POLITICS

among NATIONS

THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER
AND PEACE

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THE WORLD
MERCATOR'S PROJECTION

ARCTIC OCEAN

GREENLAND

ASIA

EUROPE

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

FINLAND
NORWAY
SWEDEN
POLAND
GERMANY
FRANCE
SPAIN
GREAT BRITAIN
EIRE
MOROCCO
ALGERIA

CHINA
JAPAN
INDIA
PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
SUMATRA
NEW GUINEA
NETHERLANDS INDIES

TURKEY
SYRIA
IRAQ
IRAN
SAUDI ARABIA
EGYPT
ANGLO EGYPTIAN SUDAN
ETHIOPIA
BELGIAN CONGO
FRENCH WEST AFRICA
AFRICA
SOUTH AFRICA
MADAGASCAR

INDIAN OCEAN

AUSTRALIA

NEW ZEALAND

ALASKA
CANADA
NORTH AMERICA
UNITED STATES
MEXICO
CENTRAL AMERICA
WEST INDIES
COLOMBIA
VENEZUELA
ECUADOR
SOUTH AMERICA
BRAZIL
BOLIVIA
ARGENTINA

ATLANTIC OCEAN

PACIFIC OCEAN

HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

EQUATORIAL SCALE
1000 2000 3000 4000 MILES

GREECE

International Politics:

A Dual Approach

I. UNDERSTANDING INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The purpose of this book is twofold. The first is to detect and understand the forces which determine political relations among nations, and to comprehend the ways in which those forces act upon each other and upon international political relations and institutions. In most other branches of the social sciences there would be no need to emphasize this purpose. It would be taken for granted, because the natural purpose of all scientific undertakings is to discover the forces underlying social phenomena and how they operate. However, in approaching the study of international politics, such emphasis is not misplaced. As Professor Grayson Kirk has so ably said:

> Until recent times the study of international relations in the United States has been dominated largely by persons who have taken one of three approaches. First there have been the historians who have considered international relations merely as recent history, in which the student is handicapped by the absence of an adequate amount of available data. A second group, the international lawyers, have properly concerned themselves primarily with the legal aspects of inter-state relations, but they have seldom made a serious effort to inquire into the fundamental reasons for the continuing incompleteness and inadequacy of this legal nexus. Finally, there have been those who have been less concerned with international relations as they are than with the more perfect system which these idealists would like to build. Only recently — and belatedly — have students undertaken to examine the fundamental and persistent forces of world politics, and the institutions which embody them, not with a view to praise or to condemn, but merely in an effort to provide a better understanding of these basic drives which determine the foreign policies of states. Thus the political scientist is moving into the international field at last.[1]

Professor Charles E. Martin has taken up Professor Kirk's theme by pointing to "the problem which faces the students and the teachers of international relations more than any other, namely, that dualism we have to face in mov-

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[1] *American Journal of International Law*, XXXIX (1945), 369–70.

ing in two different and opposite areas. I mean the area of institutions of peace which are related to the adjustment of disputes and the area of power politics and war. Yet, it must be so. There is no escape from it. . . . I think probably one of the greatest indictments of our attitude in teaching in the last twenty years has been to write off glibly the institution of war and to write off the books the influence of power politics. I think political scientists make a great mistake in doing so. We should be the very ones who are studying power politics and its implications and the situations growing out of it, and we should be the ones who study the institution of war." [2]

Defined in such terms, international politics embraces more than recent history and current events. The observer is surrounded by the contemporary scene with its ever shifting emphasis and changing perspectives. He cannot find solid ground on which to stand, nor objective standards of evaluation, without getting down to fundamentals which are revealed only by the correlation of recent events with the more distant past.

International politics cannot be reduced to legal rules and institutions. International politics operates within the framework of such rules and through the instrumentality of such institutions. But it is no more identical with them than American politics on the national level is identical with the American Constitution, the federal laws, and the agencies of the federal government.

Concerning attempts to reform international politics before making an effort to understand what international politics is about, we share William Graham Sumner's view:

> . . . The worst vice in political discussions is that dogmatism which takes its stand on great principles or assumptions, instead of standing on an exact examination of things as they are and human nature as it is. . . . An ideal is formed of some higher or better state of things than now exists, and almost unconsciously the ideal is assumed as already existing and made the basis of speculations which have no root. . . . The whole method of abstract speculation on political topics is vicious. It is popular because it is easy; it is easier to imagine a new world than to learn to know this one; it is easier to embark on speculations based on a few broad assumptions than it is to study the history of states and institutions; it is easier to catch up a popular dogma than it is to analyze it to see whether it is true or not. All this leads to confusion, to the admission of phrases and platitudes, to much disputing but little gain in the prosperity of nations. [3]

The most formidable difficulty facing a scientific inquiry into the nature and ways of international politics is the ambiguity of the material with which the observer has to deal. The events which he must try to understand are, on the one hand, unique occurrences. They happened in this way only once and never before or since. On the other hand, they are similar, for they are manifestations of social forces. Social forces are the product of human nature in action. Therefore, under similar conditions, they will manifest them-

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[2] *Proceedings of the Eighth Conference of Teachers of International Law and Related Subjects* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1946), p. 66.

[3] "Democracy and Responsible Government," *The Challenge of Facts and Other Essays* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1914), pp. 245–6.

selves in a similar manner. But where is the line to be drawn between the similar and the unique?

We learn what the principles of international politics are from comparisons between such events. A certain political situation evokes the formulation and execution of a certain foreign policy. Dealing with a different political situation, we ask ourselves: How does this situation differ from the preceding one and how is it similar? Do the similarities reaffirm the policy developed previously? Or does the blending of similarities and differences allow the essence of that policy to be retained while, in some aspects, it is to be modified? Or do the differences vitiate the analogy altogether and make the previous policy inapplicable? If one wants to understand international politics, grasp the meaning of contemporary events, and foresee and influence the future, one must be able to perform the dual intellectual task implicit in these questions. One must be able to distinguish between the similarities and differences in two political situations. Furthermore, one must be able to assess the import of these similarities and differences for alternative foreign policies. Three series of events taken at random will illustrate the problem and its difficulties.

1. On September 17, 1796, George Washington made a speech in which he bade farewell to the nation, outlining among other things the principles of American foreign policy. On December 2, 1823, President Monroe sent a message to Congress in which he, too, formulated the principles of American foreign policy. In 1917, the United States joined France and Great Britain against a nation which threatened the independence of both. In 1941, the United States followed a similar course of action. On March 12, 1947, President Truman, in a message to Congress, reformulated the principles of American foreign policy.

2. In 1512, Henry VIII made an alliance with the Hapsburgs against France. In 1515, he made an alliance with France against the Hapsburgs. In 1522 and 1542, he joined the Hapsburgs against France. In 1756, Great Britain allied itself with Prussia against the Hapsburgs and France. In 1793, Great Britain, Prussia, and the Hapsburgs were allied against Napoleon. In 1914, Great Britain joined with France and Russia against Austria and Germany, and, in 1939, with France and Poland against Germany.

3. Napoleon, William II, and Hitler tried to conquer the continent of Europe and failed.

Are there within each of these three series of events similarities which allow us to formulate a principle of foreign policy for each series? Or is each event so different from the others in the series that each would require a different policy? The difficulty in making this decision is the measure of the difficulty in making correct judgments in international affairs, in charting the future wisely, and in doing the right things in the right way and at the right time.

Should the foreign policy of Washington's Farewell Address be considered a general principle of American foreign policy, or did it stem from temporary conditions and was it, therefore, bound to disappear with them? Are the foreign policies of Washington's and Monroe's messages compatible with the Truman Doctrine? Stated another way, is the Truman Doctrine a mere

modification of a general principle underlying Washington's and Monroe's conception of foreign affairs, or does the Truman Doctrine constitute a radical departure from the traditions of American foreign policy? If it does, is it justified in the light of changed conditions? Generally speaking, are the differences in the international position of the United States in 1796, 1823, 1917, 1941, and 1947 such as to justify the different foreign policies formulated and executed with regard to these different political situations? More particularly, what are the similarities and differences in the situation with which Europe confronted the United States in 1917, 1941, and 1947, and to what extent do they require similar or different foreign policies on the part of the United States?

What is the meaning of these shifts in British foreign policy? Are they the outgrowth of the whim and perfidy of princes and statesmen? Or are they inspired by the accumulated wisdom of a people, mindful of the permanent forces which determine their relations to the continent of Europe?

Are the disasters which follow in the wake of the three attempts at continental conquest so many accidents due to disparate causes? Or does the similarity in results point to similarities in the over-all political situation, similarities which convey a lesson to be pondered by those who might want to try again? More particularly, are the European policies of Stalin similar to those of Napoleon, William II, and Hitler? To the extent that they are, do they call for policies on the part of the United States similar to those pursued in 1917 and 1941?

Sometimes, as in the case of the retrospective analysis of British foreign policy, the answer seems to be clear. We shall have more to say about that later. Most of the time, however, and especially when we deal with the present and the future, the answer is bound to be tentative and subject to qualifications. The facts from which the answer must derive are essentially ambiguous and subject to continuous change. To those men who would have it otherwise, history has taught nothing but false analogies. When they have been responsible for the foreign policies of their countries, they have brought only disaster. William II and Hitler learned nothing from Napoleon's fate, for they thought it could teach them nothing. Those who have erected Washington's advice into a dogma to be followed slavishly have erred no less than those who would dismiss it altogether.

The first lesson which the student of international politics must learn and never forget is that the complexities of international affairs make simple solutions and trustworthy prophecies impossible. It is here that the scholar and the charlatan part company. Knowledge of the forces which determine politics among nations, and knowledge of the ways by which their political relations proceed, reveals the ambiguity of the facts of international politics. In every political situation contradictory tendencies are at play. One of these tendencies is more likely to prevail under certain conditions than others. But which tendency actually will prevail is anybody's guess. The best the scholar can do, then, is to trace the different tendencies which, as potentialities, are inherent in a certain international situation. He can point out the different conditions which make it more likely for one tendency to prevail than for

another, and, finally, assess the probabilities for the different conditions and tendencies to prevail in actuality.

Because the facts of international politics are exposed to continuous change, world affairs have surprises in store for whoever tries to read the future from his knowledge of the past and from the signs of the present. Take the example of one of the greatest of British statesmen, the younger Pitt. In February 1792, in his budget speech to the House of Commons, Pitt justified the reduction of military expenditures (particularly the decrease by more than 11 per cent in the personnel of the British Navy) and held out hope for more reductions to come by declaring: "Unquestionably there never was a time in the history of this country when from the situation of Europe we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace than at the present moment." Only two months later the continent of Europe was engulfed in war. Less than a year later Great Britain was involved. Thus was initiated a period of almost continuous warfare which lasted nearly a quarter of a century.

When the prophecies of a great statesman fare so ill, what can we expect from the forecasts of lesser minds? In how many books written on international affairs before the First World War, when common opinion held great wars to be impossible or at least of short duration, was there even an inkling of what was to come? Is there a book, written in the period between the two world wars, which could have helped one anticipate what international politics would be like in the fifth decade of the century? Who could have guessed at the beginning of the Second World War what the political world would be like at its end? Who could have known in 1945 what it would be like in 1948? What trust then shall we place in those who today would tell us with absolute certainty what tomorrow and the day after will bring? [4]

2. UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE

This leads us to the second purpose of this book. No study of politics and certainly no study of international politics in the mid-twentieth century can be disinterested in the sense that it is able to divorce knowledge from action and to pursue knowledge for its own sake. International politics is no longer, as it was for the United States during most of its history, a series of incidents, costly or rewarding, but hardly calling into question the nation's very existence and destiny. The existence and destiny of the United States were more deeply affected by the domestic events of the Civil War than by the international policies leading up to, and evolving from, the Mexican

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[4] The fallibility of prophecies in international affairs is strikingly demonstrated by the fantastic errors committed by the experts who have tried to forecast the nature of the next war. The history of these forecasts, from Machiavelli to General J. F. C. Fuller, is the story of logical deductions, plausible in themselves, which had no connection with the contingencies of the actual historic development. General Fuller, for instance, foresaw in 1923 that the decisive weapon of the Second World War would be gas! See *The Reformation of War* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1923).

War, the Spanish-American War, and the Roosevelt corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.[5]

Two facts, peculiar to our time, have completely reversed the relative importance of domestic and international policies for the United States. One is that the United States is at the moment of this writing the most powerful nation on earth. Yet, in comparison with its actual and potential competitors, it is not so powerful that it can afford to ignore the effect of its policies upon its position among the nations. From the end of the Civil War to the beginning of the Second World War it mattered little what policies the United States pursued with regard to its Latin-American neighbors, China, or Spain. The self-sufficiency of its own strength, in conjunction with the operation of the balance of power, made the United States immune to the boundless ambition born of success and the fear and frustration which goes with failure. The United States could take success and failure in stride without being unduly tempted or afraid. Now it stands outside the enclosures of its continental citadel, taking on the whole of the political world as friend or foe. It has become dangerous and vulnerable, feared and afraid.

The risk of being very powerful, but not omnipotent, is aggravated by the second fact: a dual revolution in the political situation of the world. The multiple state system of the past, which in the moral sense was one world, has been transformed into two inflexible, hostile blocs, which are morally two worlds. On the other hand, modern technology has made possible total war. The predominance of these two new elements in contemporary international politics has not only made the preservation of world peace extremely difficult, it has also enormously increased the risks of war. Since in this world situation the United States holds a position of predominant power and, hence, of foremost responsibility, the understanding of the forces which mold international politics and of the factors which determine its course has become for the United States more than an interesting intellectual occupation. It has become a vital necessity.

To reflect on international politics in the United States, as we approach the mid-twentieth century, then, is to reflect on the problems which confront American foreign policy in our time. While at all times the promotion of the national interests of the United States as a power among powers has been the main concern of American foreign policy, in the age of two worlds and of total war the preservation of peace has become the prime concern of all nations. It yields in importance only to the most elemental considerations of national existence and security.

It is for this reason that this book is planned around the two concepts of power and peace. These two concepts are central to a discussion of world politics in the mid-twentieth century, when the greatest accumulation of power ever known gives to the problem of peace an urgency which it has never had before. In a world whose moving force is the aspiration for power

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[5] This corollary is found in the message of Theodore Roosevelt to Congress on December 6, 1904. In that message he proclaimed the right of the United States to intervene in the domestic affairs of the Latin-American countries. For the text, see Ruhl J. Bartlett, editor, *The Record of American Diplomacy: Documents and Readings in the History of American Foreign Relations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), p. 539.

of sovereign nations, peace can be maintained only by two devices. One is the self-regulatory mechanism of the social forces which manifests itself in the struggle for power on the international scene, that is, the balance of power. The other consists of normative limitations upon that struggle in the form of international law, international morality, and world public opinion. Since neither of these devices, as they operate today, is capable of keeping the struggle for power within peaceful bounds, three further questions must be asked and answered. What is the value of the main current proposals for the maintenance of international peace? More particularly, what is the value of the proposal for doing away with the very structure of an international society of sovereign nations by establishing a world state? And, finally, what must a program for action be like which, mindful of the lessons of the past, endeavors to adapt them to the problems of the present?

PART TWO

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AS

A STRUGGLE FOR POWER

CHAPTER I

Political Power

I. WHAT IS POLITICAL POWER?[1]

International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power. Whatever the ultimate aims of international politics, power is always the immediate aim. Statesmen and peoples may ultimately seek freedom, security, prosperity, or power itself. They may define their goals in terms of a religious, philosophic, economic, or social ideal. They may hope that this ideal will materialize through its own inner force, through divine intervention, or through the natural development of human affairs. But whenever they strive to realize their goal by means of international politics, they do so by striving for power. The Crusaders wanted to free the holy places from domination by the Infidels; Woodrow Wilson wanted to make the world safe for democracy; the National Socialists wanted to open Eastern Europe to German colonization, to dominate Europe, and to conquer the world. Since they chose power to achieve these ends, they were actors on the scene of international politics.[2]

When we speak of power in the context of this book, we have in mind not man's power over nature, or over an artistic medium, such as language, speech, sound, or color, or over the means of production or consumption, or over himself in the sense of self-control. When we speak of power, we mean man's control over the minds and actions of other men. By political power we refer to the mutual relations of control among the holders of public authority and between the latter and the people at large.

Political power, however, must be distinguished from force in the sense of the actual exercise of physical violence. The threat of physical violence in the form of police action, imprisonment, capital punishment, or war is an intrinsic element of politics. When violence becomes an actuality, it signifies

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[1] The concept of political power poses one of the most difficult and controversial problems of political science. The value of any particular concept will be determined by its ability to explain a maximum of the phenomena which are conventionally considered to belong to a certain sphere of political activity. Thus a concept of political power, to be useful for the understanding of international politics, must be broader than one adopted to operate in the field of municipal politics. The political means employed in the latter are much more narrowly circumscribed than are those employed in international politics.

[2] For some suggestive remarks on power in relation to international politics, see Lionel Robbins, *The Economic Causes of War* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1939), pp. 63 ff.

the abdication of political power in favor of military or pseudo-military power. In international politics in particular, armed strength as a threat or a potentiality is the most important material factor making for the political power of a nation. If it becomes an actuality in war, it signifies the substitution of military for political power. The actual exercise of physical violence substitutes for the psychological relation between two minds, which is of the essence of political power, the physical relation between two bodies, one of which is strong enough to dominate the other's movements. It is for this reason that in the exercise of physical violence the psychological element of the political relationship is lost, and that we must distinguish between military and political power.

