

plain fact, we are the closest neighbors of the British Empire at every vital point. So habitual and so unobtrusive has this relation become that we almost forget its existence. But it exists mightily, and if we have enjoyed a century of immunity from European aggressions the real cause lies in the successful maintenance by England of a balance of power upon the continent. We have never had the navy or the army to enforce the Monroe Doctrine against a European coalition and it is a mischievous form of self-deception to proceed on the theory that the Monroe Doctrine has been respected simply because we willed it. It was a principle of English policy fully as much as ours, because the English realized that the security of the Empire over large areas was protected by it.

Now, after the most serious threat ever directed against sea power, Britain and America emerge the undisputed leaders of world politics. Their common purposes are irresistible, and the destiny of all governments is for the moment in their hands.

How that joint power shall be used is the heart of the world's problem. How then, shall it be used? There are some who would seem to favor a course by which we should find ourselves preparing for war with Britain. They do not say so publicly, to be sure, but they dream of supplanting Great Britain as mistress of the seas. That means war. They may not face the fact now, but it is a fact—sea power cannot be divided permanently. Britain may wield it; America, after a disastrous war might snatch it from her. The two together can wield it. But they cannot each wield parts of it for any length of time, because after a period of competition war seems preferable to perpetual menace. The control of the seas is so delicate and so fundamental that it is impossible to leave it in dispute. Naval competition makes naval war, not a probability, but a certainty.

Another school, realizing this and smacking its lips over the concentration of power under Anglo-American control, looks to a permanent alliance as the basis of a good headstrong foreign policy. Since America and Britain temporarily control the world's destiny, why not continue, and profit by it? This is the policy of imperialist alliance, and it leads straight to those very entanglements against which Washington warned the nation. A mere offensive and defensive alliance between two or three powers means in practice that each has to back the other's ambitions and mistakes. It is a method of whetting the worst appetites of each, and of committing both to all the troublesomeness of either. Such a policy would soon awaken against us first the jealousy and then the enmity of the excluded nations. The masses of the world are stirring; they will not long trust themselves to any selfish combination of powers, no matter how idealistic their present purposes may be. An alliance would be a temporary thing for there is too much disruptive energy in the world to tolerate it long.

There is only one other course, and that is to make

Anglo-American sea power the nucleus of world organization, to guarantee its uses before the whole world, to bind ourselves in honor to employ it only for the security of all nations. That is what the League does. The actual ownership of power remains in British and American hands, but its uses are stipulated in a covenant. By this we avoid the dangers of competition and alliance, while retaining the possession of the necessary force against an emergency in case the League were destroyed. Anglo-American sea power, fortified by the abolition of neutrality, becomes the ultimate guarantor of the world's affairs. It is the force by which such liberties as we may devise are finally secured.

This is not the old isolation. There is no denying that. But so far as mortal man can see into an extremely perplexing future, this programme can if intelligently administered be made to serve the same ends. At the beginning of the nineteenth century we were a weak people and the neighbors of a string of weak republics which had just secured their independence. In Europe a great war had ended with the triumph on the continent of autocracies which hated republics and were resolved to crush them. Taking advantage of England's position and her liberalism President Monroe proclaimed the doctrine that this hemisphere must remain safe for democracy. Now, a century later, another great war has closed in which those autocracies are crushed and a string of weak republics has risen from their ruins. We stand as the richest and strongest power in the world, and our intervention decided the issue. In spite of our strength we have remained true to those very things which we proclaimed when we were young and weak. European peoples seeing this miracle, for miracle it is to the continental mind, have turned to us with such faith as was never before given to a distant people. They have heard an American president announce their liberation and promise their safety, and while the war was engaged they heard no dissent because in fact there was none. They have taken his word as America's, and built their hopes upon it.

Perhaps it was wrong of him to arouse such expectations. Certainly it would have been wiser if he had acted less singly in committing the nation. But nevertheless, there was opportunity to object, and no formal objection was made. Our honor is consequently very seriously involved in the President's promises.

VIII. Amendments

IT cannot be asserted too often that the indispensable action to be taken at Paris is to provide for a continuous meeting. Nothing else in the Twenty-Six Articles can be regarded as beyond the reach of criticism and amendment. Let it be agreed now, that in one form or another the contacts which exist shall not be broken, and it becomes not only possible but desirable that the covenant should be subjected to drastic examination. Revision need not delay the making of the Peace Treaty, because the

Congress of Versailles—if it does not adjourn—can adequately perform the immediate tasks of the League. For at bottom the League is merely the conference made permanent, and the conference is quite competent to make the necessary decisions of the next half a dozen months, while a more adequate instrument is provided out of the provisional text contained in the Twenty-Six Articles.

