to look at its own separate and several interests, in disregard of what the results may be to the rest of humanity. For human society there is no government, and so, for its paramount interests, no control.

After the catastrophe of the World War, this position was realised by the statesmen who assembled in Paris to attempt the gigantic task of restoring the shattered framework of human society. The remedy they applied was the League of Nations based on a covenant which recognised and emphasised the sovereignty of the States it proposed to unite. The task of keeping the peace between these States was laid on the Council and Assembly at Geneva.

Lord Robert Cecil had asked me to go to Paris as a member of the section he had organised to advise the British Government on the subject. His reason for doing this was that I had written an article called "The Windows of Freedom" in the *Round Table* for December 1918, in which I advocated a League of Nations, designed to secure the discussion of international relations by foreign ministers meeting face to face at some place like Geneva, with a common secretariat to assist them. But when I saw the draft of the Covenant with Articles 10 and 16, my impression was that here was a travesty of the American Constitution, drawn in disregard of all the principles upon which that Constitution was based. The Covenant was a close counterpart of the Articles of Confederation which *The Federalist* had shown to be unworkable. I feared that, like the Confederation, it would lead to unimagined and unforeseen troubles. But I also remembered that the Confederation had been a step to the Federal Constitu-

tion under which the United States of America had grown to its present greatness. Now, as then, human affairs must proceed by the process of trial and error. The League of Nations had to be tried : but I also felt that during the period of trial all should be ready to read the lessons of experience, and especially the lessons of failure.

We have had our twenty years of trial, and now can see that in actual experience collective security is neither collective nor yet secure. To-day we are faced by hourly risks of a war which, if it starts, will be more widespread and far more devastating than the war which started in 1914.

From July 1938 to January 1939 I was travelling through Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States, and have felt at times as though I were back in those days, thirty-five years ago, when I visited South African governments. Everywhere I found that people were blaming individual statesmen for the failure of the League. First it was Lloyd George, Poincaré, Mussolini. Then it was Simon, Laval and Hoare. Now it is Hitler or Chamberlain, Daladier or Halifax. Is it not time, I ask, that we stop distributing blame to statesmen, and examine the system, or want of system, they are asked to operate? Is it not time that we take a leaf out of medical practice, and try to diagnose before we begin writing prescriptions?

I will therefore make bold to give my own diagnosis, which is this. *I suggest that the principles stated in The Federalist are no less true of international relations to-day than of the thirteen States to which they were applied by Hamilton, Madison and Jay, who were, as we know, speaking the mind of Washington.* Now, as then, compacts between sovereign States are foundations of sand. The larger and stronger a structure founded on sand may be, the more certain it is to collapse by its own weight, and involve in its ruin those it was meant to protect. To create a stable society you must do what Washington did : you must drive piles through the sands of compact right down to the bedrock which Lincoln described as "dedication." By that he meant loyalty, the infinite duty which each individual man owes to his fellow-men. No kind of authority can really secure the peace of the world unless it is responsible to individuals and rests on individual loyalty. International law is a figment, so long as it rests on parchment compacts between sovereign States. It is just that old wolf anarchy, closely disguised in a clothing of legal sheepskins. The reason why law in the true sense of that word cannot rest on compacts between sovereign States is this : that it creates a conflict of

loyalties. Take my own case. Is my ultimate loyalty due to England, to the British Commonwealth, or to the League of Nations? I cannot answer that question.

My meaning is that nothing can solve the problems we are now facing but a world government responsible, not to States, but to all individuals fitted for the trust. That is the goal, however remote, at which we must aim. In handling all human affairs you must first decide what you are trying to do, what is the goal you are trying to reach. I am now convinced that a world commonwealth embracing all nations and kindreds and tongues is the goal at which we must aim before we can hope to move to a higher plane of civilisation. Indeed, I will now go so far as to say that unless we conceive that goal in time, and take steps to approach it, our present stage of civilisation is doomed to collapse.

I am sure that a world government is the ultimate goal we shall reach. I am equally sure that its structure can only be built little by little, bit by bit. And I strongly suspect that the first step is by far the most difficult. The world is obsessed by nationalism. That national States are the last word in political construction is an almost universal assumption. I believe in preserving all that is best in nationalism and that sooner or later men will rise to the new idea that two or more nations, without losing their characteristics or freedom, can unite in one international State, can erect one federal government responsible to all their citizens fit for the task, for maintaining peace between themselves, and also between themselves and the world without. I believe that they will form a federal government, limited to that purpose, leaving all other activities to the national governments where they now rest. I believe that the nations so united in one international State would presently find they had attained a higher degree of freedom. In a few generations other States would be eager to enter the federation, and the process of accretion, once started, would advance more rapidly than men are now able to conceive.

