

profits, the vision of a United States transformed into a complete self-contained economic unit, the vision of a Germany hurled from the pinnacle of world-power into the abyss of helplessness by the blossoming of the chrome-ore business on American soil, and the vision of individual service to Woodrow Wilson the Man, all portrayed in five minutes.

Such are the commissions given to Mr. Baruch and to the War Industries Board and to the Prices Committee and to the Priorities Committee by the President's letter. It means a much clearer defining of powers and duties and a much clearer locating of responsibilities. It indicates that the President would be inclined to make genuine use of the Overman bill. And will Congress pretend it is in a position to act intelligently and promptly, from time to time, on such administrative questions as: "Shall the power of developing chrome-ore mines be centred in Mr. Baruch's hands now or in those of Mr. Lane, Secretary of the Interior?"

Such questions in war-time might well have a different answer on Monday from the answer appropriate on Saturday. And now that the President is really looking at administration, it is time for Congress to empower him to make his looking effective from day to day, and even from hour to hour.

WILLIAM HARD.

Morals and the Conduct of States

IN his recent article on the legal status of war, Mr. Levinson pointed out that according to the older theory of personal relations and the still prevailing theory of national relations, lower interests, material and mundane affairs, may be discussed and adjudicated, while conflicts in higher interests, ideal and spiritual affairs, must be settled by armed force in duel or war. Swift himself never conceived such irony. Comment or amplification can only detract from the completeness of the picture of a world morally upside down. Mr. Levinson's further suggestion of some super-national organization based upon a preliminary outlawing of war suggests, however, a question of morals which may well be discussed. What is the cause of the present separation of private and public morals? What will be the moral consequences of an assimilation of national and private codes to each other?

Lamentations as to the gulf which divides the working ethical principles of nations from those animating decent individuals are copious. But they express the pious rather than the efficacious

wish of those who indulge in them. They overlook the central fact that morals are relative to social organization. Individuals have to be moral because they can be. They can be because they are partakers in modes of associated life which confer powers and impose responsibilities upon them. States are non-moral in their activities just because of the absence of an inclusive society which defines and establishes rights. Hence they are left to their own devices, secret and violent if need is deemed imminent, in judging and asserting their rights and obligations. The distance which separates the code of intrigue and conquest permissible to nations from the code exacted of persons measures the significance for morals of social organization. The nations exist with respect to one another in what the older writers called a state of nature, not in a social or political state.

The not infrequent saying that international law expresses not true but only moral law is a striking indication of the widespread absence of scientific understanding of morals. The actual fact is that until nations are bound together by the law of a social order there cannot be any truly moral obligations existing among them. The attempt on the part of a particular nation to conceive of its relations with other nations in genuinely moral terms may be a source of weakness. The bald enunciation of any such position as this is, very properly, shocking. The frank acceptance of the double standard of conduct on the part of Germany has seemed to other nations to be an example of that abolition of all morality commonly known as Machiavellianism. But this attitude of abhorrence is effective only in the degree in which it marks an aspiration for the establishment of a social order among nations wherever moral relations may obtain. The moral deadliness of the assertion of a "higher" morality for a nation lies in its cynical contempt for the possibility of a society of nations where moral regulations would exist. Conversely, if the conception of a federated concert of nations obtains more widely and ardently in America than elsewhere it is not because we are so much more moral than others that we can conceive of a higher social state; it is rather that being more highly socialized we can conceive of a new morality.

The plea that nations *ought* to regulate themselves by the moral code which obtains among individuals is likely to degenerate into a sentimentalism which projects action on the base of wishes instead of facts. It escapes this sentimentalism only as it is a symptom of a discontent with the present social order which will momentarily express itself in a demand for a new social organization. To indulge in vituperations at the wickedness of

war and in asseverations of the obligations of states to act upon the basis of the most enlightened code is merely to permit one's self a Pharisaic luxury—unless one is willing to fight for the establishment of a social organization which will make moral responsibilities and regulations a fact.