Political power is a psychological relation between those who exercise it and those over whom it is exercised. It gives the former control over certain actions of the latter through the influence which the former exert over the latter's minds. That influence may be exerted through orders, threats, persuasion, or a combination of any of these. The President of the United States, for instance, exerts political power over the executive branch of the government so long as his orders are obeyed by the members of that branch. The leader of a party has political power so long as he is able to mold the actions of the members of the party according to his will. We refer to the political power of an industrialist, labor leader, or lobbyist in so far as his preferences influence the actions of other men. The United States exerts political power over Puerto Rico so long as the laws of the United States are observed by the citizens of that island. When we speak of the political power of the United States in Central America, we have in mind the conformity of the actions of Central American governments with the wishes of the government of the United States.[3] Thus the statement that A has or wants political power over B signifies always that A is able, or wants to be able, to control certain actions of B through influencing B's mind.

Whatever the material objectives of a foreign policy, such as the acquisition of sources of raw materials, the control of sea lanes, or territorial changes, they always entail control of the actions of others through influence over their minds. The Rhine frontier as a century-old objective of French foreign policy points to the political objective to destroy the desire of Germany to attack France by making it physically difficult or impossible for Germany to do so. Great Britain owed its predominant position in world politics throughout the nineteenth century to the calculated policy of making it either too dangerous (because Great Britain was too strong) or unattractive (because its strength was used with moderation) for other nations to oppose it.

The political objective of military preparations of any kind is to deter other nations from attack by making it too risky for them to do so. The political aim of military preparations is, in other words, to make the actual application of military force unnecessary by inducing the prospective enemy

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[3] The examples in the text illustrate also the distinction between political power as mere social fact, as in the case of the lobbyist, and political power in the sense of legitimate authority, i.e., of the President of the United States. Both the President of the United States and the lobbyist exercise political power, however different its source and nature may be.

to desist from the use of military force. The political objective of war itself is not per se the conquest of territory and the annihilation of enemy armies, but a change in the mind of the enemy which will make him yield to the will of the victor.

Therefore, whenever economic, financial, territorial, or military policies are under discussion in international affairs, it is necessary to distinguish between economic policies which are undertaken for their own sake and economic policies which are the instrumentalities of a political policy, that is to say, a policy whose economic purpose is but the means to the end of controlling the policies of another nation. The export policy of Switzerland with regard to the United States falls into the first category. The economic policies of the Soviet Union with regard to the Eastern and Southeastern European nations fall into the latter category. So do many policies of the United States in Latin America and Europe. The distinction is of great practical importance, and the failure to make it has led to much confusion in policy and public opinion.

An economic, financial, territorial, or military policy undertaken for its own sake is subject to evaluation in its own terms. Is it economically or financially advantageous? What effects has acquisition of territory upon the population and economy of the nation acquiring it? What are the consequences of a change in a military policy for education, population, and the domestic political system? The decisions with respect to these policies are made exclusively in terms of such intrinsic considerations.

When, however, the objectives of these policies serve to increase the power of the nation pursuing them with regard to other nations, these policies and their objectives must be judged primarily from the point of view of their contribution to national power. An economic policy which cannot be justified in purely economic terms might nevertheless be undertaken in view of the political policy pursued. The insecure and unprofitable character of a loan to a foreign nation may be a valid argument against it on purely financial grounds. But the argument is irrelevant if the loan, however unwise it may be from a banker's point of view, serves the political policies of the nation. It may, of course, be that the economic or financial losses involved in such policies will weaken the nation in its international position to such an extent as to outweigh the political advantages to be expected. On these grounds such policies might be rejected. In such a case, what decides the issue is, however, not purely economic and financial considerations, but a comparison of the political changes and risks involved, that is, the probable effect of these policies upon the international power of the nation.

2. THE DEPRECIATION OF POLITICAL POWER

The aspiration for power being the distinguishing element of international politics, as of all politics, international politics is of necessity power politics. While this fact is generally recognized in the practice of international affairs, it is frequently denied in the pronouncements of scholars, publicists, and even statesmen. Since the end of the Napoleonic Wars, ever larger

groups in the Western World have been persuaded that the struggle for power on the international scene is a temporary phenomenon, a historical accident which is bound to disappear once the peculiar historic conditions which have given rise to it have been eliminated. Thus Jeremy Bentham believed that the competition for colonies was at the root of all international conflicts. "Emancipate your colonies!" was his advice to the governments, and international conflict and war would of necessity disappear.[4] Adherents of free trade, such as Cobden [5] and Proudhon,[6] were convinced that the removal of trade barriers was the only condition for the establishment of permanent harmony among nations and might even lead to the disappearance of international politics altogether. "At some future election," said Cobden, "we may probably see the test 'no foreign politics' applied to those who offer to become the representatives of free constituencies."[7] For Marx and his followers, capitalism is at the root of international discord and war. They maintain that international socialism will do away with the struggle for power on the international scene and bring about permanent peace. During the nineteenth century, liberals everywhere shared the conviction that power politics and war were residues of an obsolete system of government and that, with the victory of democracy and constitutional government over absolutism and autocracy, international harmony and permanent peace would win out over power politics and war. Of this liberal school of thought, Woodrow Wilson was the most eloquent and most influential spokesman.

In recent times, the conviction that the struggle for power can be eliminated from the international scene has been connected with the great attempts at organizing the world, such as the League of Nations and the United Nations. Thus Cordell Hull, then Secretary of State, declared in 1943 on his return from the Moscow Conference, which laid the groundwork for the United Nations, that the new international organization would mean the end of power politics and usher in a new era of international collaboration.[8] Mr. Philip Noel-Baker, then British Minister of State, declared in 1946 in the House of Commons that the British government was "determined to use the institutions of the United Nations to kill power politics, in order that, by the methods of democracy, the will of the people shall prevail."[9]

While we shall have more to say later about these theories and the expectations derived from them,[10] it is sufficient to state that the struggle for

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[4] *Emancipate Your Colonies* (London: Robert Heward, 1830).

[5] "Free Trade! What is it? Why, breaking down the barriers that separate nations; those barriers, behind which nestle the feelings of pride, revenge, hatred, and jealousy, which every now and then burst their bounds, and deluge whole countries with blood." "Free trade is the international law of the Almighty," and free trade and peace seem to be "one and the same cause." See *Speeches by Richard Cobden* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1870), I, 79; *Political Writings* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1867), II, 110; letter of April 12, 1842, to Henry Ashworth, quoted in John Morley, *Life of Richard Cobden* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1881), p. 154.

[6] "Let us suppress the tariffs, and the alliance of the peoples will thus be declared, their solidarity recognized, their equality proclaimed." *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris, 1867), I, 248.

[7] Quoted in A. C. F. Beales, *A Short History of English Liberalism*, p. 195.

[8] *New York Times*, November 19, 1943, p. 1.

[9] *House of Commons Debates* (Fifth Series, 1946), Vol. 419, p. 1262.

[10] See Part Eight.

power is universal in time and space and is an undeniable fact of experience. It cannot be denied that throughout historic time, regardless of social, economic, and political conditions, states have met each other in contests for power. Even though anthropologists have shown that certain primitive peoples seem to be free from the desire for power, nobody has yet shown how their state of mind and the conditions under which they live can be recreated on a world-wide scale so as to eliminate the struggle for power from the international scene.[11] It would be useless and even self-destructive to free one or the other of the peoples of the earth from the desire for power while leaving it extant in others. If the desire for power cannot be abolished everywhere in the world, those who might be cured would simply fall victims to the power of others.

The position taken here might be criticized on the ground that conclusions drawn from the past are unconvincing, and that to draw such conclusions has always been the main stock-in-trade of the enemies of progress and reform. Though it is true that certain social arrangements and institutions have always existed in the past, it does not necessarily follow that they must always exist in the future. The situation is, however, different when we deal, not with social arrangements and institutions created by man, but with those elemental bio-psychological drives by which in turn society is created. The drives to live, to propagate, and to dominate are common to all men.[12] Their relative strength is dependent upon social conditions which may favor one drive and tend to repress another, or which may withhold social approval from certain manifestations of these drives, while they encourage others. Thus, to take examples only from the sphere of power, most societies condemn killing as a means of attaining power within the society, but all societies encourage the killing of enemies in that struggle for power which is called war. Dictators look askance at the aspirations for political power among their fellow citizens, but democracies consider active participation in the competition for political power a civic duty. Where a monopolistic organization of economic activities exists, competition for economic power is absent, and in competitive economic systems certain manifestations of the struggle for economic power are outlawed, while others are encouraged.

Regardless of particular social conditions, the decisive argument against the opinion that the struggle for power on the international scene is a mere historic accident can, however, be derived from the nature of domestic politics. The essence of international politics is identical with its domestic counterpart. Both domestic and international politics are a struggle for power, modified only by the different conditions under which this struggle takes place in the domestic and in the international spheres.

The desire to dominate, in particular, is a constitutive element of all human associations, from the family through fraternal and professional asso-

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[11] For an illuminating discussion of this problem, see Malcolm Sharp, "Aggression: A Study of Values and Law," *Ethics*, Vol. 57, No. 4, Part II (July 1947).

[12] Zoologists have shown that the drive to dominate is to be found even in animals, such as chickens and monkeys, who create social hierarchies on the basis of the will and the ability to dominate; see, e.g., Warder Allee, *Animal Life and Social Growth* (Baltimore: The Williams and Wilkins Company, 1932) and *The Social Life of Animals* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1938).

ciations and local political organizations to the state. On the family level, the typical conflict between the mother-in-law and her child's spouse is in its essence a struggle for power, the defense of an established power position against the attempt to establish a new one. As such it foreshadows the conflict on the international scene between the policies of the status quo and the policies of imperialism. Social clubs, fraternities, faculties, and business organizations are scenes of continuous struggles for power between groups which either want to keep what power they already have or desire to attain greater power. Competitive contests between business enterprises as well as labor disputes between employers and employees are frequently fought not only, and sometimes not even primarily, for economic advantages, but for influence over each other and over others, that is, for power. Finally, the whole political life of a nation, particularly of a democratic nation, from the local to the national level, is a continuous struggle for power. In periodical elections, in voting in legislative assemblies, in law suits before courts, in administrative decisions and executive measures — in all these activities men try to maintain or to establish their power over other men. The processes by which legislative, judicial, executive, and administrative decisions are reached are subject to pressures and counterpressures by "pressure groups" trying to defend and expand their positions of power.

In view of this ubiquity of the struggle for power in all social relations and on all levels of social organization, is it surprising that international politics is of necessity power politics? And would it not be rather surprising if the struggle for power were but an accidental and ephemeral attribute of international politics when it is a permanent and necessary element of all branches of domestic politics?

3. TWO ROOTS OF THE DEPRECIATION OF POLITICAL POWER

The depreciation of the role power plays on the international scene grows from two roots. One is the philosophy of international relations which dominated the better part of the nineteenth century and still holds sway over much of our thinking on international affairs. The other is the particular political and intellectual circumstances which have determined the relations of the United States of America to the rest of the world.

The nineteenth century was led to its depreciation of power politics by its domestic experience. The distinctive characteristic of this experience was the domination of the middle classes by the aristocracy. By identifying this domination with political domination of any kind, the political philosophy of the nineteenth century came to identify the opposition to aristocratic politics with hostility to any kind of politics. After the defeat of aristocratic government, the middle classes developed a system of indirect domination. They replaced the traditional division into the governing and governed classes, and the military method of open violence, characteristic of aristocratic rule, with the invisible chains of economic dependence. This economic system operated through a network of seemingly equalitarian legal rules which con-

cealed the very existence of power relations. The nineteenth century was unable to see the political nature of these legalized relations. They seemed to be essentially different from what had gone, so far, under the name of politics. Therefore, politics in its aristocratic, that is, open and violent form was identified with politics as such. The struggle, then, for political power — in domestic as well as in international affairs — appeared to be only a historic accident, coincident with autocratic government and bound to disappear with the disappearance of autocratic government.

This identification of power politics with aristocratic government found support in the American experience. It can be traced to three elements in that experience: the uniqueness of the American experiment, the actual isolation of the American continent from the centers of world conflict during the nineteenth century, and the humanitarian pacifism and anti-imperialism of American political ideology.

That the severance of constitutional ties with the British crown was meant to signify the initiation of an American foreign policy distinct from what went under the name of foreign policy in Europe is clearly stated in Washington's Farewell Address. "Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities." In 1796, European politics and power politics were identical; there was no other power politics but the one engaged in by the princes of Europe. "The toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor or caprice" were the only manifestations of the struggle for international power before the American eye. The retreat from European politics, as proclaimed by Washington, could, therefore, be taken to mean retreat from power politics as such.

Yet American aloofness from the European tradition of power politics was more than a political program. Certain sporadic exceptions notwithstanding, it was an established political fact until the end of the nineteenth century. The actuality of this fact was a result of deliberate choice as well as of the objective conditions of geography. Popular writers might see in the uniqueness of America's geographic position the hand of God which had unalterably prescribed the course of American expansion as well as isolation. But more responsible observers, from Washington on, have been careful to emphasize the conjunction of geographic conditions and of a foreign policy choosing its ends in the light of geography, using geographic conditions to attain those ends. Washington referred to "our detached and distant situation" and asked, "Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation?" When this period of American foreign policy drew to a close, John Bright wrote to Alfred Love: "On your continent we may hope your growing millions may henceforth know nothing of war. None can assail you; and you are anxious to abstain from mingling with the quarrels of other nations."[13]

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[13] Merle Curti, *Peace and War: The American Struggle 1636–1936* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1936), p. 122.

From the shores of the North American continent, the citizens of the new world watched the strange spectacle of the struggle for international power unfolding on the distant scenes of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Since for the better part of the nineteenth century their foreign policy enabled them to retain the role of spectators, what was actually the result of a passing historic constellation appeared to Americans as a permanent condition, self-chosen as well as naturally ordained. At worst they would continue to watch the game of power politics played by others. At best the time was close at hand when, with democracy established everywhere, the final curtain would fall and the game of power politics would no longer be played.

To aid in the achievement of this goal was conceived to be part of America's mission. Throughout the nation's history, the national destiny of the United States has been understood in antimilitaristic, libertarian terms. Where that national mission finds a nonaggressive, abstentionist formulation, as in the political philosophy of John C. Calhoun, it is conceived as the promotion of domestic liberty. Thus we may "do more to extend liberty by our example over this continent and the world generally, than would be done by a thousand victories." When the United States, in the wake of the Spanish-American War, seemed to desert this anti-imperialist and democratic ideal, William Graham Sumner restated its essence: "Expansion and imperialism are a grand onslaught on democracy . . . expansion and imperialism are at war with the best traditions, principles, and interests of the American people." [14] Comparing the tendencies of European power politics with the ideals of the American tradition, Sumner thought with Washington that they were incompatible. Yet, as a prophet of things to come, he saw that with the conclusion of the Spanish-American War America was irrevocably committed to the same course which was engulfing Europe in revolution and war.

Thus the general conception which the nineteenth century had formed of the nature of foreign affairs combined with specific elements in the American experience to create the belief that involvement in power politics is not inevitable, but only a historic accident, and that nations have a choice between power politics and other kinds of foreign policy not tainted by the desire for power.

. [14] "The Conquest of the United States by Spain," *Essays of William Graham Sumner* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), II, 295.

The Struggle for Power: Policy of the Status Quo

Domestic and international politics are but two different manifestations of the same phenomenon: the struggle for power. Its manifestations differ in the two different spheres because different moral, political, and general social conditions prevail in each sphere. National societies show a much greater degree of social cohesion within themselves than among themselves. Cultural uniformity, technological unification, external pressure, and, above all, a hierarchic political organization co-operate in making the national society an integrated whole set apart from other national societies. In consequence, the domestic political order is, for instance, more stable and to a lesser degree subject to violent change than is the international order.

The history of the nations active in international politics shows them continuously preparing for, actively involved in, or recovering from organized violence in the form of war. In domestic politics, on the other hand, organized violence as an instrument of political action on an extensive scale has become a rare exception. Yet as a potentiality it exists here, too, and at times the fear of it in the form of revolution has exerted an important influence upon political thought and action.[1] Hence, the difference between domestic and international politics in this respect is one of degree and not of kind.

All politics, domestic and international, reveals three basic patterns, that is to say, all political phenomena can be reduced to one of three basic types. A political policy seeks either to keep power, to increase power, or to demonstrate power.

To these three typical patterns of politics, three typical international policies correspond. A nation whose foreign policy tends toward keeping power and not toward changing the distribution of power in its favor pursues a policy of the status quo. A nation whose foreign policy aims at acquiring more power than it actually has through expansion of its power beyond its frontiers, whose foreign policy, in other words, seeks a favorable change in power status, pursues a policy of imperialism. A nation whose foreign policy

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[1] This is true especially of the nineteenth century, as Guglielmo Ferrero has pointed out in *The Principles of Power* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1942).

aims to demonstrate the power it has, either for the purpose of maintaining or increasing it, pursues a policy of prestige.[2] It should be noted that these formulations are of a provisional nature and are subject to further refinement.[3]

The concept "status quo" is derived from *status quo ante bellum,* a diplomatic term referring to the usual clauses in peace treaties which provide for the evacuation of territory by enemy troops and its restoration to the prewar sovereignty. Thus the peace treaties with Italy [4] and Bulgaria [5] terminating the Second World War provide that "all armed forces of the Allied and Associated Powers shall be withdrawn" from the territory of the particular nation "as soon as possible and in any case not later than ninety days from the coming into force of the present Treaty." [6] That is, within this time limit the *status quo ante bellum* shall be re-established with regard to this territory.[7]

The policy of the status quo aims at the maintenance of the distribution of power which exists at a particular moment in history. One might say that the policy of the status quo fulfills the same function for international politics that a conservative policy performs for domestic affairs. The particular moment in history which serves as point of reference for a policy of the status quo is frequently the distribution of power as it exists at the end of a war and as it is codified in a treaty of peace. This is so because the main purpose of peace treaties is to formulate in legal terms the shift in power which victory and defeat in the preceding war have brought about, and to insure the stability of the new distribution of power by means of legal stipulations. Thus it is typical for a status quo policy to appear as defense of the peace settlement which terminated the last general war. The European govern- .