“If you can dream—and not make dreams your master,
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim.”

It is not enough to conceive the goal. When you have done that, I hold it a duty to force yourself to think what practical step can be taken to start men on the path which leads to the goal. It is for that reason that I have forced myself in the closing pages of *The Commonwealth of God* to say what I think the first and most difficult practical step might be. From the nature of the case,

I feel that it could only be taken by the most experienced commonwealths. I have therefore given my own personal view that a beginning might be made by Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain. I believe that if that step could be taken in time, humanity would be saved thereby from sufferings untold.

I have always been conscious that any proposal of mine for creating the first international State was likely to be biased by my own national outlook. This feeling grew stronger as I travelled back from Australia, where I had gone to attend the Sydney Conference on British Commonwealth Relations in September 1938. I had no intention of broaching the subject dealt with in these pages in North America; for I hardly expected to find anyone there prepared to regard it as a subject for serious discussion. I was, therefore, greatly surprised on reaching British Columbia to find a letter from the Secretary of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs inviting me to visit its branches and address them on the theme set forth in *The Commonwealth of God*. Having promised to visit some friends at Portland, Oregon, before starting to cross Canada, I there accepted an invitation to address a gathering at the University Club. The attitude of mind I encountered at Portland led me to see that I had greatly misjudged the readiness of people in North America to discuss these ideas on their merits. When I afterwards visited Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Regina, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal, Boston and Toronto, this impression was strengthened, more especially by a review of my book in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, which I chanced to read in the train. At Winnipeg I was asked to address a joint meeting of the men and women's Canadian Club, and again at Toronto an even larger gathering of the Canadian Club in that city. At these various gatherings on both sides of the international frontier I found a number of people who seemed to regard an international commonwealth in the genuine sense of that word as the true and practical goal of human endeavour.

It thus began to dawn on my mind that people accustomed to live under federal institutions were perhaps more likely to hit on the best road to an international commonwealth than those like myself who have lived under unitary governments. In England my greatest difficulty has always been that people here have no practical experience of federal government. They scarcely know what it means, as anyone will realise who studies decisions of the Privy Council on the constitutional questions of Canada. In Canada, as in the great Republic south of her frontier, there are people who know all that is known at present

of the practical working of federal institutions. They know the difficulties and are versed in the art of overcoming them. It was on this continent that men who had handled government first conceived these institutions, explained the principles on which they rest and applied them in constitutions which brought into being the largest and most impregnable area of peace on this earth. So the thought entered my mind that Canadians and Americans might see in their own institutions a key to the problems of a suffering world and teach the world how to use that key. Then indeed would a time be in sight when man would cease to torture his own flesh with the scourge of war.

The Council on Foreign Relations in New York had asked me to address them before sailing for England in January 1939. As I was preparing to leave the house where I was staying to keep this engagement, Mr. Clarence Streit of the *New York Times* called to see me. He had been on President Woodrow Wilson's staff at Paris and had for years represented the *New York Times* at Geneva. In watching the League at work he had seen how unstable a system based on compacts between sovereign States must be. He had then discovered and read *The Federalist*, which had shown him why this must be so. On the invitation of my host, Mr. Streit accompanied us to the meeting, and afterwards put in my hands an advance copy of his book *Union Now*, privately printed at Geneva, but due for publication in February. The reading of that book as I crossed the Atlantic was a thrilling experience. As I say in my own book, the transition from the national to the international State is perhaps the most difficult step in political construction that man will ever attempt. In crossing the continent from British Columbia to New York, the idea had first entered my mind that here might be found the thinkers who would lead a civilisation threatened with ruin to face that transition, and might show them how the thing might be done. That idea had already been realised, before I conceived it, on lines larger and bolder than I myself had dared to imagine.