The document itself exhibits all the marks of haste and patching. General principles, agencies, procedure are scattered through the various articles in considerable confusion, and one has to search through most of the covenant to discover the complete doctrine on any specific point. For example, why having read Articles VII, VIII, and IX on the subject of armaments, does one suddenly discover another provision on the subject in XVIII? What is the meaning of "freedom of transit and equitable treatment" in XXI, and how does it relate itself to X where "political independence" is guaranteed? Does this same X mean that the boundaries to be fixed at Versailles are immutable, or simply that they cannot be changed by threat of war? Does this X mean that if a state once member of the League collapses through misgovernment the mandatory principle cannot be applied to it?

Apart from these general and technical difficulties there are certain specific criticisms to be made.

The covenant is very difficult to amend. Now an organic law which is virtually unchangeable should not burden itself with those abstract negative principles, which are the refuge of obstructionists. Article X, guaranteeing territorial integrity and existing political independence, is of this type. It is an article of distrust, an effort to be wiser than the next generation, and to curb the action of the future by a magic set of words. Contrast it with Article XI, which makes it a "friendly right" to draw attention to circumstances which threaten peace and understanding. X binds the League in a formula; XI releases the League for an active policy of conciliation. The one is restrictive, the other permissive, and the two clauses bark at each other. X is one of those grand generalities behind which every opponent of change can barricade himself. He can always declare that anything he does not like is "external aggression" against his political independence, and there is always sure to be some nation ready to vote against a unanimous recommendation.

The clause will not protect a nation's independence against the kind of economic penetration which to-day constitutes the chief mode of conquest. But it will protect a government in bad practices and oppressions. It will hamper the honorable nations by ruling out interference; it will assist the dishonorable governments who have learned to manipulate affairs in a costume of legality. It may put minorities beyond the scope of the League's protection, and enforce the privilege of the oppressing state. Moreover, it puts a premium upon insincerity. In the actual conduct of human affairs there is an increasing limitation of political dependence

resulting from the necessities of economic cooperation. Those necessities are stronger than any political axiom, and will prevail. But under Article X they will prevail in roundabout fashion and furtively. The framers of the covenant, and the majority of well-informed people do not believe that a state can do what it pleases within its own boundaries. In the future men will believe it still less, for they are discovering that "international relations" are after all nothing but the result of what goes on within the different nations. Surely at the end of this war it is perfectly clear that the "political independence" of empires like that of the Hohenzollerns, Hapsburgs, and Sultan is not something the world can afford to regard as beyond the jurisdiction of the League.

The Article should be revised. The preamble contains all that is valuable in it without setting up a piece of political dogmatism derived from the eighteenth century. Provided that international law is given binding sanctions, it is not the business of this generation to put the substance of that law in a straitjacket. When we have agreed that law is binding we have given all the necessary guarantees. What the law is to be in specific cases must be determined on the facts as they are developed by events. There is every reason to believe, for example, that sooner or later the world will require a far greater regulation of international trade than anyone has yet dared to suggest. The experiences of the war point that way. They indicate the impossibility of permitting unfair trade practices between supposedly friendly nations, or of profiteering by governments, or the use of monopolies as a means of conquest. The conferees at Paris have avoided these matters in the draft. Perhaps they had to. But statesmen in the future may not be able to avoid them, and it is the part of wisdom to eliminate any dogmatic rule now which might exclude such action.

If the covenant is to serve through the perils that confront the next generation, flexibility and the possibilities of growth must be assured. To attempt, in the organic law, to go beyond "instruments" to legislation is to turn our back upon a century of experience with written constitutions. No printed text can govern the energies of a generation, but it can stifle the more inventive but scrupulous minds. When we have accepted the League we intend to abide by its spirit and its letter; let us not, then, tie ourselves up in the presence of those who may use the letter of it to defeat the spirit. That we can do by eliminating the negatives.

We can do it also by enlarging the "instrumentalities." The President's own experience shows how necessary it is to secure the intimate cooperation of executive and legislature, majority and minority, if the action of the League is not to be balked. No meeting of executives alone is sufficient to bind the nations, and it is a stultification of democratic control to erect a structure on the theory that the legislature will accept the commitments of the executive