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[2] It is not a departure from this threefold pattern of international politics when sometimes a nation gives up power without being physically compelled to do so, as Great Britain did with regard to India in 1947 and as the United States has done on several occasions with regard to Latin-American countries. In such cases a nation acts like a military commander who may retreat under certain circumstances, either because his front is overextended or his lines of communication are threatened or because he wants to concentrate his forces for an attack. Similarly, a nation may retreat from an exposed power position which it cannot hope to hold very long. Or it may exchange one kind of control for another kind, e.g., military for political control, political for economic control, or vice versa (the substitution of the Good Neighbor Policy for the policy of the "big stick" is a case in point). Or a change in the objectives of its foreign policy may require concentration of effort at another point. In any case, the fact that it gives up power voluntarily cannot be taken to mean that it is not interested in power, any more than the retreat of a military commander proves that he is not interested in military victory.

[3] It must especially be pointed out that these different patterns of international policies do not of necessity correspond to conscious motivations in the minds of statesmen or supporters of the respective foreign policies. Statesmen and supporters may not even be aware of the actual character of the policies they pursue and support. More particularly, a nation may intend to pursue a policy of the status quo, while actually, without being aware of it, it is embarking upon a policy of imperialism. Thus it has been said of the British that they acquired their empire in a "fit of absent-mindedness." In what follows at this point in the text we are exclusively concerned with the actual character of the policies pursued and not with the motives of those who pursue them.

[4] See Article 73, *New York Times,* January 18, 1947, p. 26.

[5] See Article 20, *ibid.,* p. 32.

[6] Article 22 of the peace treaty with Hungary and Article 21 of the peace treaty with Rumania (*ibid.,* pp. 31, 34) contain a similar provision, subject only to the right of the Soviet Union to keep on the respective territories the troops necessary for the maintenance of lines of communications with its occupation forces in Austria.

[7] For a great number of older examples, see Coleman Phillipson, *Termination of War and Treaties of Peace* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1916), pp. 223 ff.

ments and political parties which, from 1815 to 1848, pursued a policy of the status quo did so in defense of the peace settlement of 1815. The main purpose of the Holy Alliance was the maintenance of the status quo as it existed at the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars; in consequence it functioned mainly as a guarantor of the Treaty of Paris of 1815 which terminated the Napoleonic Wars.

In this respect, the relation between the policy in defense of the status quo of 1815, the Treaty of Paris, and the Holy Alliance is similar to the relation between the policy in favor of the status quo of 1918, the peace treaties of 1919, and the League of Nations. The distribution of power as it existed at the end of the First World War found its legal expression in the peace treaties of 1919. It became the main purpose of the League of Nations to maintain peace by preserving the status quo of 1918 as it has been formulated in the peace treaties of 1919. Article 10 of the Covenant of the League, obligating its members "to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members of the League," recognizes as one of the purposes of the League the maintenance of the territorial status quo as established by the peace treaties of 1919. Consequently, in the period between the two world wars the struggle for and against the status quo was in the main fought either by defending or opposing the territorial provisions of the Treaty of Versailles and their guarantee in Article 10 of the Covenant of the League. It was, therefore, only consistent from their point of view that the nations chiefly opposed to the status quo established in 1919 should sever their connections with the League of Nations — Japan in 1932, Germany in 1933, Italy in 1937.

It is, however, not only in peace treaties and international organizations supporting them that the policy of the status quo manifests itself. Nations desiring to maintain a certain distribution of power may use as their instrument special treaties, such as "The Nine Power Treaty relating to Principles and Policies to be followed in Matters concerning China," signed at Washington, February 6, 1922,[8] and the "Treaty of Mutual Guarantee between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain, and Italy," signed at Locarno, October 16, 1925.[9]

The Nine Power Treaty transformed the American policy of the "open door" in China into a multilateral policy which the nations mostly interested in trade with China, as well as China itself, pledged themselves to uphold. Its main purpose was to stabilize the distribution of power which existed at the time between the contracting nations with regard to China. This meant that the special rights which certain nations, especially Great Britain and Japan, had acquired in certain parts of Chinese territory, such as Manchuria and various ports, should not only remain intact but that no new special rights should be ceded by China to any of the contracting parties.

The Locarno Treaty of mutual guarantee endeavored to supplement the general guarantee of the territorial status quo of 1918, contained in Article 10 of the Covenant of the League, with a special one with respect to the

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[8] United States *Treaty Series*, No. 671 (Washington, 1923).
[9] *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 20 (1926), Supplement, p. 22.

western frontiers of Germany. Article 1 of the Treaty expressly referred to the guarantee of "the maintenance of the territorial status quo resulting from the frontiers between Germany and Belgium and between Germany and France."

Alliance treaties, in particular, have frequently the function of preserving the status quo in certain respects. Thus, after the victorious conclusion of the war against France and the foundation of the German Empire in 1871, Bismarck tried to protect the newly won dominant position of Germany in Europe by alliances which were intended to prevent a war of revenge on the part of France. In 1879, Germany and Austria concluded an alliance for mutual defense against Russia, and, in 1894, France and Russia entered into a defensive alliance against the German-Austrian combination. The mutual fear lest the other alliance be intent upon changing the status quo while professing to maintain it was one of the main factors in bringing about the general conflagration of the First World War.

The alliance treaties which France concluded with the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania in the period between the two world wars were intended to maintain the status quo, mainly in view of possible German attempts to change it. Similar treaties between Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, and the treaty between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union had the same purpose. The ineffectiveness of this system of alliances when it was put to the test from 1935 to 1939 was one of the reasons for Germany's attack on Poland. The British-Polish Alliance of April 5, 1939, was the last attempt, before the outbreak of hostilities, to preserve at least the territorial status quo on the eastern German frontier. Today the alliances which the Soviet Union has concluded with the countries of Eastern Europe and which the countries of Western Europe have concluded among themselves aim similarly at the maintenance of the status quo in these respective European regions as it was established by the distribution of power at the end of the Second World War.

The manifestation of the policy of the status quo which has had the greatest importance for the United States and has been the cornerstone of its foreign relations is the Monroe Doctrine. A unilateral declaration made by President Monroe in his annual message to Congress on December 2, 1823, the Doctrine lays down the two essential principles of any status quo policy. On the one hand, it stipulates on the part of the United States respect for the existing distribution of power in the Western Hemisphere: "With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere." On the other hand, it proclaims resistance on the part of the United States to any change of the existing distribution of power by any non-American nation: "But with the governments who have declared their independence, and maintain it, . . . we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States.", As President Franklin D. Roosevelt expressed it in an address before the Governing Body of the Pan-American Union on April 12, 1933: "It [the Monroe Doctrine] was

aimed and is aimed against the acquisition in any manner of the control of additional territory in this hemisphere by any non-American power." [10]

. We have said that the policy of the status quo aims at the maintenance of the distribution of power as it exists at a particular moment in history. This does not mean that the policy of the status quo is necessarily opposed to any change whatsoever. While it is not opposed to change as such, it is opposed to any change which would amount to a reversal of the power relations among two or more nations, reducing, for instance, A from a first-rate to a second-rate power and raising B to the eminent position A formerly held. Minor adjustments in the distribution of power, however, which leave intact the relative power positions of the nations concerned, are fully compatible with a policy of the status quo. For instance, the purchase of the territory of Alaska by the United States in 1867 did not then affect the status quo between the United States and Russia, since, in view of the technology of communications and warfare at the time, the acquisition by the United States of this then inaccessible territory did not affect to any appreciable extent the distribution of power between the United States and Russia.

Similarly, by acquiring the Virgin Islands from Denmark in 1917, the United States did not embark upon a policy aiming at a change of the status quo with regard to the Central American republics. While the acquisition of the Virgin Islands greatly improved the strategic position of the United States in so far as the defense of the approaches to the Panama Canal was concerned, it did not change the relative power positions of the United States and the Central American republics. The acquisition of the Virgin Islands may have strengthened the already dominant position of the United States in the Caribbean, yet it did not create it and, therefore, was compatible with a policy of the status quo. One might even say that, by strengthening the preponderance of the United States over the Central American republics, it actually reinforced the existing distribution of power and thus served the purposes of a policy of the status quo.

[10] *Roosevelt's Foreign Policy, 1933–41. F.D.R.'s Unedited Speeches and Messages* (New York: Wilfred Funk, Inc., 1942), p. 4.

CHAPTER III

The Struggle for Power:

Imperialism

I. WHAT IMPERIALISM IS NOT

An objective analysis of the acquisition of the Virgin Islands by the United States might show that it was part of a policy of the status quo in that region. Nevertheless, these and similar moves toward strengthening the position of the United States in the Caribbean have been decried as imperialistic by many observers. Such observers have used the term "imperialistic" not for the purpose of characterizing objectively a particular type of foreign policy, but as a term of opprobrium by which a policy to which the observer is opposed can be discredited. This arbitrary use of the term for polemical purposes has become so widespread that today "imperialism" and "imperialistic" are indiscriminately applied to any foreign policy, regardless of its actual character, to which the user happens to be opposed.

Anglophobes will refer to British imperialism as an actuality in 1948, as they did in 1940 or in 1914. Russophobes will call imperialistic whatever the Russians do in foreign affairs. The Second World War was considered imperialistic in motivation by the Soviet Union until it was attacked in 1941. In Russian eyes, the war then became anti-imperialistic. To enemies and critics of the United States everywhere "American imperialism" is a standard term. To add to the confusion, economic systems, political systems, and economic groups, such as bankers and industrialists, are indiscriminately identified with imperialistic foreign policies.

In this process of indiscriminate usage the term "imperialism" has lost all concrete meaning. Everybody is an imperialist to someone who happens to take exception to his foreign policies. Under such circumstances it becomes the task of a scholarly study to break with popular usage in order to give the term an ethically neutral, objective, and definable meaning which at the same time is useful for the theory and practice of international affairs.[1]

Before we ask what imperialism actually is, let us ask first what imperial-

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[1] The term is frequently used as synonymous with any kind of colonial expansion, as, for instance, in Parker Thomas Moon, *Imperialism and World Politics* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926). Such use is unobjectionable from a scientific point of view, so long as it implies no general theory of the nature of expansionist policies as such. Since in the text we are concerned with the general characteristics of international policies of expansion, it is obvious that a concept limited to the phenomena of colonial expansion is too narrow for our purposes.

ism is not, but is most often supposed to be. The three most popular misconceptions require our attention.

1. Not every foreign policy aiming at an increase in the power of a nation is necessarily a manifestation of imperialism. We have already disposed of this misconception in our discussion of the policy of the status quo.[2] We defined imperialism as a policy which aims at the overthrow of the status quo, at a reversal of the power relations between two or more nations. A policy seeking only adjustment, leaving the essence of these power relations intact, still operates within the general framework of a policy of the status quo.

The view that imperialism and any purposeful increase in power are identical is held mainly by two distinct groups. Those who are opposed on principle to a particular nation and its policies, such as Anglophobes, Russophobes, and anti-Americans, regard the very existence of the object of their phobia as a threat to the world. Whenever a country, thus feared, sets out to increase its power, those who fear it must view the increase in power as a stepping-stone to world conquest, that is, as manifestation of an imperialistic policy. On the other hand, those who, as heirs of the political philosophy of the nineteenth century, consider any active foreign policy an evil bound to disappear in the foreseeable future will condemn a foreign policy that seeks an increase in power. They will identify that foreign policy with what is for them the paradigm of evil — imperialism.

2. Not every foreign policy aiming at the preservation of an empire that already exists is imperialism. It is widely believed that whatever a nation, such as Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union, or the United States, does in order to maintain its preponderant position in certain regions is imperialistic. Thus imperialism becomes identified with the maintenance, defense, and stabilization of an empire already in existence rather than with the dynamic process of acquiring one. Yet, while it may make sense to apply the term "imperialism" to the domestic policies of an existing empire, it is confusing and misleading to apply the term to international policies of an essentially static and conservative character; for in the international field imperialism is contrasted with the policy of the status quo and, hence, has a dynamic connotation. The history of what is commonly called "British imperialism" is instructive in this regard.

The idea of British imperialism had its origin in Great Britain itself. It was used for the first time by the conservatives under Disraeli in the campaign for the elections of 1874. The idea of British imperialism, as conceived by Disraeli and developed later by Joseph Chamberlain and Winston Churchill, was opposed to what they called the cosmopolitanism and internationalism of the liberals. It found its concrete expression in the political program of "imperial federation." The most important points of this program were: (1) the unification and integration of Great Britain and its possessions into a unified empire with the aid of protective tariffs, (2) the reservation of free colonial land to Englishmen, (3) unified armed forces, and (4) a central representative organ in London.

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[2] On this point see the discussion in Chapter II.

When this "imperialistic" program was postulated and put into effect, the territorial expansion of Great Britain had in the main come to an end. The program of British "imperialism" was, therefore, essentially a program of consolidation, not of expansion. It sought to secure and exploit what had already been appropriated. It endeavored to stabilize the distribution of power which had been brought about by the creation of the British Empire.

When Kipling justified British imperialism as "the white man's burden," the burden was already shouldered. Since the 1870's, British "imperialism," that is, British foreign policy with regard to Britain's oversea possessions, was in the main a policy of the status quo and not imperialistic at all in the exact meaning of the term. Yet the anti-imperialists in Great Britain and elsewhere, accepting the imperialistic slogans of Disraeli and Chamberlain at face value and mistaking the effects of imperialism for imperialism itself, opposed the British policy of exploitation and consolidation, especially in Africa and India, as "imperialistic." In fact, when Churchill refused "to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire," he was speaking not as an imperialist but as a conservative in foreign affairs, a defender of the status quo of empire.

British "imperialism" and its opponents are the outstanding examples of the confusion between the consolidation and defense of empire, on the one hand, and imperialism, on the other. But they are not the only examples. When we speak of the Roman Empire and of Roman imperialism, we think naturally of the period of Roman history which starts with Augustus, the first emperor governing what was then called for the first time *imperium Romanum*. Yet, when Augustus gave Rome and its possessions the constitution of an empire, the expansion of Rome had essentially come to an end. The foreign policy of the Republic, from the Punic Wars to its overthrow by Julius Caesar, had indeed been imperialistic in the exact meaning of the term. In that period the political face of the earth had been changed and made Roman. The foreign policy of the emperors and their perpetual wars served the main purpose of securing and protecting what had been conquered before. Not unlike the "imperialistic" policies of Great Britain from the time of Disraeli to Churchill, Roman foreign policy was one of conservation, of the status quo. When there were conquests, as under Trajan for instance, these policies served to make the empire and Roman supremacy secure.

The same is essentially true of the territorial aspects of American "imperialism" from the beginning of the twentieth century to the Second World War. The great debate for and against American imperialism which raged during the first decades of the century followed the great imperialistic expansion of the nineteenth century. The policy which was the object of that debate was essentially a policy of consolidation, of protection, of exploitation, that is, a policy of the status quo. When William Graham Sumner, in 1898, referred to the American policy of territorial expansion as "the conquest of the United States by Spain,"[3] he referred to a policy which was already con-

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[3] See previous quotation, p. 20.

summated. When Senator J. Beveridge declared that "God has made us adepts in government that we may administer government among savage and senile peoples," [4] he endeavored to justify dominion already established rather than to support expansion planned for the future.

Thus, in both Great Britain and the United States, much of the modern debate on imperialism follows after the process of imperialistic expansion, condemning or justifying it in retrospect. In terms of actual policies to be pursued in the future, the debate is concerned primarily with the result of imperialistic policies, that is, the administration and safeguarding of empire. The explanation is not hard to find. The great debate started in Great Britain with the Conservative exaltation of the British Empire, a kind of British counterpart to the nationalism of the continent. The British Empire was a colonial empire and, as such, it became the prototype of modern empire. In consequence, the acquisition and exploitation of colonies became synonymous with empire, which thus received primarily, if not exclusively, an economic connotation. This economic connotation gave rise to the most extensive, most systematic, and also most popular body of thought which has sought to explain imperialism in modern times: the economic theories of imperialism. Here we find the third of the misconceptions which have obscured the true nature of imperialism.

2. ECONOMIC THEORIES OF IMPERIALISM

a) The Marxian, Liberal, and "Devil" Theories of Imperialism

The economic theories of imperialism have been developed in three different schools of thought: the Marxian, the liberal, and one which has aptly been called the "devil theory" [5] of imperialism.

The Marxian theory of imperialism rests upon the conviction, which is the foundation of all Marxian thought, that all political phenomena are the reflection of economic conditions. Consequently, the political phenomenon of imperialism is the product of the economic system in which it originates, that is, capitalism. Capitalist societies, according to the Marxian theory, are unable to find within themselves sufficient markets for their products and sufficient investments for their capital. They have, therefore, a tendency to subjugate ever larger noncapitalist and, ultimately, even capitalist regions in order to transform them into markets for their surplus products and to give their surplus capital opportunities for investment.

The moderate Marxians, such as Kautsky and Hilferding, believed that imperialism was a policy of capitalism and that, therefore, an imperialistic policy was a matter of choice toward which capitalism might be more or less inclined according to circumstances. Lenin [6] and his followers, especially

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[4] Speech in the Senate, January 9, 1900, reprinted in Ruhl J. Bartlett, *The Record of American Diplomacy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), p. 388.