Mr. Streit shows how restricted and how precarious is the freedom which peoples enjoy under national commonwealths. He proves with unanswerable force what an increase in personal freedom, material prosperity and national security the democracies would gain by joining one international commonwealth. He has brought to bear on the subject a better grasp and also an incomparably fuller knowledge of the social and economic factors than I can command. I have dealt more fully with the

moral and religious foundations of freedom than was possible in the length to which Mr. Streit has wisely limited his work. As Professor Toynbee has said, "Western Liberalism is merely the political husk of Christianity, without its spiritual kernel." The belief that democracy is by nature opposed to religion, which dominated thought in the nineteenth century, was doubtless due to the French Revolution. The established Church was so closely bound up with the *ancien régime* that the Revolution was bound to aim at destroying them both together. Apart from the influence of Voltaire, the mistake of confusing institutional religion with religion itself—that is to say, a spiritual view of the universe—was inevitable. Marxism, with its by-products Fascism and Nazism, is at last leading the world to realise that the democratic commonwealth is the Sermon on the Mount translated into political terms. The message which President Roosevelt addressed to Congress at the opening of this year (1939) marked an epoch in history; for here was the first executive officer of the greatest commonwealth in the world telling its legislature that the system for which they stand has its roots in religion.

In my talks with the branches of the Canadian Institute, the World Peace Foundation at Boston and the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, I made one practical suggestion. It was this. I suggested that each Branch of the Canadian Institute should get into touch with a group organised by the Council on Foreign Relations in the nearest city south of the frontier. I suggested that these Canadian and American Groups should jointly consider the question "whether the key to international relations might not be found in the principles which underlie the Constitutions of the United States of America and of Canada, as propounded in *The Federalist*."

If perchance this suggestion bears fruit, Mr. Streit's work will provide pertinent matter for these joint discussions.

Summary of Discussion.

PROFESSOR C. K. WEBSTER said that it was fitting that from time to time there should be an address upon some lofty theme to contrast with the very earthy character of most of the discussions which took place at the Institute, and surely no one could be better fitted to undertake such a task than its founder. Contrary to the usual practice, the latter appeared only very rarely to speak to them in public, however much he might inspire them behind the scenes, and all were deeply grateful for what he had said that evening.

There were not many who would disagree with Mr. Curtis's main theme: that to ensure the peace of the world some sort of world

State was necessary. It was an obvious lesson of history. When the lecturer had been making his unitary Constitution of Africa and inventing his Federal Constitution for the British Empire, which unfortunately had never been adopted, he (the speaker) had been studying European history and travelling in Europe and had written a paper entitled "The Evolution of the World State." There seemed to be two questions raised in Mr. Curtis's paper: first, whether the creation of the League of Nations had been a great mistake, and, secondly, whether the only way to a world State was through a federal system.

Concerning the formation of the League of Nations, no one could say that President Wilson and his staff had not been well acquainted with *The Federalist* and with the federal system. He did not know whether the lecturer wished to assert that it would have been possible to create a Federal World State in 1919, but in his opinion such a view was contrary to the facts. The United States more than any other Power had limited the functions of the Covenant of the League of Nations. When studying *The Federalist* it would be well to study the life of Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton had not believed in the new Constitution, but had thought that he could have made a better one had he been entrusted with the task; but he had accepted that Constitution as the best possible thing at the time, and instead of putting forward negative criticism, had thrown himself forward as a passionate advocate of the cause, and this was one of the reasons why it had succeeded. If those people who had seen the obvious faults of the League, especially influential members of the public of the Great Powers, had during the earlier years made strenuous efforts to strengthen it, instead of putting forward merely negative criticism, matters might be very different to-day. The lesson of *The Federalist* was that a new creation had been evolved because of the conviction and unity of the men who had started it. This unity and conviction had been lacking among the members of the League.

Secondly, it must be remembered that no federal State had come to its full fruition without a civil war. What Hamilton had seen to be necessary had only been made possible through a civil war. The same thing applied to Switzerland and to Germany. Always at the crucial moment of the surrender of sovereignty there had been war. The passage to a world State through a war was not as attractive as the picture shown by the lecturer.

He did not know if the lecturer had meant to imply that democracy was one of the essential elements of a federal State. There were examples where democracy had not been present in parts of such a State. But if democracy were to be a *sine qua non* of a federal State, then the world might become divided into two opposed camps, which would surely be likely to lead to friction between them, and ultimately to war.