We are still incredibly subjectivistic in our moral ideas. The common assumption of the Protestant world is that men are gifted as individuals with conscience and that this conscience brings into existence acts and social relations which may approximate its high dictates. So far as anything objective, anything external to the individual is recognized it is usually something supernatural, God or some of those mitigated substitutes for theological supernaturalism which modern thought calls transcendental absolutes and values. A pacifist clergyman in California recently proclaimed his supreme right to follow not only for himself but for propaganda among others the dictates of his own conscience even when they brought him into conflict with the law of the land: his right to do it not only in the sense of willingness to stand the penalties which would follow, but in the sense that the state had no right to inflict any penalties if he chose to obey what his conscience told him was the law of God. He doubtless offended the loyalty of thousands of his fellow citizens. It may be doubted how many of them recognized that he was asserting the essence of moral anarchy, by which I mean a course which would not only lead to practical anarchy but to a destruction of all moral distinctions whatever. For "conscience," that is the aggregate of the moral sentiments and ideas of man, is not the author and judge of social institutions, but the product and reflex of the latter. They are functions of social organization. They reflect criticism of the existing social order as well as approval of it. But in this capacity they are heralds of a changed social order. They are significant only as they become the pivots about which turn active efforts for the reconstruction of the social order. The notion that it is possible to get bodies of men to act in accord with finer moral sentiments while the general scheme of social organization remains the same is not only futile, it is a mark of the subtlest form of conceit, moral egotism.

If only there were a general recognition of the dependence of moral control upon social order, all of the sentiment and well-wishing opinion that is now dissipated would be centred. It would aim at the establishment of a definitely organized federation of nations not merely in order that certain moral obligations might be effectively enforced but in order that a variety of obligations might come into existence. The weakness on the ethical

side of previous discussions of international courts and leagues has been that these have so largely assumed that moral considerations are already adequately cared for, and that it remains only to give them, through proper agencies, legal effect. The result was that moral enthusiasm was no sooner aroused than it was chilled by finding only legal technicalities with which to occupy itself, more international laws, treaties, courts, diplomats and lawyers. It wanted machinery to propel a great new idea and it found itself confronting additions to make the old machinery work better, to keep going the old idea of ultimate national sovereignty and irresponsibility. It found itself confronted with negative provisions for making war more difficult to enter upon, but which refrained from dealing in any positively organized way with those defects in social organization from which wars proceed. All proposals short of a league of nations whose object is not the negative one of preventing war but the positive one of looking after economic and social needs which are now at the mercy of chance and the voracity of isolated states, assume that war is the effect of bellicosity—which is exactly on the intellectual level of the famous idea that it is the dormitive power of opium which puts men to sleep.

Warlikeness is not of itself the cause of war; a clash of interests due to absence of organization is its cause. A supernational organization which oversees, obviates and adjusts these clashes, an organization which, as Mr. Levinson points out, is possible only with coincident outlawing of war itself, will focus moral energies now scattered and make operative moral ideas now futile. It will align the moral code of state behavior with the best which obtains as to personal conduct. But it will do more than that. It will give personal conscience a new stay and outlook. It will permit the social principle which is the heart of all morals to find full instead of hampered expression; it will enable it to be courageous because consistent. It will generalize that secularization or humanization of morals which is now so halting and vagrant that it leads many persons to escape supernaturalism only to land in a half-suppressed scepticism as to the possibility of any intelligent and objective morals, anything beyond social convention on one hand and personal taste on the other.

When I said that it is mere sentimentalism to deplore the deviation of the moral standard of states from that of persons unless one is willing to fight for a social organization which will permit moral relations and regulations to exist, I meant fight in every sense of the word. War to put a stop to war is no new thing. History shows a multitude of wars which have been professedly

waged in order that a future war should not arrive. History also shows that as a pacifist, Mars has not been a success. But a war waged to establish an international order and by that means to outlaw war is something hitherto unknown. In just the

degree in which the American conception of the war gains force, and *this* war becomes a war for a new type of social organization, it will be a war of compelling moral import.

JOHN DEWEY.

CORRESPONDENCE

From an I W W in Jail

SIR: It has been remarked that there is a growth of anti-governmental sentiment among the workers of this country. The wage-earners, it is said, regard with increasing suspicion the good faith of the administrative and executive arms of the state.