[5] Charles A. Beard, *The Devil Theory of War* (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1936); see also *The New Republic*, Vol. 86, March 4, 11, 18, 1936.

[6] *Collected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1927), Vol. 18; *Selected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1935), Vol. 5.

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Bukharin,[7] on the other hand, identified imperialism and capitalism outright. Imperialism is identical with capitalism in its last, that is, monopoly stage of development. According to Lenin, "Imperialism is capitalism in that phase of its development in which the domination of monopolies and finance-capital has established itself; in which the export of capital has acquired very great importance; in which the division of the world among the big international trusts has begun; in which the partition of all the territory of the earth amongst the great capitalist powers has been completed." [8]

In the eyes of the Marxians capitalism is the main evil and imperialism only its necessary or probable manifestation. The liberal school, of which John A. Hobson [9] is the chief representative, is mainly concerned with imperialism in which it finds the result, not of capitalism as such, but of certain maladjustments within the capitalist system. In conformity with Marxism, the liberal school diagnoses as the root of imperialism the surplus of goods and capital which seek outlets in foreign markets. Yet, according to Hobson and his school, imperialist expansion is not the inevitable and not even the most rational method of disposing of these surpluses. Since the surpluses are the result of the maldistribution of consuming power, the remedy lies in the expansion of the home market through economic reforms, such as payment of higher wages and elimination of oversavings. It is this belief in a domestic alternative to imperialism which in the main distinguishes the liberal school from Marxism.

The "devil theory" of imperialism operates on a much lower intellectual level than its two companion theories. It is widely held by pacifists and may be said to have been the official philosophy of the Nye Committee which in 1934-6 investigated on behalf of the United States Senate the influence of financial and industrial interests on the participation of the United States in the First World War. The publicity which the proceedings of this committee received made the "devil theory" of imperialism for a time the most popular explanation of foreign affairs in the United States. The simplicity of the theory contributed much to its popularity. It identified certain groups which obviously profited from war, such as manufacturers of war material (the so-called "munitions makers"), international bankers ("Wall Street"), and the like. Since they profited from war, they must be interested in having war. Thus the war profiteers transform themselves into the "war mongers," the "devils" who plan wars in order to enrich themselves.

While the extreme Marxians equate capitalism and imperialism, and while the moderate Marxians and the disciples of Hobson see in imperialism the result of maladjustments within the capitalist system, for the adherents of the "devil theory" imperialism and war in general amount to nothing but a conspiracy of evil capitalists for the purpose of private gain.

[7] *Imperialism and World Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1929). Of the writers who, aside from those mentioned in the text, have particularly influenced the development of the Marxian theory of imperialism, Rosa Luxemburg and Fritz Sternberg ought to be mentioned; cf. the latter's *The Coming Crisis* (New York: The John Day Company, 1946).

[8] *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (New York: International Publishers, 1933), p. 72.

[9] *Imperialism* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1938).

b) Criticism of these Theories

All economic explanations of imperialism, the refined as well as the primitive, are unable to overcome the arguments derived from the evidence of history. The economic interpretation of imperialism erects a limited historic experience based on certain isolated cases into a universal law of history. It is indeed true that in the late nineteenth and in the twentieth centuries a small number of wars were waged primarily, if not exclusively, for economic objectives. The classic examples are the Boer War of 1899–1902 and the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay from 1932–35. The main responsibility of British gold mining interests for the Boer War can hardly be doubted. The Chaco War is considered by some to have been primarily a war between two oil companies for the control of desirable oil fields.

However, during the entire period of mature capitalism, no war, with the exception of the Boer War, was waged by major powers exclusively or even predominantly for economic objectives. The Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-German War of 1870, for instance, had no economic objectives of any importance. They were political wars, indeed imperialistic wars, fought for the purpose of establishing a new distribution of power, first in favor of Prussia within Germany and then in favor of Germany within the European state system. The Crimean War of 1854–56, the Spanish-American War of 1898, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, the Turko-Italian War of 1911–12, and the several Balkan Wars show economic objectives only in a subordinate role, if they show them at all. The two world wars were certainly political wars, whose stake was the domination of Europe, if not of the world. Naturally, victory in these wars brought economic advantages and, more particularly, defeat brought in its wake economic losses. But these effects were not the real issue; they were only by-products of the political consequences of victory and defeat. Still less were these economic effects the motives which determined in the minds of the responsible statesmen the issue of war and peace.

The economic theories of imperialism are thus not supported by the experience of that historic period which they suppose to be intimately connected, if not identical, with imperialism, that is, the period of capitalism. Furthermore, the main period of colonial expansion which the economic theories tend to identify with imperialism precedes the age of mature capitalism and cannot be attributed to the inner contradictions of the decaying capitalist system. In comparison with the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, the colonial acquisitions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are small. The latest phase of capitalism even witnesses the liquidation of empire on a large scale in the form of the retreat from Asia of Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands.

The historic evidence is still more unfavorable to the contentions of the economic theories if one tests the theories against the evidence presented by the precapitalist processes of empire building. The policies which in ancient times led to the foundation of the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Persian empires were imperialistic in the political sense. So were the conquests of Alexander the Great and the policies of Rome in the last century before the Christian

era. The Arabian expansion in the seventh and eighth centuries showed all the earmarks of imperialism. Pope Urban II used the typical ideological arguments in support of an imperialistic policy when, in 1095, he expressed to the Council of Clermont the reasons for the First Crusade in these words: "For this land which you inhabit, shut in on all sides by the seas and surrounded by the mountain peaks, is too narrow for your large population; nor does it abound in wealth; and it furnishes scarcely food enough for its cultivators. Hence it is that you murder and devour one another, that you wage war, and that very many among you perish in civil strife." [10] Louis XIV, Peter the Great, and Napoleon I were decidedly imperialists.

All these imperialisms of precapitalist times share with those of the capitalist period the tendency toward overthrowing the established power relations and putting in their stead the dominance of the imperialistic power. Yet those two periods of imperialism share also the subordination of economic objectives to political considerations.

Alexander the Great and Napoleon I, no more than Adolf Hitler, embarked on imperialistic policies for the purpose of personal gain or in order to escape the maladjustments of their economic systems. What they aimed at was exactly the same thing the captain of industry is aiming at when he tries to establish an industrial "empire" by adding enterprise to enterprise until he dominates his industry in a monopolistic or quasi-monopolistic manner. What the precapitalist imperialist, the capitalist imperialist, and the "imperialistic" capitalist want is power, not economic gain. The captain of industry is no more driven toward his "imperialistic goal" by economic necessity or personal greed than was Napoleon I. Personal gain and the solution of economic problems through imperialistic expansion are for all of them a pleasant afterthought, a welcome by-product, not the goal by which the imperialistic urge is attracted.

We have seen that imperialism is not determined by economics, capitalist or otherwise. We shall see now that capitalists per se are not imperialists. According to the economic theories and, more particularly, the "devil theory," capitalists use governments as their tools in instigating imperialistic policies. Yet the investigation of historic instances cited in support of the economic interpretation shows that in most cases the reverse relationship actually existed between statesmen and capitalists. Imperialistic policies were generally conceived by the governments who summoned the capitalists to support these policies. Thus historic evidence points to the primacy of politics over economics, and "the rule of the financier . . . over international politics" is indeed, in the words of Professor Schumpeter, "a newspaper fairytale, almost ludicrously at variance with facts." [11]

Yet, far from being the instigators of imperialistic policies, capitalists as a group, that is, aside from certain individual capitalists, were not even enthusiastic supporters. The literature and policies of the groups and political parties representing the capitalist element in modern societies are a testimony

[10] F. A. Ogg, editor, *A Source Book of Medieval History* (New York: American Book Company, 1907), p. 286.
[11] Joseph Schumpeter, *Business Cycles* (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1939), I, 405, note 1.

to the traditional opposition of the merchant and manufacturing classes to any foreign policy which, like imperialism, might lead to war. As Professor Viner has stated:

> It was for the most part the middle classes who were the supporters of pacifism, of internationalism, of international conciliation and compromise of disputes, of disarmament—in so far as these had supporters. It was for the most part aristocrats, agrarians, often the urban working classes, who were the expansionists, the imperialists, the jingoes. In the British Parliament it was spokesmen for the "moneyed interests," for the emerging middle classes in the northern manufacturing districts and for the "City" in London, who were the appeasers during the Napoleonic Wars, during the Crimean War, during the Boer War, and during the period from the rise of Hitler to the German invasion of Poland. In our own country it was largely from business circles that the important opposition came to the American Revolution, to the War of 1812, to the imperialism of 1898, and to the anti-Nazi policy of the Roosevelt administration prior to Pearl Harbor.[12]

From Sir Andrew Freeport in the *Spectator* at the beginning of the eighteenth century to Norman Angell's *The Great Illusion* in our time, it has been the conviction of the capitalists as a class and of most capitalists as individuals that "war does not pay," that war is incompatible with an industrial society, that the interests of capitalism require peace and not war. For only peace permits those rational calculations upon which capitalist actions are based. War carries with it an element of irrationality and chaos which is alien to the very spirit of capitalism. Imperialism, however, as the attempt to overthrow the existing power relations, carries with it the inevitable risk of war. As a group then, capitalists were opposed to war; they did not initiate, and only supported with misgivings and under pressure, imperialistic policies which might lead, and many times actually did lead, to war.

How was it possible that a body of doctrine, such as the economic theories of imperialism, which is to such an extent at variance with the facts of experience, could hold sway over the public mind? There are two answers. We have already pointed to the general tendency of the age to reduce political problems to economic ones.[18] Of this fundamental error, the capitalists and their critics are equally guilty. The former expected from the development of capitalism, freed from the atavistic fetters of the precapitalist age and following only its own inherent laws, general prosperity and peace. The latter were convinced that these aims could be achieved only through the reform or the abolition of the capitalist system. Both camps looked to economic reme-

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[12] Jacob Viner, "The Economic Problem," *New Perspectives on Peace,* edited by George B. de Huszar (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 97. Professor Viner might also have cited the opposition of New York and New England merchants to the Civil War; cf. Philip S. Foner, *Business and Slavery: the New York Merchants and the Irrepressible Conflict* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1941).

Significant in this respect is also the report which the British Ambassador to Germany sent on the eve of the First World War, June 30, 1914, to his Foreign Office: "I hear in fact from all sides that the financial and industrial classes are dead against a war in any shape. . . ." *British Documents on the Origin of the War, 1898–1914* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1926), XI, 361.

[18] See above, pp. 15 ff. Cf. also Hans J. Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946), pp. 75 ff.

dies for political problems. Bentham advocated the emancipation of the colonies as the means of doing away with the imperialistic conflicts which lead to war. Proudhon, Cobden, and their disciples saw in tariffs the sole source of international conflicts and reasoned that peace lay in extending free trade.[14]

In our own time we have heard it said that since German, Italian, and Japanese imperialism was born of economic needs, these countries would have refrained from imperialistic policies had they received loans, colonies, and access to raw materials. Poor nations will go to war, so the argument runs, in order to escape economic distress; if the rich nations alleviate their economic afflictions, they will have no reason to go to war. In the classic age of capitalism both the adherents and the opponents of the capitalist system believed that the economic motives which seemed to determine the actions of businessmen were guiding the actions of all men.

The other reason for the ready acceptance of the economic interpretation of imperialism lies in its plausibility. What Professor Schumpeter has said of the Marxian theory of imperialism holds generally true: "A series of vital facts of our time seems to be perfectly accounted for. The whole maze of international politics seems to be cleared up by a single powerful stroke of analysis." [15] The mystery of so threatening, inhuman, and often murderous a historic force as imperialism, the theoretical problem of defining it as a distinctive type of international politics, the practical difficulty, above all, of recognizing it in a concrete situation and of counteracting it with adequate means — all this is reduced to either the inherent tendencies or the abuses of the capitalist system. Whenever the phenomenon of imperialism presents itself for either theoretical understanding or practical action, the simple scheme will provide an almost automatic answer which puts the mind at ease

3. DIFFERENT TYPES OF IMPERIALISM

The true nature of imperialism as a policy devised to overthrow the status quo can best be explained by a consideration of certain typical situations which favor imperialistic policies and which, given the subjective and objective conditions necessary for an active foreign policy, will almost inevitably produce a policy of imperialism.

a) Three Inducements to Imperialism

When a nation is engaged in war with another nation, it is very likely that the nation which anticipates victory will pursue a policy which seeks a permanent change of the power relations with the defeated enemy. The nation will pursue this policy regardless of what the objectives were at the outbreak of the war. It is the objective of this policy of change to transform the relation between victor and vanquished which happens to exist at the end of the war into the new status quo of the peace settlement. Thus a war which was started by the victor as a defensive war, that is, for the maintenance of

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[14] See above, p. 16.
[15] Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 51.

the prewar status quo, transforms itself with the approaching victory into an imperialistic war, that is, for a permanent change in the status quo.

The "Carthaginian Peace," by which the Romans changed their power relations with the Carthaginians permanently in their favor, has become the by-word for the kind of peace settlement which tends to perpetuate the relation between victor and vanquished as it exists at the conclusion of hostilities. The Treaty of Versailles and its companion treaties, terminating the First World War, had in the eyes of many observers a similar character. A policy which aims at a peace settlement of this kind must, according to our definition, be called imperialistic. It is imperialistic because it tries to replace the prewar status quo, when approximately equal or at least not thoroughly unequal powers oppose each other, with a postwar status quo where the victor becomes the permanent master of the vanquished.

However, this very status of subordination, intended for permanency, may easily engender in the vanquished a desire to turn the scales on the victor, to overthrow the status quo created by his victory, and to change places with him in the hierarchy of power. In other words, the policy of imperialism pursued by the victor in anticipation of his victory will be likely to call forth a policy of imperialism on the part of the vanquished. If he is not forever ruined or else won over to the cause of the victor, the vanquished will want to regain what he has lost and to gain more if possible.

The typical example of imperialism conceived as a reaction against the successful imperialism of others is German imperialism from 1935 to the end of the Second World War. The European status quo of 1914 was characterized by a concert of great powers consisting of Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia. The victory of the Allies and the peace treaties created a new status quo which was the fruition of the imperialistic policies of France. This new status quo established the hegemony of France, exercised in alliance with most of the newly created nations of Eastern and Central Europe.

The German foreign policy from 1919 to 1935 operated seemingly within the framework of that status quo, while secretly preparing for its overthrow. It tried to win concessions for Germany, but it nevertheless accepted, at least for the time being and with mental reservations, the power relations established by the Treaty of Versailles. It did not openly challenge the power relations established by the Treaty of Versailles; rather, it aimed at adjustments which left the essence of those power relations intact. Such was particularly the character of the "policy of fulfillment," that is, fulfillment of the Treaty of Versailles, which the Republic of Weimar pursued. It was this attempt to improve the international position of Germany while accepting at least temporarily the status quo of Versailles which aroused the violent opposition of nationalists and Nazis. After the Nazis had come to power in 1933 and stabilized their regime domestically, they abrogated in 1935 the disarmament provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. In 1936, in violation of the same treaty, they occupied the Rhineland and declared void the demilitarization of the German territory adjacent to the German-French frontier. With these acts the imperialistic policy of Nazi Germany began in the open; for these acts were the first in a series which expressed Germany's resolution

no longer to accept the status quo of Versailles as basis for its foreign policy, but to work for the overthrow of that status quo.

Another typical situation that favors imperialistic policies is the existence of weak states or of politically empty spaces, which are attractive and accessible to a strong state. This is the situation out of which colonial imperialism grew. It is also the situation which made possible the transformation of the original federation of thirteen American states into a continental power. Napoleon's as well as Hitler's imperialism had partly this character, the latter's particularly in the period of the "blitzkrieg" of 1940. With the period of colonialism having come to an end and with two great power combinations opposing each other, imperialism growing out of the relations between strong and weak nations and out of the attractiveness of power vacuums seems to be less likely in the future than it has been in the past.

b) Three Goals of Imperialism

As imperialism grows out of three typical situations, so imperialism moves toward three typical objectives. The objective of imperialism can be the domination of the whole politically organized globe, that is, a world empire. Or it can be an empire or hegemony of approximately continental dimensions. Or it can be a strictly localized preponderance of power. In other words, the imperialistic policy may have no limits but those set by the power of resistance of the prospective victims. Or it may have geographically determined limits, such as the geographical boundaries of a continent. Or it may be limited by the localized aims of the imperialistic power itself.

The outstanding historic examples of unlimited imperialism are the expansionist policies of Alexander the Great, Rome, the Arabs in the seventh and eighth centuries, Napoleon I, and Hitler. They all have in common an urge toward expansion which knows no rational limits, feeds on its own successes, and, if not stopped by a superior force, will go on to the confines of the political world.[16] This urge will not be satisfied so long as there remains anywhere a possible object of domination, that is, a politically organized group of men which by its very independence challenges the conqueror's lust for power. It is, as we shall see, exactly the lack of moderation, the aspiration to conquer all that lends itself to conquest, characteristic of unlimited imperialism, which in the past has been the undoing of the imperialistic policies of this kind. The only exception is Rome, for reasons which will be discussed later.[17]

[16] Hobbes has given the classical analysis of this unlimited desire for power in the *Leviathan*, Chapter XI (Everyman's Library), pp. 49 ff. "So that in the first place, I put for a generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death. And the cause of this, is not alwayes that a man hopes for a more intensive delight, than he has already attained to; or that he cannot be content with a moderate power: but because he cannot assure the power and means to live well, which he hath present, without the acquisition of more. And from hence it is, that Kings, whose power is greatest, turn their endeavours to the assuring it at home by Lawes, or abroad by Wars: and when that is done, there succeedeth a new desire; in some, of Fame from new conquest; in others, of ease and sensuall pleasure; in others, of admiration, or being flattered from excellence in some art, or other ability of the mind."