It was exceedingly unjust to the democratic forces on the continent of Europe to say that "Western Liberalism is merely the political husk of Christianity, without its spiritual kernel." It was necessary

to hear a professor from the Sorbonne really warming to his subject before a sympathetic audience to realise that liberty in the French sense was not a mere negative conception, relegating Christianity to the background, but that it was a real and fervent belief in elementary human rights on which the whole basis of human society must be built ; and in the greater portion of the Latin world those things counted for much more than did their Anglo-Saxon counterpart which had been the substance of the lecturer's address. The Spanish States of South America had been in somewhat the same position as those of North America, but it had not been possible to apply the federal solution in their case because their previous history and their Latin conception of life had made it impossible for them to use it in the same way.

MR. H. WICKHAM STEED said that he agreed in part with the statement that there was no fundamental incompatibility between the Church and the Declaration of the Rights of Man. The lower clergy under the Third Estate who had been more in touch with the people had felt no inherent antagonism towards it, it had only been the higher clergy who had afterwards set their faces against it.

He had had the privilege of knowing Mr. Streit for more than twelve years. After serving during the Great War, and then on President Wilson's staff in Paris, he had returned to the United States, and had been through a University, had been a Rhodes scholar, spending a year at Oxford, had then travelled through Asia Minor, and had settled down at Geneva in 1929 as correspondent of the *New York Times*. As a Wilsonian he had been a sympathiser with the League, watching it with a loving eye. During those years he had realised that the greatest difficulty standing in the way of the League was the persistence of the concept of neutrality among its members which Article 16 had been designed to kill. Thus he had come to the conclusion that it was the fact that the League was composed of sovereign States which made a real community of nations, with an effective Common Law of its own, impossible on the basis of a League. In the very important book which he had written, *Union Now*, he demanded *union*, not a league or alliance among the democracies immediately—between Great Britain, the Dominions, the United States, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, the Scandinavian countries, Finland. He saw in democracy the only chance of preserving human freedom, and the only chance for its survival in this “union now,” which would have a command of such resources, both actual and potential, as would give pause to any aggressor or combination of aggressors. Then, when this union had been formed, other nations now under dictatorship would see the disadvantage of remaining outside it and the advantages of belonging to it, and would make such modifications in their own methods of government as would be necessary to enable them to become members. Mr. Streit had explained very carefully the financial and economic advantages of such a union, and the salient features of his book had been broadcast throughout the United States on a national

"hook-up." It was to be hoped that through the B.B.C. it would be broadcast to the British Commonwealth. It was not possible to over-estimate the danger to which the British Commonwealth was now exposed. They had gone back on the only general lofty principle for which they could have asked not only the lives of their own people, but the sympathy of the rest of the world. If it should be necessary now to fight on a territorial issue, it was doubtful whether the support from the Empire or Commonwealth would be so immediate or so unanimous as it would have been last September, when a principle had been involved. The scheme outlined by the lecturer and by Mr. Streit provided a chance which should not be missed.

DR. A. D. LINDSAY said that on first reading the lecturer's paper he had thought it very unreal, and on a second reading had still found it unreal to a certain extent. He agreed that none of the nations would have been prepared to accept a federal government at the end of the War. He thought it would be difficult to form a federal State to-day. He did wish, however, to express his agreement with the underlying theme of the address, which was that it was useless to try to obtain any sort of unity in society unless the different individual members believed in it. The trouble had been that the members of the League of Nations had not believed in it. It had been a mistake to think that the important thing was to get everyone in. The all-important thing was that all should believe in that to which they belonged. The lecturer had been right when he had said that the strength of any Commonwealth must depend on the strength of the loyalty of the individuals who belonged to it. It was necessary to draw together all those people who did want unity and who did believe in it, and if this meant dividing the world into two camps, surely this would be better than having it divided into one large and horrible camp and a lot of isolated distracted States. Looking back, one might say of the League of Nations that either it ought to have done more or it ought to have done less. It could not have done more, and so perhaps it had tried to do a little too much, and had so led its members to think that they had no responsibility, that they could do as they pleased and it would continue on its own without their support. He, personally, had no fear of the bogey of sovereignty; except that it was a silly theory, it did no harm. The facts behind the theory did harm. It was necessary that those people who had a real feeling of responsibility both for their own nation and for the commonwealth of nations should come together and start to build on the principles in which they all believed.

MR. R. STOKES paid a warm tribute to the lecturer's address and also to his book *Civitas Dei*, but wished to suggest a point of view diametrically opposed to that put forward by Mr. Curtis.