Why is this? The superficial intellectualists glibly allege it is because of a growth of "syndicalist" or "direct actionist" thought among the workers.

This is putting the cart before the horse. The growth of such thought must be because of certain facts. These must have been of such a nature as to inspire doubt of the fairness and impartiality of certain branches of the state.

That such a sentiment of doubt among the workers is not based upon rhetoric or imagined wrongs is apparent when we direct our attention, for example, to the activities of the Department of Justice in the I. W. W. cases at present in preparation.

The Department of Justice obtains the money for the prosecution by the taxing of the people of America through the fiscal machinery of the government.

The Industrial Workers of the World endeavor to obtain sufficient money for the defense of their imprisoned members through the solicitation of donations, the sale of voluntary assessment stamps to members and the general diffusion of information on the case.

Funds for the prosecution are practically inexhaustible and are obtained without effort.

Funds for the defense are contributed from the meager earnings of workmen and are obtained through solicitation and publicity.

The Department of Justice has the ear of the daily press, but the press is extremely chary of printing anything which emanates from the side of the defense.

Therefore, we have had to organize our own avenues of publicity. By means of circular letters and a weekly paper, the *Defense News Bulletin*, and by the organization of Defense Committees in various districts, we have sought to put before the wage-earners our side of the question.

But the Department of Justice has not confined itself to the preparation of the government's case against us. It has also tried to cripple our efforts to secure enough funds to provide ourselves with an adequate defense.

Agents of the Department occupied for eleven days the quarters of the General Defense Committee in Chicago, thereby materially hampering the solicitation of funds.

The *International Socialist Review*, a monthly magazine which of late has devoted much space to our publicity, has been forbidden the mails and also forbidden the Express Companies for the dispatch of their periodical.

Our little weekly, the *Defense News Bulletin*, we sent to various parts of the country in bundles through the Express Companies. They were then distributed among the workers by organizations or sympathizers in the various

districts. This paper was published in Chicago and openly sold and distributed there.

Now the final blow has been struck. The Express Company has been forbidden to carry our paper—of course we had no mailing privileges—and the workers outside Chicago must rely upon what the Associated Press pleases to give them for news of our case.

Also this is a severe blow at the financial maintenance of the Defense. Is this fair fighting?

Many of us surrendered voluntarily to the U. S. authorities as soon as we heard we were indicted. All those arrested went willingly to jail, glad of a chance to have this great test case of industrial union principles. Surely one would think that a democratic government would accord us treatment which would not cause the workers to smile with bitter unbelief when such shining abstractions as "fair play" or "justice" are trumpeted forth.

And the vision of over a hundred of us, who have already lain in prison for five months in default of securing bail which has been set at a prohibitive figure, is not particularly calculated to strengthen the confidence of the more intelligent worker in the beneficence—or even in the impartiality—of that medley of powers and prerogatives we call the State.

CHARLES ASHLEIGH.

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To Pry Off Bulgaria

[The following was sent as a letter from Radoslav A. Tsanoff, assistant professor of philosophy at the Rice Institute, Houston, Texas, to Professor Stephen Panarettoff, Bulgarian Minister to the United States.]

MY dear Professor Panarettoff: The grim events of 1913, and the more recent blunders of Entente diplomacy in the Balkans, compelled Bulgaria to wage a war of liberation in unwilling alliance with three autocracies, but in the firm hope that the democratic world would ultimately give her justice and thus enable her to break with the Kaisers and the Sultan. For a whole year since America entered the war, Bulgaria, resisting all German pressure, has made possible your continued presence in Washington, thus proving daily that the Sofia statesmen remember the American democratic ideals which they learned at Roberts College, your own Alma Mater; that they will continue to recognize America as a friend, and will never recognize the Prussian as a master.

The Russian revolution changed the entire meaning of the war. It thrilled every Bulgar heart. But, while the moral effect of Russian freedom is chastening and refining the democracies of the west, and has made sympathy with Kaiserism doubly impossible for democratic Bulgaria,