[17] See below, pp. 403 ff.

The type of geographically determined imperialism is most clearly presented in the policies of European powers to gain a predominant position on the European continent. Louis XIV, Napoleon III, and William II are cases in point. The kingdom of Piedmont under Cavour aiming at the domination of the Italian peninsula, the different participants in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 aspiring to hegemony in the Balkan peninsula, Mussolini trying to make the Mediterranean an Italian lake — these are examples of geographically determined imperialism on a less than continental basis. The American policy of the nineteenth century consisting in the gradual expansion of American rule over the better part of the North American continent is primarily, but not exclusively, determined by the geographic limits of a continent; for the United States has not attempted to bring Canada and Mexico under its domination although it certainly would have been able to do so. Continental imperialism is here modified by its limitation to a localized section of the continent.

The same mixed type of imperialism constitutes the essence of American foreign policy toward the geographic unit of the Western Hemisphere. The Monroe Doctrine, by postulating for the Western Hemisphere a policy of the status quo with regard to non-American powers, erected a protective shield behind which the United States could establish its predominance within that geographic region. Within these geographic limits, however, American policy was not always uniformly imperialistic. In respect to the Central American republics and certain countries of South America it was outright imperialistic. But with regard to others, such as Argentina and Brazil, it sought rather to maintain the superiority of the United States which was the result of a kind of natural process rather than of a deliberate American policy. Even though the United States has had the power to impose its superiority upon these countries in form of actual hegemony, it chose not to do so. Here again we find within the general framework of a geographically limited policy a localized imperialism.

The prototype of localized imperialism is to be found in the monarchical policies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the eighteenth century, Frederick the Great, Louis XV, Maria Theresa, Peter the Great, and Katherine II were the moving forces of this kind of foreign policy. In the nineteenth century, Bismarck was the master of this imperialistic policy which seeks to overthrow the status quo and to establish political preponderance within self-chosen limits. The difference between such a localized imperialistic policy, continental imperialism, and unlimited imperialism is the difference between the foreign policies of Bismarck, William II, and Hitler. Bismarck wanted to establish Germany's preponderance in Central Europe; William II, in all of Europe; Hitler, in the whole world. The traditional objectives of Russian imperialism, such as control of Finland, Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Dardanelles, and Iran, are also of a localized nature.

The limits of this type of imperialism are not, as in the case of the geographically limited type, primarily a product of the objective facts of nature beyond which to go would be either technically difficult or politically unwise. On the contrary, they are primarily the result of a free choice among several alternatives one of which might be a policy of the status quo, another conti-

nental imperialism, a third localized imperialism. In the eighteenth century the third alternative recommended itself because the existing concert of powers, each of about the same strength, discouraged any attempt at continental imperialism. The experience of Louis XIV showed how hazardous such at attempt could be. Furthermore, eighteenth-century imperialism was motivated mainly by considerations of monarchical power and glory, not by the mass emotions of modern nationalism. These considerations operated within a common framework of monarchical traditions and European civilization which imposed upon the actors on the political scene a moral restraint necessarily absent in periods of religious or nationalistic crusades.

In the nineteenth century, the element of choice characteristic of the policy of localized imperialism is paramount in the history of Bismarck's foreign policy. First, he had to overcome the opposition of the Prussian conservatives who favored a policy of the status quo for Prussia as over against Bismarck's policy of localized imperialism aiming at hegemony within Germany. When victorious wars had made Bismarck's policy feasible, it had to be defended against those who now wanted to go beyond the limits which Bismarck had set for Prussian and later German hegemony. The dismissal of Bismarck by William II in 1890 marked the end of localized and the beginning of at least a tendency toward continental imperialism as the foreign policy of Germany.

c) Three Methods of Imperialism

Just as there are three types of imperialism with respect to the situations from which imperialism typically arises, and three types of imperialism from the point of view of its objectives, so a triple distinction is to be made as regards the typical means employed by imperialistic policies. Accordingly, we must distinguish between military, economic, and cultural imperialism. A widespread popular misconception connects these three concepts with the objectives of imperialism. This misconception has its origin in the economic theories of imperialism as well as in the neglect of the power element in international relations referred to above.[18] Military imperialism seeks military conquest; economic imperialism, economic exploitation of other peoples; cultural imperialism, the displacement of one culture by another. Imperialism, however, always aims at the overthrow of the status quo, that is, the reversal of the power relations between the imperialist nation and its prospective victims. This immutable end is served by military, economic, and cultural means, either alone or in combination. It is with these means that we are dealing here.

MILITARY IMPERIALISM. The most obvious, the most ancient, and also the crudest form of imperialism is military conquest. The great conquerors of all times have by the same token also been the great imperialists. The great advantage of this method from the point of view of the imperialistic nation lies in the fact that the new power relations resulting from military conquest can as a rule be changed only by another war instigated by the vanquished na-

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[18] See above, pp. 13 ff.

tion, with the odds normally against the latter. Napoleon I might have relied upon the sole power of the ideas of the French Revolution to establish the hegemony of France in Europe and in the world, that is, he might have chosen cultural imperialism instead of military conquests. On the other hand, if he could make and hold military conquests, he would reach his imperialistic goal more quickly and derive from the process of conquering that maximum of personal satisfaction which victory in combat gives to the victor. Yet the very condition under which this statement is alone correct indicates the great drawback of military conquest as a method of imperialism — war is a gamble; it may be lost as well as won. The nation which starts wars for imperialistic ends may gain an empire and keep it, as Rome did. Or it may gain it and, in the process of trying to gain still more, lose it, as in Napoleon's case. Or it may gain it, lose it, and fall victim to the imperialism of others, as in the case of Nazi Germany and of Japan. Military imperialism is a gamble played for the highest stakes.

ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM. Economic imperialism is less obtrusive and also generally less effective than the military variety and is, as a rational method of gaining power, a product of modern times. As such, it is concomitant with the age of mercantilist and capitalist expansion. Its outstanding modern example is what is called "dollar imperialism." Yet it has also played its role in the history of British and French imperialism. In the British domination of Portugal since the beginning of the eighteenth century economic control has played an important part. British supremacy in the Arab world is the result of economic policies for which the term "oil diplomacy" is not misplaced. The predominant influence which France exercised in the period between the two world wars in countries such as Rumania was to a considerable extent based upon economic factors.

The common characteristic of the policies which we call economic imperialism is their tendency, on the one hand, to overthrow the status quo by changing the power relations between the imperialist nations and others and, on the other, to do so, not through the conquest of territory, but by way of economic control. If a nation cannot or will not conquer territory for the purpose of establishing its mastery over other nations, it can try to achieve the same end by establishing its control over those who control the territory. The Central American republics, for instance, are all sovereign states; they possess all the attributes of sovereignty and display the paraphernalia of sovereignty. Their economic life being almost completely dependent upon exports to the United States, these nations are unable to pursue for any length of time policies of any kind, domestic or foreign, to which the United States would object.

The nature of economic imperialism as an unobtrusive, indirect, but fairly effective method of gaining and maintaining domination over other nations is particularly striking where two rival imperialisms compete with economic means for control over the same government. The century-old competition between Great Britain and Russia for control of Iran, though carried on for a long time predominantly by military means, may serve as an example. Professor P. E. Roberts described this situation in Iran, then called Persia, before the First World War:

Russia presses on her from the north, Great Britain from the south, though the influence of the two powers is very different. Great Britain holds in her hands the bulk of the foreign trade of southern Persia, and claims a general control of the whole Asiatic coastline from Aden eastwards to Baluchistan. . . . Great Britain has never coveted territorial possessions. . . . The development of navigation on the Volga and the construction of the Transcaspian railway have given to Russia the bulk of the trade with northern Persia. But the commercial weapons of Russia are a monopoly and prohibition. She has laid an interdict upon the making of railroads in Persian territory, and has often opposed measures which might regenerate the country.[19]

Only "the commercial and political rivalry of Great Britain" seemed then, as does now that of the United States, to bar the way to the complete absorption of Iran into the Russian orbit.

To the factors prevalent before the First World War must be added the competitive exploitation of oil concessions and the competition for new ones in Northern and Southern Iran which exist today. During the period of economic and political rivalry between Great Britain and Russia in that region the foreign policies, and frequently also the domestic ones, of the Iranian governments have faithfully reflected the intensity of the economic, and sometimes military, pressures which the rival powers brought to bear. When Russia promised or granted economic advantages which Great Britain failed to match, or when Russia threatened to withdraw advantages it had granted, Russian influence would increase, and vice versa. Russia does not dare realize its territorial ambitions with regard to Iran. Great Britain has none. But both try to control the Iranian government which, in turn, controls oil fields as well as the road to India.

CULTURAL IMPERIALISM.[20]   What we suggest calling cultural imperialism is the most subtle and, if it were ever to succeed by itself alone, the most successful of imperialistic policies. It aims not at the conquest of territory or at the control of economic life, but at the conquest and control of the minds of men as an instrument for changing the power relations between two nations. If one could imagine the culture and, more particularly, the political ideology, with all its concrete imperialistic objectives, of State A conquering the minds of all the citizens determining the policies of State B, State A would have won a more complete victory and would have founded its supremacy on more stable grounds than any military conqueror or economic master. State A would not need to threaten or employ military force or use economic pressure in order to achieve its ends; for that end, the subservience of State B to its will, would have already been realized by the persuasiveness of a superior culture and a more attractive political ideology.

This is, however, a hypothetical case. In actuality, cultural imperialism

[19] *Cambridge Modern History* (Popular Edition), XII, 491.

[20] What we describe under this heading goes frequently under the name of ideological imperialism, the term "ideological" referring particularly to the contest of political philosophies. Two reasons, however, seem to make it advisable to use the term "cultural" instead. On the one hand, the term "cultural" comprises all kinds of intellectual influences, political and otherwise, which serve as means for imperialistic ends. On the other hand, we are using the term "ideological" in Chapter V in its specific sociological sense, and it would only make for confusion if we would use the same term here in its general popular meaning.

falls short of a victory so complete that other methods of imperialism would be superfluous. The typical role which cultural imperialism plays in modern times is subsidiary to the other methods. It softens up the enemy, it prepares the ground for military conquest or economic penetration. Its typical modern manifestation is the fifth column, and one of its two outstanding modern successes is to be found in the operations of the Nazi fifth columns in Europe before the outbreak and at the beginning of the Second World War. Its success was most spectacular in Austria where in 1938 a Nazi-minded government invited the German troops to occupy their country. Its success was still considerable in France and Norway where a number of influential citizens, inside and without the government, had become "Quislings," that is, had been converted to the Nazi ideology and its international objectives. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that these countries were already partly conquered by means of cultural imperialism before military conquest finished the task. Great Britain, by interning at the outbreak of the Second World War all known Nazis and Nazi sympathizers within its borders, paid tribute to the danger which Nazi methods of cultural penetration presented for the prospective victims of German imperialism.

The other outstanding example of cultural imperialism in our time, ante dating and surviving the Nazi fifth column, is the Communist International. Directed officially from Moscow, it guides and controls the Communist parties in all countries and sees to it that the policies pursued by the national Communist parties conform with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. To the extent that Communist parties gain influence in particular nations, the influence of the Soviet Union over these nations increases, and where Communist parties gain control of national governments, the Russian government, controlling the Communist parties, controls these national governments.

The struggle for the control of Germany is instructive in this respect. The main instrument of the Soviet Union in this struggle was the Communist party, called Socialist Unity party, in the Russian zone of occupation. Through victory in elections, this party was to have transformed the temporary military power of the Soviet Union in its zone into a permanent hegemony. With the defeat of the Communist party in a number of elections, the cultural phase of Russian imperialism in Germany came to an at least temporary end. The Soviet Union had to devise other methods to reach the imperialistic goal of the domination of Germany, or, prompted by the failure of the means employed, had to change the goal itself.

The cultural imperialism of totalitarian governments is well disciplined and highly organized; for these governments are able, because of their totalitarian character, to exert strict control and guiding influence over the thoughts and actions of their citizens and foreign sympathizers. While the technique of cultural imperialism has been perfected by the totalitarians and has been forged into the effective political weapon of the fifth column, the use of cultural sympathy and political affinities as weapons of imperialism is almost as old as imperialism itself. The history of ancient Greece and of Italy in the period of the Renaissance is replete with episodes in which imperialistic policies were executed through association with political sympa-

thizers in the enemy ranks rather than through military conquests. In modern times religious organizations, associated or identified with governments, have played an important role in imperialistic policies of a cultural character. Typical in this respect are the imperialistic policies of Czarist Russia which used the dual position of the Czar as head of the Russian government and of the Orthodox Church for the purpose of extending the power of Russia to the followers of the Orthodox faith in foreign countries. That Russia was able in the nineteenth century to succeed Turkey as the preponderant power in the Balkans is largely due to the cultural imperialism which used the Orthodox Church as a weapon of Russian foreign policy.

In the secular field, *la mission civilisatrice* of France has been a potent weapon of French imperialism. The deliberate use of the attractive qualities of French civilization for the purposes of French foreign policy was before the First World War one of the cornerstones of French imperialism in the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean area. The wave of public sympathy throughout the world, which came to the aid of France in both world wars, was the fruit of cultural imperialism, which in turn strengthened the French military imperialism of the later, victorious years of both world wars. Cultural imperialism in the form of the diffusion of a national culture is incomparably less mechanical and disciplinary, but not necessarily less effective, than the totalitarian kind. While the latter makes use primarily of the affinities of political ideology, the former impresses the intellectually influential groups of a foreign country with the attractive qualities of a civilization until these groups tend to find the political objectives and methods of that civilization equally attractive.

We have already pointed out that cultural imperialism generally plays a role subsidiary to the military and economic varieties. Similarly, while economic imperialism sometimes stands by itself, it frequently supports military policies. On the other hand, while military imperialism is able to conquer without the support of nonmilitary methods, no dominion can last which is founded upon nothing but military force. Thus the conqueror will not only prepare for military conquests by economic and cultural penetration. He will also found his empire not upon military force alone, but primarily upon the control of the livelihood of the conquered and upon the domination of their minds. And it is in that most subtle, yet most important, task that, with the exception of Rome, all the great imperialists, from Alexander to Napoleon and Hitler, have failed. Their failure to conquer the minds of those whom they had conquered otherwise proved to be the undoing of their empires. The ever renewed coalitions against Napoleon, the revolts of the Poles against the Russians throughout the nineteenth century, the struggle of the underground against Hitler, and the fight of Ireland and of India for freedom from British rule are the classic examples in modern times of that ultimate problem which few imperialistic policies have been able to solve.

4. HOW TO DETECT AND COUNTER
AN IMPERIALISTIC POLICY

The preceding considerations lead to the fundamental question which confronts the public officials responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs as well as citizens trying to form an intelligent opinion on international issues. This question concerns the character of the foreign policy pursued by another nation and, in consequence, the kind of foreign policy which ought to be adopted with regard to it. Is the foreign policy of the other nation imperialistic, or is it not? In other words, does it seek to overthrow the existing distribution of power, or does it only contemplate adjustments within the general framework of the existing status quo? The answer to that question has determined the fate of nations, and the wrong answer has often meant deadly peril or actual destruction; for upon the correctness of that answer depends the success of the foreign policy derived from it. While it would be fatal to counter imperialistic designs with measures appropriate to a policy of the status quo, it would be only a little less risky to deal with a policy seeking adjustments within the status quo as though it were imperialistic. The classic example of the former error is the appeasement of Germany in the late thirties. The other error has been influential in the formation of the foreign policies of the great European powers in the decades before the outbreak of the First World War.

a) Appeasement

Appeasement is a foreign policy which attempts to do with respect to imperialism what compromise does with respect to a policy of the status quo. It is the transfer of a policy of compromise from a political environment favorable to the preservation of the status quo, where it belongs, to an environment exposed to imperialistic attack, where it does not belong. One might say that appeasement is a corrupted policy of compromise, made erroneous by mistaking a policy of imperialism for a policy of the status quo. It is important to note, in view of the contemporary tendency to use the term "appeasement" indiscriminately as a term of opprobrium, that appeasement and imperialism are logically correlated. In other words, a policy of appeasement on the one side presupposes a policy of imperialism on the other side. If we say that State A pursues with respect to State B a policy of appeasement, we are at the same time saying that State B pursues with respect to State A a policy of imperialism. If the latter statement is incorrect, the former is meaningless.

The appeaser sees in the successive demands of the imperialistic power rationally limited objectives which in themselves are compatible with the maintenance of the status quo and must be disposed of either on their intrinsic merits or by way of compromise. His error lies in not seeing that the successive demands, far from being satisfied with obtaining their professed objectives, are but the links of a chain at the end of which stands the overthrow of the status quo. The conciliation of antagonistic policies on the basis of

legal or moral principles or through a diplomatic bargain is indeed the great task of a diplomacy which operates on both sides within the recognized limits of the status quo. Since both sides accept the existing distribution of power, both sides can afford to settle their differences either on the basis of principle or through compromise; for whatever the settlement may be, it will not affect the basic distribution of power between them.

The situation is, however, different when one or both sides have imperialistic designs, that is, to bring about a fundamental change in the existing distribution of power. Then the settlement of the respective demands on the basis of legal or moral principles or through bargaining methods, in disregard of the influence the settlement might have upon the distribution of power, amounts to a piecemeal change in the power relations in favor of the imperialistic nation. For the latter will always be favored by compromise and will be careful in choosing the grounds for its demands so that principle will favor it, too. Ultimately, these piecemeal changes will add up to the reversal of the power relations in favor of the imperialistic nation. The imperialistic nation will have won a bloodless, yet decisive, victory over an opponent who did not know the difference between compromise and appeasement.