Mr. Curtis had pleaded for a world State, but the speaker wanted to suggest that it was not only an impracticable dream, but also a morally

wrong ideal. He agreed with all that the lecturer had said about *The Federalist*. It was one of the greatest books on political philosophy ever written, and he agreed with the lecturer that the causes of the failure of the League of Nations undoubtedly lay in the disregard of the principles laid down in *The Federalist*. Further, he agreed that it was those principles, incorporated in the Constitutions of South Africa, Canada and Australia, that had given those Constitutions the cohesion upon which they had built up their sovereignty. But when it came to larger units, he would point out that even under the most favourable circumstances for its extension, namely within the British Empire, the main principle of *The Federalist* had broken down. Mr. Curtis had before the War produced a book to persuade the British Commonwealth to adopt the principle of federalism, but even his persuasive reasoning had failed.

PROFESSOR ARNOLD TOYNBEE said that he had not yet read Mr. Streit's book, but he had first met him in Constantinople in 1921. He was certainly a man of mark, and what he had to say would no doubt be important.

The important point in Mr. Curtis's thesis, it seemed to him, was not the difference between the constitutional structure of the Covenant of the League of Nations and that of a federal world State, but the fact that the world had become economically and morally a unit while it was still politically divided. A study of history would show the danger of the present situation, because all past civilisations had come to grief through a failure to solve this problem. The danger was not that a world State would not take shape, but that it would be established by methods of violence which would be the ruin of society.

The Roman Empire was a good example of a world State which had been formed in this way by a process of conquest that had destroyed the other States in the Graeco-Roman world and had ruined that world economically and morally. A world State was a necessity, but the line of least resistance for reaching this inevitable goal was by a process of conquest which would destroy everything which at present made life worth living.

The interesting thing about the address and the book *Union Now* was that the idea behind them both seemed to offer a remote possibility of creating a world State by some less ruinous method than the traditional one of world conquest. It was only necessary to look at a map of the world to see that in a conflict in which the whole world would become engaged, North America would survive, and possibly also Russia, but that the European Powers would all inevitably perish. They were too small and close to each other not to be exterminated fairly quickly by modern methods of warfare. The project of a "union now" between the democratic nations held out the hope that the balance of power would be weighted so overwhelmingly on the side of this super-United States that it would be manifestly too formidable to be attacked and might therefore come to form the nucleus of a

world State without the destruction of our present society. But obviously when considering any project of world federation the problem of the moment was one of time. This was a crucial factor in the situation. For this reason, in the presence of that hourly danger of catastrophe to which the speaker had referred, the more ambitious plan of "union now" between all the democratic States might be more practical politics than the more modest idea of an initial union between Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand. The question was whether the pressure of the immediate danger would be sufficient to overcome the prejudices existing in Western Europe, and still more in North America, in favour of national parochialism, and whether this might come to pass in time to avert the impending catastrophe.

DR. DRUMMOND SHIELS said he would like to pay a tribute to the lecturer's courage and faith in restating the thesis of *Civitas Dei* at a time when nationalism appeared to be sweeping triumphantly across the world. Some form of world government was almost certainly the ultimate solution of international difficulties, and a collaboration of democracies was an obvious and natural beginning. The Dominions, however, were already closely associated with Great Britain in respect of foreign policy, and it was unlikely that they would be willing to retrace their steps and to accept more formal commitments unless these were part of a much bigger scheme. If the United States, possibly with the addition of the Scandinavian countries, were prepared to come in, the attitude of the Dominions would be different.

Before a world government was possible, however, material and psychological factors making for aggressive nationalism and racial antagonism would have to be more frankly faced. The most obvious and urgent problems were not necessarily the most fundamental. Was world unity in government possible, for example, while financial and trade rivalries existed between nations whose internal economy was based on a profit-making system which had many extra-national ramifications? Also, what about racial and colour prejudice, perhaps more acute to-day in a political sense than it had ever been? Could there be world unity while this question was unsolved, and, if not, how could it be solved?