Germany started its imperialistic policies openly in 1935 with the repudiation of the disarmament provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, pointing to the failure of the other nations to disarm and to the increase in French and Russian armaments. Taken by itself and in disregard of an ulterior objective, the argument was not without merit in the light of the legal principle of equality. Apart from paper protests and paper alliances, the only tangible reaction to this first German step on the road to empire was the conclusion three months later of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement in which Great Britain conceded to Germany a naval force of not more than 35 per cent that of Great Britain. Both the reoccupation of the Rhineland by Germany in 1936 and its denunciation of the international control of its waterways later in the same year found support in the legal principle of equality, if one accepted the professed rational limits of the demands as the actual ones. The annexation of Austria in 1938 could easily be defended by the principle of national self-determination which had also been one of the professed war aims of the Allied powers in the First World War.

Later in 1938 Germany demanded the German parts of Czechoslovakia. The Munich settlement granted the German demands. When Hitler, shortly before the settlement of Munich, declared that the German parts of Czechoslovakia were the last territorial demands Germany had to make in Europe, he was really saying that the annexation of these territories was an end in itself, self-contained within its own rational limits. He pretended that German policy operated within the general framework of the European status quo and was not intent upon overthrowing it, and that the other European powers ought to view German foreign policy in that light and deal with it correspondingly. It was only by the end of March 1939, five months before the outbreak of the Second World War, that the annexation of the whole of Czechoslovakia and the territorial demands on Poland convinced the Western powers that what had appeared to be a policy of the status quo had really

been from the beginning a policy of imperialism, imperialism of continental, if not world, dimensions.

At that moment, the distribution of power in Europe was already changed in favor of Germany. It was changed to such an extent that a further increase in German power could not be prevented short of war. Germany had become strong enough to challenge openly the status quo of Versailles, and the prestige, that is, the reputation for power, of the nations identified with the order of Versailles had sunk so low that they were unable to defend what was left of the status quo by mere diplomatic means. They could either surrender or go to war. Thus the appeasers of 1938 became either the Quislings (if they deemed resistance to German imperialism hopeless) or the heroes of 1939–45 (if they thought that resistance was morally required regardless of the outcome or that it had even a chance to succeed). The final catastrophe and the tragic choices with which that catastrophe confronted the actors on the international scene were predetermined by that initial error which mistook a policy of imperialism for a policy of the status quo.

b) Fear

The other fundamental error into which those responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs are most likely to fall is the reverse of the one thus far discussed. It mistakes a policy of the status quo for a policy of imperialism. By doing so, State A resorts to measures, such as armaments, fortifications, alliances, with respect to State B. The latter, in turn, resorts to countermeasures, for it now sees State A embark upon a policy of imperialism. These countermeasures strengthen the initial misapprehension, on the part of State A, of State B's policies, and so forth. Ultimately, either both countries correct their errors with regard to their respective policies or else the ever increasing mutual suspicions, feeding upon each other, end in war. Out of an initial error there develops a vicious circle where two or more nations, each only seeking to preserve the status quo, but each convinced of the imperialistic designs of the others, find support for their own errors of judgment and action in the errors of the others. In such a situation nothing but an almost superhuman effort will deflect the trend of events from a catastrophic denouement.

The history of European diplomacy between the Franco-German War of 1870 and the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 illustrates this situation. After the victorious conclusion of the War of 1870 and the foundation of the German Empire, German foreign policy was mainly defensive. It was concerned with the maintenance of the position which Germany had acquired in Europe and with the danger, Bismarck's famous *chauchemar des coalitions,* that a hostile coalition, especially between France and Russia, might challenge that position. The Triple Alliance between Germany, Austria, and Italy was the instrument of that defensive policy. It was served also by the Reinsurance Treaty with Russia in which Russia and Germany pledged each other neutrality if either became involved in war with a third power.

After the dismissal of Bismarck in 1890, William II decided to let the Reinsurance Treaty lapse, primarily because of the fear that its continuation

might alienate Austria and thus destroy the Triple Alliance. Russia then (in 1891 and 1894) entered into agreements with France which were defensive in character and obviously inspired by fear of the intentions of the Triple Alliance. The provisions of the Military Convention of 1894, in particular, anticipated the possible transformation of the Triple Alliance from a defensive into an imperialistic instrument. Thus the Convention was to remain in force as long as the Triple Alliance. The main provisions of the Convention made the following stipulations: If France were attacked by Germany or by Italy supported by Germany, Russia would give military aid to France. France would do the same in respect to Russia if the latter were attacked by Germany or by Austria supported by Germany. In case of the mobilization of the forces of the Triple Alliance, France and Russia would mobilize their forces without delay.

First, the fear of hostile alliances led to the formation of the Triple Alliance. Then, the fear of the latter's dissolution led to the severance, on the part of Germany, of the friendly relations with Russia. Finally, the fear of the intentions of the Triple Alliance brought about the Franco-Russian Alliance. It was the mutual fears of these two defensive alliances and the general insecurity created by the erratic character of the imperialistic utterances of William II which inspired the diplomatic maneuvers during the two decades before the First World War. These maneuvers sought either new combinations destructive of existing alignments or the support of powers, thus far aloof, for the existing alliances. In the end, the general conflagration in 1914 was made inevitable by the fear that the other side would change the power relations decisively in its favor if not forestalled by such a change in one's own favor. In the two antagonistic blocs, Russia and Austria especially were animated by this fear. The fear of the other's suspected imperialism bred imperialism in reaction, which, in turn, gave substance to the original fear.

c) Five Difficulties of the Problem

Appeasement, the attempt to compromise with an imperialism not recognized as such, and the fear which creates imperialism where there is none — these are the two wrong answers, the two fatal mistakes which an intelligent foreign policy must try to avoid. Such an intelligent foreign policy, which recognizes imperialism where it exists and determines its specific nature, is confronted with five difficulties, and they are all of a formidable character.

The first and most fundamental difficulty has been pointed out by Bukharin, the foremost exponent of the Communist doctrine from Lenin's death to the great purges in the mid-thirties. He tried to prove the absurdity of a noneconomic explanation of imperialism by summarizing it thus: "Imperialism is a policy of conquest. But not every policy of conquest is imperialism." [21] The statement is indeed correct and squares with what we have said previously about the distinction between a policy of conquest operating

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[21] N. I. Bukharin, *Imperialism and World Economy* (New York: International Publishers, 1929), p. 114.

within the existing status quo and one seeking to overthrow it.[22] To make this distinction in a concrete situation presents a formidable difficulty. How was one to know with any degree of certainty what Hitler's ultimate objectives were? From 1935 on, he made demand after demand, each of which in itself could be fully reconciled with a policy of the status quo, yet each of which might be a stepping-stone on the road to empire. The nature of the individual steps in themselves was ambiguous and, therefore, did not reveal the actual nature of the policy of which they formed the elements. Where could one, then, have found an answer to our question?

One might have found it, however tentative and open to doubt, in two of the three typical situations which we said before favored imperialistic policies. The desire to overthrow the status quo of the Treaty of Versailles had been from the very beginning one of the main points of the Nazi program which in 1933 became the official program of the German government. In view of this objective, one might have been able to foresee that the German government would pursue a foreign policy seeking its realization as soon as it had a chance to do so, that is, as soon as the nations identified with the status quo of the Treaty of Versailles were no longer able or willing to defend that status quo effectively.

This initial and fundamental difficulty is aggravated by the fact that a policy which starts out seeking adjustments within the existing distribution of power may change its character either in the course of its success or in the process of its frustration. In other words, the ease with which the original objectives are reached within the established distribution of power may suggest to the expanding nation that it is dealing with weak or irresolute antagonists and that a change in the existing power relations can be achieved without great effort or risk. Thus the appetite may come with the eating, and a successful policy of expansion within the status quo may overnight transform itself into a policy of imperialism. The same may be true of an unsuccessful policy of expansion within the status quo. A nation frustrated in its limited objectives, which do not seem to be attainable within the existing power relations, concludes that it must change these power relations if it is to make sure that it gets what it wants.

Where a policy is couched in purely territorial terms, the nature of the territorial objectives will sometimes indicate the nature of the policy pursued. The objective may, for instance, be a strategic point, the acquisition of which may in itself change the power relations in that particular region. No such help can be expected and, therefore, an additional difficulty must be met where a foreign policy uses mainly the vehicles of economic or cultural penetration. These methods, too, are ambiguous in view of the character of the policy which they serve, but their ambiguity is much greater than that of the military method which has defined territorial objectives. Economic and cultural expansion are generally without a clearly defined locale. They address themselves to a wide variety of ill-defined persons. And, furthermore, they are practiced on a wide scale by an indifferent number of nations. To identify economic or cultural expansion as instruments of imperialism in

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[22] See above, pp. 25 ff.

contradistinction to identical policies which have their ends in themselves is another difficult task. Here again reference to the typical situations favorable to imperialistic policies will be of help.

The active economic policies which Switzerland has been pursuing in the international sphere have never had an imperialistic tinge. British foreign-trade policies at times have had an imperialistic character with respect to certain countries. Today their end is in the main purely economic, that is, they try to obtain for the inhabitants of the British Isles the necessities of life. They aim at economic survival through favorable trade balances, not at the maintenance or acquisition of political power over foreign nations. It is only with regard to the Near East, certain regions of Western Europe, and Germany that British economic policies are subordinated to political considerations. Some of these political considerations might have, or under certain conditions will acquire, an imperialistic character.

The cultural penetration of Spanish-America by Spain was generally bound to be without imperialistic significance; for the military weakness of Spain in relation to the United States forbade any thought of changing the power relations in Latin America in Spain's favor. The cultural mission of France has been in certain countries and at certain times an end in itself. Under different circumstances and in other countries it has been subordinated to imperialistic aims. Here, too, the character of economic and cultural expansion may change with a change in the political situation. When the opportunity beckons, the "reservoir of good will" or a preponderant position in the foreign trade of another country, which a nation has acquired as ends in themselves, may suddenly become sources of political power and potent instruments in the struggle for power. But when circumstances change again they may lose that quality just as suddenly.

When all these difficulties have been overcome and a foreign policy has been correctly identified as imperialistic, yet another difficulty presents itself. It concerns the kind of imperialism with which one has to deal. A successful localized imperialism may find in its success an incentive to spread wider and wider until it becomes continental or world-wide. More particularly, a country may find it necessary, in order to stabilize and secure a local preponderance, to acquire preponderance of power on an ever greater scale, and it may feel fully secure only in a world-wide empire. There is frequently in imperialism a dynamism, rationalized in aggressive or defensive terms, which proceeds from a limited region to a continent and from there to the world. The Macedonian Empire under Philip and Alexander and the Napoleonic imperialism were of this kind. On the other hand, a policy of world-wide imperialism, opposed by superior force, may retreat to a geographically determined region or be satisfied with local preponderance. Or it may lose its imperialistic tendencies altogether and transform itself into a policy of the status quo. The development from geographically determined to localized imperialism and from there to the permanent loss of imperialistic tendencies altogether can be traced in the history of Swedish imperialism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Thus the evaluation of imperialistic tendencies and, consequently, of the policies countering them is never definitive. Both policies and counterpolicies

are ever subject to re-evaluation and reformulation. However, the framers of foreign policy are always exposed to the temptation to take a particular pattern of imperialistic expansion or of any other type of foreign policy as permanent and to pursue a foreign policy adapted to that pattern even when that pattern has changed. Yet a world-wide imperialism requires countermeasures different from those which are adequate for one that is localized, and a nation which counters the latter with measures appropriate to the former will bring on the very dangers which it tries to avoid. In this necessity to recognize quickly a change in the imperialistic policy of another nation lies another difficulty and, in the failure to adapt one's own foreign policy quickly to such change, another source of error.

Finally, imperialism poses a problem which it shares with all foreign policy, presenting it, however, in a particularly acute manner, that is, the detection of the true nature of a foreign policy behind its ideological disguises. The difficulties of recognition inherent in imperialism itself are augmented by the fact that a foreign policy rarely presents itself for what it is, and a policy of imperialism almost never reveals its true face in the pronouncements of its representatives. The reasons why this must be so and the typical shapes these ideologies take will be discussed in Chapter V of this book. How difficult it is to distinguish between the appearance of a foreign policy and its essence will become apparent in the course of that discussion.

CHAPTER IX

The Balance of Power[1]

The aspiration for power on the part of several nations, each trying either to maintain or to overthrow the status quo, leads of necessity to a constellation which is called the balance of power and to policies which aim at preserving it. We are using the term "of necessity" advisedly. For here again we are confronted with the basic misconception which has impeded the understanding of international politics and has made us the prey of illusions. This misconception asserts that men have a choice between power politics and its necessary outgrowth, the balance of power, on the one hand, and a different, better kind of international relations, on the other. It insists that a foreign policy based on the balance of power is one among several possible foreign policies and that only stupid and evil men will choose the former and reject the latter.

It will be shown in the following pages that the balance of power in international affairs is only a particular manifestation of a general social principle to which all societies composed of a number of autonomous units owe the autonomy of their component parts; that the balance of power and policies aiming at its preservation are not only inevitable, but an essential stabilizing factor in a society of sovereign nations; and that the instability of the international balance of power is due not to the faultiness of the principle, but to the particular conditions under which the principle must operate in a society of sovereign states.

I. SOCIAL EQUILIBRIUM

The concept of "equilibrium" as a synonym for "balance" is commonly employed in many sciences — physics, biology, economics, sociology, and political science. It signifies stability within a system composed of a number of autonomous forces. Whenever the equilibrium is disturbed either by an

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[1] The term "balance of power" is used in the text in four different meanings: (1) as a policy aimed at a certain state of affairs, (2) as an actual state of affairs, (3) as an approximately equal distribution of power, (4) as any distribution of power. Whenever the term is used without qualification, it refers to an actual state of affairs in which power is distributed among several nations with approximate equality. For the term referring to any distribution of power, see below, pp. 158, 159.

outside force or by a change in one or the other elements composing the system, the system shows a tendency to re-establish either the original or a new equilibrium. Thus equilibrium exists in the human body. While the human body changes in the process of growth, the equilibrium persists as long as the changes occurring in the different organs of the body do not disturb the latter's stability. This is especially so if the quantitative and qualitative changes in the different organs are proportionate to each other. When, however, the body suffers a wound or loss of one of its organs through outside interference or experiences a malignant growth or a pathological transformation of one of its organs, the equilibrium is disturbed, and the body tries to overcome the disturbance by re-establishing the equilibrium either on the same or a different level from the one which obtained before the disturbance occurred.[2]

The same concept of equilibrium is used in a special social science, such as economics, with reference to the relations between the different elements of the economic system, e.g., between savings and investments, exports and imports, supply and demand, costs and prices. It also applies to society as a whole. Thus we search for a proper balance between different geographical regions, such as the East and the West, the North and the South; between different kinds of activities, such as agriculture and industry, heavy and light industries, big and small businesses, producers and consumers, management and labor; between different functional groups, such as city and country, the old, the middle-aged, and the young, the economic and the political sphere, the middle classes and the upper and lower classes.

Two assumptions are at the foundation of all such equilibriums: first, that the elements to be balanced are necessary for society or have a right to exist, and second, that without a state of equilibrium among them one element will gain ascendancy over the others, encroach upon their interests and rights, and might ultimately destroy them. Consequently, it is the purpose of all such equilibriums to maintain the stability of the system without destroying the multiplicity of the elements composing it. If the goal were stability alone, it could be achieved by allowing one element to destroy or overwhelm the others and take their place. Since the goal is stability plus the

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[2] Cf., for instance, the impressive analogy between the equilibrium in the human body and in society in Walter B. Cannon, *The Wisdom of the Body* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1932), pp. 293, 294: "At the outset it is noteworthy that the body politic itself exhibits some indications of crude automatic stabilizing processes. In the previous chapter I expressed the postulate that a certain degree of constancy in a complex system is itself evidence that agencies are acting or are ready to act to maintain that constancy. And moreover, that when a system remains steady it does so because any tendency towards change is met by increased effectiveness of the factor or factors which resist the change. Many familiar facts prove that these statements are to some degree true for society even in its present unstabilized condition. A display of conservatism excites a radical revolt and that in turn is followed by a return to conservatism. Loose government and its consequences bring the reformers into power, but their tight reins soon provoke restiveness and the desire for release. The noble enthusiasms and sacrifices of war are succeeded by moral apathy and orgies of self-indulgence. Hardly any strong tendency in a nation continues to the stage of disaster; before that extreme is reached corrective forces arise which check the tendency and they commonly prevail to such an excessive degree as themselves to cause a reaction. A study of the nature of these social swings and their reversal might lead to valuable understanding and possibly to means of more narrowly limiting the disturbances. At this point, however, we merely note that the disturbances are roughly limited, and that this limitation suggests, perhaps, the early stages of social homeostasis." (Reprinted by permission of the publisher. Copyright 1932, 1939, by Walter B. Cannon.)

preservation of all the elements of the system, the equilibrium must aim at preventing any element from gaining ascendancy over the others. The means employed to maintain the equilibrium consist in allowing the different elements to pursue their opposing tendencies up to the point where the tendency of one is not so strong as to overcome the tendency of the others, but strong enough to prevent the others from overcoming its own.