He was not quite certain whether the lecturer had meant that there was no further use for the League of Nations. Any kind of world federation would take a long time to build up, and, in the meantime, how were they to solve questions of national boundaries, movement of populations, raw materials, colonies, etc., without constant danger of crises and war? He thought the lecturer had been rather sweeping in implying that sovereign States could not find common ground or make progress towards international agreement. The record of the League of Nations itself was a proof that this was not the case. In many fields of endeavour there had been great achievements, certainly in the economic, health, and social spheres, and—to some extent—in the political field. A stepping-stone to world government was required

and a reconstructed League of Nations should provide the necessary link.

He thought Mr. Curtis had used the term "loyalty" in two different senses—as an honourable and intellectual adherence to a legal contract or moral obligation, and as the emotion of patriotism. The emotional effect of the increased intensity of nationalism would work against world federation, but the consequent emotion of fear would work in its favour. A blend of idealism with the instinct of self-preservation seemed to be present in the American reaction to the world situation.

He admired and shared the ideal of the lecturer, but considered that progress to it would be assisted by getting sovereign States back as soon and as much as possible to the conference table.

MR. RENNIE SMITH suggested that, while fully-blown federalism could not be envisaged immediately, an accelerated and solid contribution towards political co-operation could be made which would save the world from its present danger and lay the foundations of a future world order.

MR. GEORGE EDINGER said that he remembered before the War having had the great privilege of meeting a man whose pioneer work for a world federation had never been sufficiently appreciated, Sir Max Waechter, a Prussian, the son of a Lutheran pastor who had come to England and made a fortune and had then spent his time considering how a federation of Europe might be brought about. In pursuit of this idea he had seen all the rulers in Europe, all the pre-War monarchs. He had tried to persuade them to come into some kind of federation and to begin by dropping the customs barriers. This was still the first thing to be done to-day. Dr. Hodza had said as far back as 1920, when speaking of the already troublesome minority problem in Czechoslovakia, that if the customs barriers could be dropped, no one would care whether they were Czechs or whether they were Poles. The best way to start a union of the nations would be to remove the customs barrier between Germany and France.

VICE-ADMIRAL DRURY-LOWE said that Mr. Lionel Curtis in his final chapter of *Civitas Dei* had pointed out that the great difficulty in moving from one stage to another towards the final goal of a World Commonwealth lay in changing the minds of men. There was indeed a great need for moral and spiritual rearmament, as many recent letters in the Press had emphasised. A world-wide spiritual regeneration was necessary; in other words, the present order would end in catastrophe unless men turned to God to regenerate it. He hoped this would not be laughed at as visionary and "in the clouds." There were higher laws which governed the world and which had been thwarted through the lack of vision of mankind, and "where there is no vision the people perish." It was not by new weapons nor by new machinery that the world would be saved, but by new men.

MR. ERNEST BEVIN (in the Chair) said that the matter which had always troubled him in considering any type of world co-operation was the relationship existing between Great Britain and the rest of Europe. The former had traditionally followed, and to-day was reaping the reward, a policy of safeguarding her own security, and doing so by keeping Europe divided. It was now found necessary to build up a system which would allow Europe to unite. The key to the Commonwealth idea was not to be found on the circumference of the world, but in the European centre. He, personally, had always approached problems from an economic point of view. The trouble with the League of Nations had been that it had been given a political head, a Labour tail, but no economic body, neither had it been provided with any instrument for dealing with the economic position which had arisen as a result of the World War. Had there been an economic conference similarly constituted to the International Labour Organisation, meeting every year to discuss the economic difficulties and raw-material requirements of each State, or group of States, the question of reparations, for example, would not have reached the magnitude it did, and the difficulties which created the present political situation would, to a great extent, have been avoided.

It was also interesting to observe that those nations which entered the League through the I.L.O. had entered more willingly and clung to it more tenaciously than those which primarily belonged to the political side of the League, the reason being that it was easier to induce the nations to discuss problems than to discuss politics. It made a great difference if the discussions were purely economic. For years it had been his job to promote unity amongst conflicting organisations, and he would never have succeeded if he had put before them cut-and-dried constitutions. The only way to promote unity amongst people was to induce them at the same time to concentrate upon problems with which they were economically confronted. In this way solutions to the problems were sought rather than differences magnified.