Nowhere have the mechanics of social equilibrium been described more brilliantly and at the same time more simply than in *The Federalist*. Concerning the system of checks and balances of the American government, No. 51 of *The Federalist* says:

> This policy of supplying, by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives, might be traced to the whole system of human affairs, private as well as public. We see it particularly displayed in all the subordinate distributions of power, where the constant aim is to divide and arrange the several offices in such a manner as that each may be a check on the other — that the private interests of every individual may be a sentinel over the public rights. These inventions of prudence cannot be less requisite in the distribution of the supreme powers of the state.

The concept of equilibrium or balance has indeed found its most important application, outside the international field, in the sphere of domestic government and politics.[8] Parliamentary bodies have frequently developed within themselves a balance of power. A multi-party system lends itself particularly to such a development. Here two groups, each representing a minority of the legislative body, often oppose each other, and the formation of a majority depends upon the votes of a third group. The third group will tend to join the potentially or actually weaker of the two, thus imposing a check upon the stronger one. Even the two-party system of the United States

[8] It hardly needs to be pointed out that, while the balance of power is a universal social phenomenon, its functions and results are different in domestic and international politics. The balance of power operates in domestic politics within a relatively stable framework of an integrated society, kept together by a strong consensus and the normally unchallengeable power of a central government. On the international scene, where consensus is weak and a central authority does not exist, the stability of society and the freedom of its component parts depend to a much greater extent upon the operations of the balance of power. More concerning this will be said below. Cf. Chapter XII.

Cf. also J. Allen Smith, *The Growth and Decadence of Constitutional Government* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1930), pp. 241, 242: "In the absence of any common and impartial agency to interpret international law and supervise international relations, every state is anxious not only to increase its own authority but to prevent, if possible, any increase in the authority of rival states. The instinct of self-preservation, in a world made up of independent nations, operates to make each desire power in order to secure itself against the danger of external aggression. The fact that no country alone is sufficiently strong to feel secure against any possible combination of opposing states makes necessary the formation of alliances and counter-alliances through which each state seeks to ensure the needed support in case its safety is menaced from without. This is usually referred to as the struggle to maintain the balance of power. It is merely an application of the check and balance theory of the state to international politics. It is assumed, and rightly so, that if any state should acquire a predominant position in international affairs, it would be a distinct menace to the interests and well-being of the rest of the world. Power, even though it may have been acquired as a means of protection, becomes a menace to international peace as soon as the country possessing it comes to feel stronger than any possible foe. It is no less necessary to maintain the balance of power in international politics, than it is to prevent some special interest from gaining the ascendancy in the state. But since this balance of power idea is based on the fear of attack and assumes that every nation should be prepared for war, it can not be regarded as in any real sense a guaranty of international peace." (Reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

Congress displayed the typical constellation of this checking and balancing process when, especially in the last years of the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Southern Democrats constituted themselves a third party, voting on many issues with the Republican minority. They thus checked not only the Democratic majority in Congress, but also the executive branch which, too, was controlled by the Democratic party.[4]

The American government is the outstanding modern example of a governmental system whose stability is maintained by an equilibrium among its component parts. Lord Bryce has said:

> The Constitution was avowedly created as an instrument of checks and balances. Each branch of the government was to restrain the others, and maintain the equipoise of the whole. The legislature was to balance the executive, and the judiciary both. The two houses of the legislature were to balance one another. The national government, taking all its branches together, was balanced against the State governments. As the equilibrium was placed under the protection of a document, unchangeable save by the people themselves, no one of the branches of the national government has been able to absorb or override the others . . . each branch maintains its independence and can, within certain limits, defy the others.
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> But there is among political bodies and offices (i.e. the persons who from time to time fill the same office) of necessity a constant strife, a struggle for existence similar to that which Mr. Darwin has shown to exist among plants and animals; and as in the case of plants and animals so also in the political sphere this struggle stimulates each body or office to exert its utmost force for its own preservation, and to develop its aptitudes in any direction where development is possible. Each branch of the American government has striven to extend its range and its powers; each has advanced in certain directions, but in others has been restrained by the equal or stronger pressure of other branches.[5]

No. 51 of *The Federalist* has laid bare the power structure of this "dynamic equilibrium" or "moving parallelogram of force," as it was called by Charles A. Beard [6] ". . . the defect must be supplied, by so contriving the interior structure of the government as that its several constitutional parts may, by their mutual relations, be the means of keeping each other in their proper places. . . . But the great security against a gradual concentration of the several powers in the same department, consists in giving to those who administer each department the necessary constitutional means and personal

[4] Cf. the illuminating discussion of the general problem in John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1882), p. 142: "In a state of society thus composed, if the representative system could be made ideally perfect, and if it were possible to maintain it in that state, its organization must be such that these two classes, manual laborers and their affinities on one side, employers of labor and their affinities on the other, should be, in the arrangement of the representative system, equally balanced, each influencing about an equal number of votes in Parliament; since, assuming that the majority of each class, in any difference between them, would be mainly governed by their class interests, there would be a minority of each in whom that consideration would be subordinate to reason, justice, and the good of the whole; and this minority of either, joining with the whole of the other, would turn the scale against any demands of their own majority which were not such as ought to prevail." See also p. 143, and concerning the balance of power within federal states, pp. 321–2.

[5] *The American Commonwealth* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1891), I, 390–1.
[6] *The Republic* (New York: The Viking Press, 1944), pp. 190–1.

motives to resist the encroachment of others. . . . The provision for defense must in this, as in all other cases, be made commensurate to the danger of attack. Ambition must be made to counteract ambition. The interest of the man must be connected with the constitutional rights of the place. . . ." The aim of these constitutional arrangements is "to guard one part of the society against the injustices of the other part. Different interests necessarily exist in different classes of citizens. If a majority be reunited by a common interest, the rights of the minority will be insecure."

The author, Hamilton or Madison, expected to safeguard the rights of the minority "by comprehending in the society so many separate descriptions of citizens as will render an unjust combination of a majority of the whole very improbable, if not impracticable. . . . The society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests, and classes of citizens, that the rights of individuals, or of the minority, will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority." Security will lie "in the multiplicity of interests," and the degree of security "will depend on the number of interests." And Charles A. Beard thus summarizes the philosophy of the American government: "The framers understood that government in action is power. They tried to pit the ambitions, interests, and forces of human beings in the three departments against one another in such a way as to prevent any one set of agents from seizing all power, from becoming dangerously powerful." [7]

One needs only to substitute the terminology of international politics for the concepts used by *The Federalist*, Lord Bryce, and Professor Beard in their analysis of the structure and dynamics of the American government, and there emerge the main elements common to both the system of checks and balances of the American Constitution and the international balance of power. In other words, the same motive forces have given rise to the American system of checks and balances and to the international system of the balance of power. Both systems seek to fulfill the same functions for their own stability and the autonomy of their constituent elements, however much they may differ in the means which they employ and in the degree to which they realize their aim. Both are subject to the same dynamic processes of change, disequilibrium, and the establishment of a new balance on a different level.

Which are the main patterns of the international balance of power? What are the typical situations out of which it arises and within which it operates? What functions does it fulfill? And to what transformations has it been subjected in recent history?

2. TWO MAIN PATTERNS OF THE BALANCE OF POWER

Two factors are at the basis of international society: one is the multiplicity, the other is the antagonism of its elements, the individual nations. The

[7] *Ibid.*

aspirations for power of the individual nations can come into conflict with each other — and some, if not most of them, do at any particular moment in history — in two different ways. In other words, the struggle for power on the international scene can be fought in two typical patterns.

Nation A may embark upon an imperialistic policy with regard to nation B, and nation B may counter that policy with a policy of the status quo or with an imperialistic policy of its own. France and its allies opposing Russia in 1812, Japan opposing China from 1931 to 1941, the United Nations vs. the Axis from 1941 on correspond to that pattern. The pattern is one of direct opposition between the nation which wants to establish its power over another nation, and the latter which refuses to yield.

Nation A may also pursue an imperialistic policy toward nation C, which may either resist or acquiesce in that policy, while nation B follows with regard to nation C either a policy of imperialism or one of the status quo. In this case, the domination of C is a goal of A's policy. B, on the other hand, is opposed to A's policy because it either wants to preserve the status quo with respect to C or wants the domination of C for itself. The pattern of the struggle for power between A and B is here not one of direct opposition, but of competition, the object of which is the domination of C, and it is only through the intermediary of that competition that the contest for power between A and B takes place. This pattern is visible, for instance, in the competition between Great Britain and Russia for the domination of Iran in which the struggle for power between the two countries has repeatedly manifested itself during the last hundred years. It is also clear in the competition for the domination of Germany which during the aftermath of the Second World War has marked the relations between France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States. The competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for the domination of Turkey offers another example of the same pattern.

It is in situations such as these that the balance of power operates and fulfills its typical functions. In the pattern of direct opposition, the balance of power is the direct result of the desire of either nation to see its policies prevail over the policies of the other. A tries to increase its power in relation to B to such an extent that it can control the decisions of B and thus lead its imperialistic policy to success. B, on the other hand, will try to increase its power to such an extent that it can resist A's pressure and thus frustrate A's policy, or else embark upon an imperialistic policy of its own with a chance for success. In the latter case, A, in turn, must increase its power in order to be able both to resist B's imperialistic policy and to pursue its own with a chance for success. This balancing of opposing forces will go on, the increase in the power of one nation calling forth an at least proportionate increase in the power of the other nation, until the nations concerned change the objectives of their imperialistic policies, if they do not give them up altogether, or until one nation gains or believes it has gained a decisive advantage over the other nation. In that event, either the weaker yields to the stronger or the contest of war decides the issue.

So long as the balance of power operates successfully in such a situation,

it fulfills two functions. It creates a precarious stability in the relations be-
tween the respective nations, a stability which is always in danger of being
disturbed and, therefore, is always in need of being re-established. This is,
however, the only stability obtainable under the assumed conditions of the
power pattern. For we are here in the presence of an inevitable inner con-
tradiction of the balance of power. One of the two functions the balance of
power is supposed to fulfill is stability in the power relations among nations;
yet these relations are, as we have seen, by their very nature subject to con-
tinuous change. They are essentially unstable. Since the weights which
determine the relative position of the scales have a tendency to change
continuously by growing either heavier or lighter, whatever stability the
balance of power may achieve must be precarious and subject to perpetual
adjustments in conformity with intervening changes. The other func-
tion which a successful balance of power fulfills under these conditions is
to insure the freedom of one nation from domination by the other.

Owing to the essentially unstable and dynamic character of the balance,
which is not unstable and dynamic by accident or only part of the time,
but by nature and always, the independence of the nations concerned is also
essentially precarious and in danger. Here again, however, it must be said
that, given the conditions of the power pattern, the independence of the re-
spective nations can rest on no other foundation than the power of each in-
dividual nation to prevent the power of the other nations from encroaching
upon its freedom. The following diagram illustrates this situation:
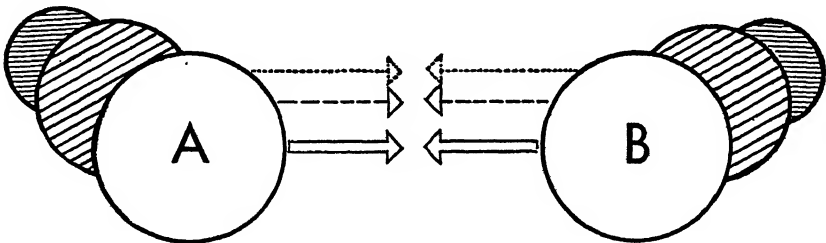
In the other pattern, the pattern of competition, the mechanics of the
balance of power are identical with those discussed. The power of A neces-
sary to dominate C in the face of B's opposition is balanced, if not out-
weighed, by B's power, while, in turn, B's power to gain dominion over C
is balanced, if not outweighed, by the power of A. The additional function,
however, which the balance here fulfills, aside from creating a precarious
stability and security in the relations between A and B, consists in safeguard-
ing the independence of C against encroachments by A or B. The independ-
ence of C is a mere function of the power relations existing between A
and B.
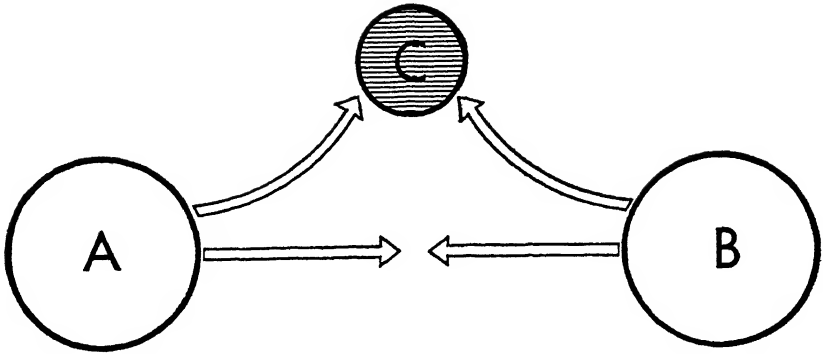
If these relations take a decisive turn in favor of the imperialistic nation, that is, A, the independence of C will at once be in jeopardy.
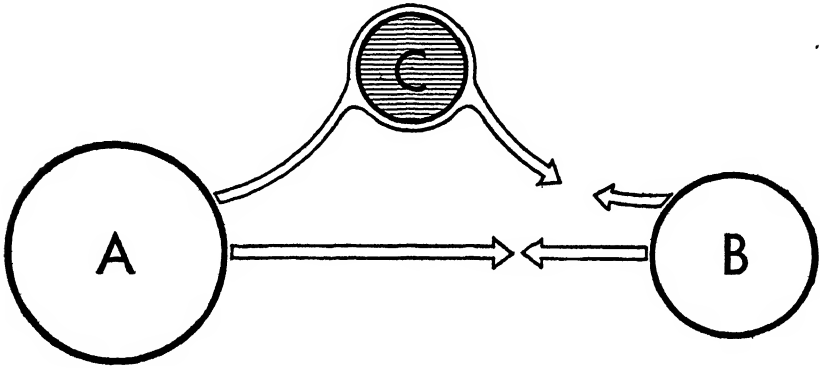
If the status quo nation, that is, B, should gain a decisive and permanent advantage, C's freedom will be more secure in the measure of that advantage.
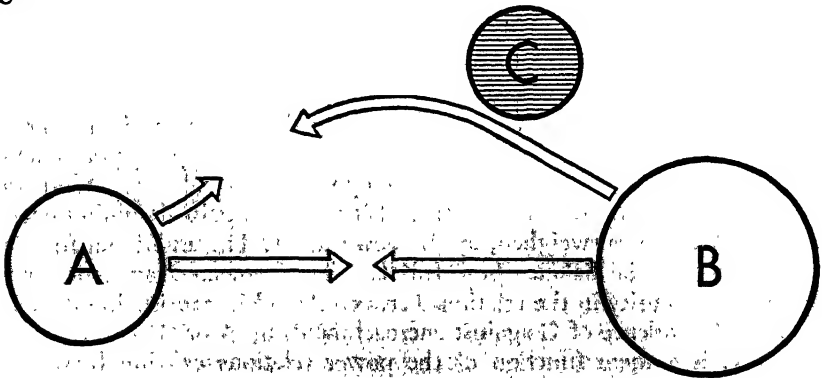
If, finally, the imperialistic nation A should give up its imperialistic policies altogether or shift them permanently from C to another objective, that is, D, the freedom of C would be permanently secured.

C

A → ← B

D
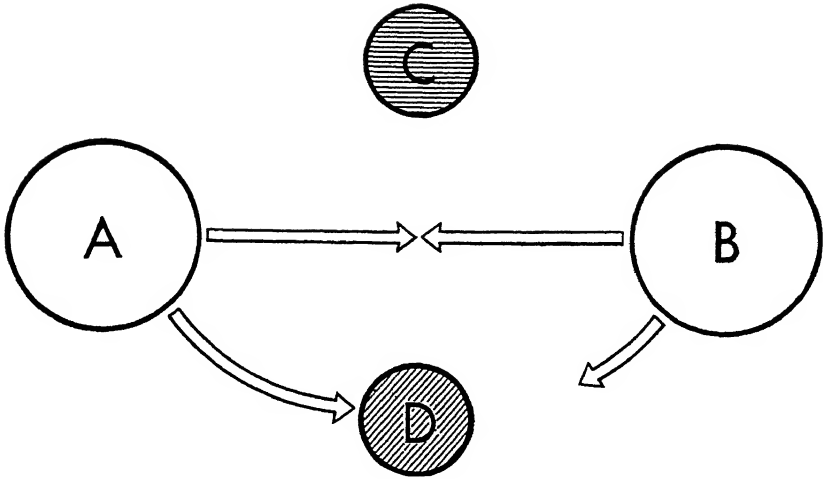
Nowhere has this function of the balance of power to preserve the independence of weak nations been more clearly recognized than by Edmund Burke, the greatest depository of political wisdom in the English language. He said in 1791 in his *Thoughts on French Affaires:*

> As long as those two princes (the King of Prussia and the German Emperor), are at variance, so long the liberties of Germany are safe. But if ever they should so far understand one another as to be persuaded that they have a more direct and more certainly defined interest in a proportioned mutual aggrandizement than in a reciprocal reduction, that is, if they come to think that they are more likely to be enriched by a division of spoil than to be rendered secure by keeping to the old policy of preventing others from being spoiled by either of them, from that moment the liberties of Germany are no more.[8]

Small nations have always owed their independence either to the balance of power (Belgium and the Balkan countries until the Second World War), or to the preponderance of one protecting power (the small nations of Central and South America and Portugal), or to their lack of attractiveness for imperialistic aspirations (Switzerland and Spain). The ability of such small nations to maintain their neutrality while war rages around them has always been due to one or the other or all of these factors. The Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway in the First, in contrast to the Second World War, and Switzerland and Sweden in both world wars are cases in point.