He had discussed with a member of the I.L.O. as to whether it would be possible to study the cartelisation of industry and to ascertain whether such cartelisation could be on a Labour basis, instead of merely by commercial agreement. If, for instance, it were possible to secure in the international steel trade, where a cartel had been established, a conference representative of international Labour to discuss the conditions of labour that should apply to the cartel internationally, thus giving it a stable foundation, people would become more interested in their problems and would forget their national differences. They would then begin to discover the programme which would be best for the steel industry as a whole. The world was so small industrially. Those who spoke of the impossibility of world order to-day forgot that the progress of science had cut down distance and brought countries very near to each other. It was not possible to discuss the wages operating in industry in England without considering at the same time the wages operating, for instance, in Japan. The so-called

democracies, with Russia, controlled 78 per cent. of the world's surface, with its raw materials, markets and opportunities for development. Middle Europe and Japan was limited to the balance of 22 per cent., yet it was in the latter that it was so necessary that the standard of living should be raised. If the democracies collaborated they could, having regard to their economic facilities, create conditions whereby they could invite these other countries to come in and enjoy the full economic advantages, provided they were willing to observe recognised labour standards and to give up using the instrument of war. There was never more than 13 per cent. of any commodity entering the international pool which affected the price level, yet this 13 per cent. had been the vexed factor in disturbing world stability. If this comparatively small percentage of the total world production at present floating about the world could be stabilised, then the fear of intermittent depression would be conquered. It should be remembered that labour represented 75 per cent. of the total cost of any commodity, and if labour as an international force could be stabilised, a foundation could be formed upon which might be built a new political Order.

MR. LIONEL CURTIS said that he had noticed the use of the word "if" : if this could be done or that could be done. But how were these things to be brought about? They could only be brought about by creating control or government. In federal government lay the instrument by which the plans mentioned by different speakers could be carried out. In *The Federalist* was the first expression by men who had handled government of the principles which must lie beneath any control and which would enable things to be done. When engineers set out to erect a bridge, they could only do it because they had grasped certain principles of physics and mathematics in order to erect the structure. The same thing was true of human affairs. They could not be understood by the philosopher who had never left his cloister as they could be understood by men who had actually been through revolution and who had handled government and who knew that the bond which united men was their loyalty to one another. By tying the thirteen States together with compacts, conflicting loyalties had been established. No answer had been given to the question : where was an Englishman's loyalty—to Great Britain, the British Commonwealth or the League of Nations?

Concerning his attitude to the League of Nations, he had always wanted a standing recurring conference at some place like Geneva of the leading statesmen of the world aided by a secretariat. He still believed that this would be a great advance on the old methods of diplomacy conducted mainly by despatches and telegrams. Had the Conference at Paris been satisfied with bringing the leading statesmen face to face, probably the United States would never have had cause to leave the arrangement, and secondly, and most important, conflicting loyalties would not have been created as they had been by Articles 10 and 16. After reading *The Federalist* he had come to the conclusion

that these structures erected to do the work of a State, while not a State, not only failed to do the work, but were in themselves positive dangers. The man who had played the part of Woodrow Wilson at the Congress of Vienna had been Alexander of Russia. He had had the imaginative idea of the Holy Alliance into which England had unwillingly and hesitatingly joined. Under Metternich the Holy Alliance had developed into a combination to suppress any signs of popular government anywhere in Europe. They had put Ferdinand back on to his throne in Spain, and then Canning had said, "No," and he had left the Alliance. Then they had tried to assert the dominion of Ferdinand over the South American colonies, and Canning had said that before this should happen the British fleet would stop it. Had there been instituted a Conference, instead of the Covenant of the League with Articles 10 and 16, Great Britain would most probably have asserted her sense of justice more quickly than she had done. She would have realised that the most important thing to do after the War was to strengthen the German Republic and not to ruin it, to help the German people to learn the difficult lesson of self-government. If sixty men were tied together with a rope, their pace would be that of the slowest. Similarly sixty sovereign nations tied together would achieve the pace of the slowest. Any one member of the League could paralyse action. For instance, because of the sufferings of the White Russians, Nansen had established his office for refugees, and had done a great and noble work, and then new refugees had come along, in greater need and in larger numbers, and when that office had been most needed it had been closed down, because Russia had never forgotten why the original Nansen office had come into being. This was a single instance of the kind of general paralysis which had caused and which had prevented the revision of the Treaty of Versailles. Had there been a conference with no definite obligations, the people of Great Britain would have come to their senses much more quickly, as they had done after the Napoleonic Wars, they would have attained more quickly their natural moral level, and would have set about liquidating reparations and helping the Weimar Republic on to its feet.