The same factors are responsible for the existence of so-called buffer states — weak states located close to powerful ones and serving their military security. The outstanding example of a buffer state owing its existence to the balance of power is Belgium from the beginning of its history as an independent state in 1831 to the Second World War. The nations belonging to the so-called Russian security belt which stretches along the western and southwestern frontiers of the Soviet Union from Finland to Bulgaria exist by leave of their preponderant neighbor whose military interests they serve.

8 *Works* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1889), IV, 331.

CHAPTER X

Different Methods of the Balance
of Power

The balancing process can be carried on either by diminishing the weight of the heavier scale or by increasing the weight of the lighter one.

I. DIVIDE AND RULE

The former method has found its classical manifestation, aside from the imposition of onerous conditions in peace treaties and the incitement to treason and revolution, in the maxim "divide and rule." It has been resorted to by nations who tried to make or keep their competitors weak by dividing them or keeping them divided. The most consistent and important policies of this kind in modern times are the policy of France with respect to Germany and the policy of the Soviet Union with respect to the rest of Europe. From the seventeenth century to the present day, it has been an unvarying principle of French foreign policy either to favor the division of the German Empire into a number of small independent states or to prevent the coalescence of such states into one unified nation. The support of the Protestant princes of Germany by Richelieu, of the Rhinebund by Napoleon I, of the princes of Southern Germany by Napoleon III, of the abortive separatist movements after the First World War, and the opposition to the unification of Germany after the Second World War — all have their common denominator in considerations of the balance of power in Europe which France found threatened by a strong German state. Similarly, the Soviet Union from the twenties to the present has consistently opposed all plans for the unification of Europe, on the assumption that the pooling of the divided strength of the European nations into a "Western bloc" would give the enemies of the Soviet Union such power as to threaten the latter's security.

The other method of balancing the power of several nations consists in adding to the strength of the weaker nation. This method can be carried out by two different means: Either B can increase its power sufficiently to offset,

if not surpass, the power of A, and vice versa. Or B can pool its power with the power of all the other nations which pursue identical policies with regard to A, in which case A will pool its power with all the nations pursuing identical policies with respect to B. The former alternative is exemplified by the policy of compensations and the armament race as well as by disarmament; the latter, by the policy of alliances.

2. COMPENSATIONS

Compensations of a territorial nature were in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a common device for maintaining a balance of power which had been, or was to be, disturbed by the territorial acquisitions of one nation. The Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 which terminated the War of the Spanish Succession recognized for the first time expressly the principle of the balance of power by way of territorial compensations. It provided for the division of most of the Spanish possessions, European and colonial, between the Hapsburgs and the Bourbons *"ad conservandum in Europa equilibrium,"* as the treaty put it.

The three partitions of Poland in 1772, 1793, and 1795, which in a sense mark the end of the classic period of the balance of power for reasons we will discuss later,[1] reaffirm its essence by proceeding under the guidance of the principle of compensations. Since territorial acquisitions at the expense of Poland by any one of the interested nations, Austria, Prussia, and Russia, to the exclusion of the others would have upset the balance of power, the three nations agreed to divide Polish territory in such a way that the distribution of power among themselves would be approximately the same after the partitions as it had been before. In the treaty of 1772 between Austria and Russia, it was even stipulated that "the acquisitions . . . shall be completely equal, the portion of one cannot exceed the portion of the other."

Fertility of the soil and number and quality of the populations concerned were used as objective standards by which to determine the increase in power which the individual nations received through the acquisition of territory. While in the eighteenth century this standard was rather crudely applied, the Congress of Vienna refined the policy of compensations by appointing in 1815 a statistical commission which was charged with evaluating the territories to be disposed of by the standard of number, quality, and type of population.

In the latter part of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, the principle of compensations was again consciously applied to the distribution of colonial territories and the delimitation of colonial or semicolonial spheres of influence. Africa, in particular, was during that period the object of numerous treaties delimiting spheres of influence for the major colonial powers. Thus the competition between France, Great Britain, and Italy for the domination of Ethiopia was provisionally resolved, after the model of the partitions of Poland, by the treaty of 1906 which divided the country into three spheres of influence for the purpose of establishing in that

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[1] See below, p. 150.

region a balance of power among the nations concerned. Similarly, the rivalry between Great Britain and Russia with respect to Iran led to the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1907 which established spheres of influence for the contracting parties and a neutral sphere under the exclusive domination of Iran. The compensation consists here not in the outright cession of territorial sovereignty, but rather in the reservation, to the exclusive benefit of a particular nation, of certain territories for commercial exploitation, political and military penetration, and eventual establishment of sovereignty. In other words, the particular nation has the right, without having full title to the territory concerned, to operate within its sphere of influence without competition or opposition from any other nation. The other nation, in turn, has the right to claim for its own sphere of influence the same abstinence on the part of the former.

Even where the principle of compensations is not consciously applied, however, as it was in the aforementioned treaties, it is nowhere absent from political arrangements, territorial or other, made within a balance-of-power system. For given such a system, no nation will agree to concede political advantages to another nation without the expectation, which may or may not be well founded, of receiving proportionate advantages in return. The bargaining of diplomatic negotiations, issuing in political compromise, is but the principle of compensations in its most general form and as such it is organically connected with the balance of power.

3. ARMAMENTS

The principal means, however, by which a nation endeavors with the power at its disposal to maintain or re-establish the balance of power are armaments. The armament race in which nation A tries to keep up with, and then to outdo, the armaments of nation B, and vice versa, is the typical instrumentality of an unstable, dynamic balance of power. The necessary corollary of the armaments race is a constantly increasing burden of military preparations devouring an ever greater portion of the national budget and making for ever deepening fears, suspicions, and insecurity. The situation preceding the First World War with the naval competition between Germany and Great Britain and the rivalry of the French and German armies illustrates this point.

It is in recognition of situations such as these that since the end of the Napoleonic Wars repeated attempts have been made to create a stable balance of power, if not to establish permanent peace, by means of proportionate disarmament of competing nations. The technique of stabilizing the balance of power by means of a proportionate reduction of armaments is somewhat similar to the technique of territorial compensations. For this technique, too, requires a quantitative evaluation of the changes which disarmament will bring about in the respective power of the individual nations. The difficulties in making such a quantitative evaluation, in correlating, for instance, the military strength of the French Army of 1932 with the military power represented by the industrial potential of Germany, have greatly

contributed to the failure of most attempts at creating a stable balance of power by means of disarmament. The only outstanding success of this kind was the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 in which Great Britain, the United States, Japan, France, and Italy agreed to a proportionate reduction and limitation of naval armaments. Yet it must be noted that this treaty was part of an overall political and territorial settlement in the Pacific which sought to stabilize the power relations in that region on the foundation of Anglo-American predominance. (The problem of disarmament will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter XXI.)

4. ALLIANCES

The historically most important manifestation of the balance of power, however, is to be found, not in the equilibrium of two isolated nations, but in the relations between one nation or alliance of nations and another alliance.

a) Alliances vs. World Domination

While the balance of power as a natural and inevitable outgrowth of the struggle for power is as old as political history itself, systematic theoretic reflections, starting in the sixteenth century and reaching their culmination in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, have conceived the balance of power generally as a protective device of an alliance of nations, anxious for their independence, against another nation's designs for world domination, then called universal monarchy.
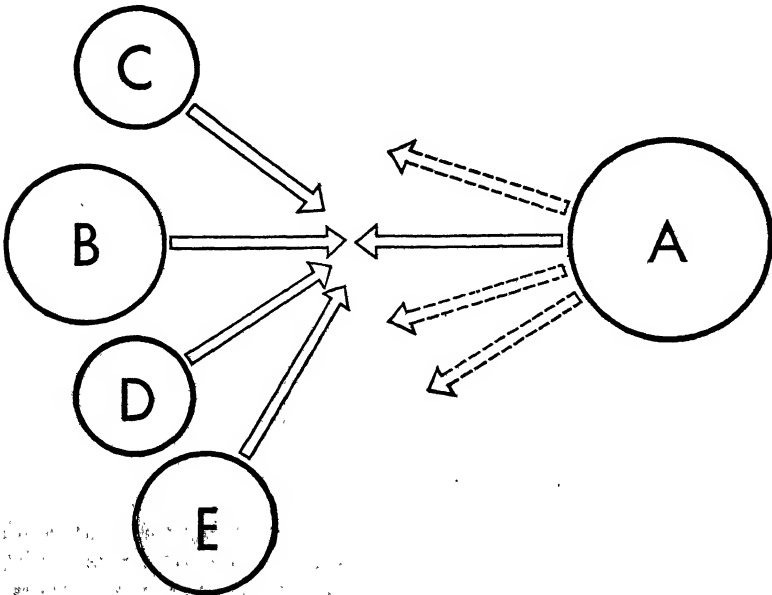
Francis Bacon was, after the Florentine statesmen and historians Rucellai and Guicciardini, the first to recognize the essence of the balance of power by way of alliances. In his essay *Of Empire* he says:

> First, for their neighbors, there can no general rule be given (the occasions are so variable), save one which ever holdeth — which is, that princes do keep due sentinel, that none of their neighbors do overgrow so (by increase of territory, by embracing of trade, by approaches, or the like,) as they become more able to annoy them than they were. . . . During that triumvirate of kings, King Henry VIII of England, Francis I, king of France, and Charles V, emperor, there was such a watch kept that none of the three could win a palm of ground, but the other two would straightways balance it, either by confederation, or, if need were, by a war, and would not in any wise take up peace at interest; and the like was done by that League (which Guicciardine saith was the security of Italy,) made between Ferdinando, king of Naples, Lorenzius Medices, and Ludovicus Sforsa, potentates, the one of Florence, the other of Milan.

The alliances which Francis I concluded with Henry VIII and the Turks in order to prevent Charles V of Hapsburg from stabilizing and expanding his empire are the first modern example on a grand scale of the balance of power operating between an alliance and one nation intent upon establishing a universal monarchy. In the second half of the seventeenth century, Louis XIV of France took over the role which the Hapsburgs had played before and called forth a similar reaction among the European nations. Alliances were formed around England and the Netherlands with the purpose of protecting the European nations from French domination and establishing a new balance of power between France and the rest of Europe.

The wars against the France of 1789 and against Napoleon show the same constellation of one preponderant nation aiming at world domination and being opposed by a coalition of nations for the sake of preserving their independence. The manifesto with which the first coalition initiated these wars in 1792 declared that "no power interested in the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe could see with indifference the Kingdom of France, which at one time formed so important a weight in this great balance, delivered any longer to domestic agitations and to the horrors of disorder and anarchy which, so to speak, have destroyed her political existence." And when these wars reached their conclusion, it was still the intention of the Allied powers, in the words of the Convention of Paris of April 23, 1814, "to put an end to the miseries of Europe, and to found her repose upon a just redistribution of forces among the nations of which she is composed," that is, upon a new balance of power. The coalitions which fought the Second World War against Germany and Japan owed their existence to the same fear, common to all their members, of the latter nations' imperialism, and they pursued the same goal of preserving their independence in a new balance of power.

b) Alliances vs. Counteralliances

The struggle between an alliance of nations defending their independence against one potential conqueror is the most spectacular of the constellations to which the balance of power gives rise. The opposition of two alliances, one

or both pursuing imperialistic goals and defending the independence of their members against the imperialistic aspirations of the other coalition, is the most frequent constellation within the system of the balance of power.

To mention only a few of the more important examples, the coalitions which fought the Thirty Years' War under the leadership of France and Sweden, on the one hand, and of Austria, on the other, sought to promote the imperialistic ambitions especially of Sweden and Austria and at the same time to keep these ambitions in check. The several treaties settling the affairs of Europe after the Thirty Years' War tried to establish a balance of power serving the latter end. The many coalition wars, which filled the period between the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 and the first partition of Poland of 1772, all attempted to maintain the balance which the Treaty of Utrecht had established and which the decline of Swedish power as well as the rise of Prussian, Russian, and British strength tended to disturb. The frequent changes in the alignments, even while war was in progress, have startled the historians and have made the eighteenth century appear to be particularly unprincipled and devoid of moral considerations. It was against that kind of foreign policy that Washington's Farewell Address warned the American people.

Yet the period in which that foreign policy flourished was the golden age of the balance of power in theory as well as in practice. It was during that period that most of the literature of the balance of power was published and that the princes of Europe looked to the balance of power as the supreme principle to guide their conduct in foreign affairs. It is true that they allowed themselves to be guided by it in order to further their own interests. But, by doing so, it was inevitable that they would change sides, desert old alliances, and form new ones whenever it seemed to them that the balance of power had been disturbed and that a realignment of forces was needed to re-establish it. In that period, foreign policy was indeed a sport of kings, not to be taken more seriously than games and gambles, played for strictly limited stakes, and utterly devoid of transcendent principles of any kind.

Since such was the nature of international politics, what looks in retrospect like treachery and immorality was then little more than an elegant maneuver, a daring piece of strategy, or a finely contrived tactical movement, all executed according to the rules of the game which all players recognized as binding. The balance of power of that period was amoral rather than immoral. The technical rules of the art of politics were its only standard. Its flexibility, which was its peculiar merit from the technical point of view, was, then, the result of imperviousness to moral considerations, such as good faith and loyalty, a moral deficiency which to us seems deserving of reproach.

From the beginning of the modern state system at the turn of the fifteenth century to the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, European nations were the active factors in the balance of power. Turkey was the one notable exception. Alliances and counteralliances were formed in order to maintain the balance or to re-establish it. The century from 1815 to the outbreak of the First World War saw the gradual extension of the European balance of power into a world-wide system. One might say that this epoch started with President Monroe's message to Congress in 1823, containing what is known as the Monroe Doctrine. By declaring the mutual political independence of Europe

and the Western Hemisphere and thus dividing the world, as it were, into two political systems, President Monroe laid the groundwork for the subsequent transformation of the European into a world-wide balance-of-power system.

This transformation was for the first time clearly envisaged and formulated in the speech which George Canning made as British Foreign Secretary to the House of Commons on December 12, 1826. Canning had been criticized for not having gone to war with France in order to restore the balance of power which had been disturbed by the French invasion of Spain. In order to disarm his critics, he formulated a new theory of the balance of power. Through the instrumentality of British recognition of their independence he included the newly freed Latin-American republics as active elements in the balance. He reasoned thus:

> But were there no other means than war for restoring the balance of power? — Is the balance of power a fixed and unalterable standard? Or is it not a standard perpetually varying, as civilization advances, and as new nations spring up, and take their place among established political communities? The balance of power a century and a half ago was to be adjusted between France and Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, and England. Some years after, Russia assumed her high station in European politics. Some years after that again, Prussia became not only a substantive, but a preponderating monarchy. — Thus, while the balance of power continued in principle the same, the means of adjusting it became more varied and enlarged. They became enlarged, in proportion to the increased number of considerable states — in proportion, I may say, to the number of weights which might be shifted into the one or the other scale. . . . Was there no other mode of resistance, than by a direct attack upon France — or by a war to be undertaken on the soil of Spain? What, if the possession of Spain might be rendered harmless in rival hands — harmless as regarded us — and valueless to the possessors? Might not compensation for disparagement be obtained . . . by means better adapted to the present time? If France occupied Spain, was it necessary, in order to avoid the consequences of that occupation — that we should blockade Cadiz? No. I looked another way — I saw materials for compensation in another hemisphere. Contemplating Spain, such as our ancestors had known her, I resolved that if France had Spain, it should not be Spain *"with the Indies."* I called the New World into existence, to redress the balance of the Old.[2]

This development toward a world-wide balance of power operating by means of alliances and counteralliances was consummated in the course of the First World War in which practically all nations of the world participated actively on one or the other side. The very designation of that war as a "world" war points to the consummation of the development.

In contrast to the Second World War, however, the First World War had its origins exclusively in the fear of a disturbance of the European balance of power which was threatened in two regions: Belgium and the Balkans. Belgium, located at the northeastern frontier of France and guarding the eastern approaches to the English Channel, found itself a focal point of great power

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[2] *Speeches of the Right Honourable George Canning* (London, 1836), VI, 109–11.

competition, without being strong enough to participate actively in that competition. That the independence of Belgium was necessary for the balance of power in Europe was axiomatic. Its annexation by any of the great European nations would of necessity make that nation too powerful for the security of the others. This was recognized from the very moment when Belgium gained its independence with the active support of Great Britain, Austria, Russia, Prussia, and France. These nations, assembled at a conference in London, declared on February 19, 1831, that "They had the right, and the events imposed upon them the duty to see to it that the Belgian provinces, after they had become independent, did not jeopardize the general security and the European balance of power." [3]

In furtherance of that aim, the five nations concerned concluded in 1839 a treaty in which they declared Belgium to be "an independent and perpetually neutral state" under the collective guaranty of the five signatories. This declaration sought to prevent Belgium forever from participating, on one or the other side, in the European balance of power. It was the German violation of Belgium's neutrality which in 1914 crystallized the threat to the balance of power emanating from Germany and enabled Great Britain to justify its participation in the war on the side of France, Russia, and their allies.

The concern of Austria, Great Britain, and Russia in the preservation of the balance of power in the Balkans was concomitant with the weakening of Turkish power in that region. The Crimean War of 1854–56 was fought by an alliance of France, Great Britain, and Turkey against Russia for the purpose of maintaining the balance of power in the Balkans. The alliance treaty of March 13, 1854, declared "that the existence of the Ottoman Empire in its present extent, is of essential importance to the balance of power among the states of Europe." The subsequent rivalries and wars, especially the events which led to the Congress of Berlin of 1878 and the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, are all overshadowed by the fear that one of the nations mainly interested in the Balkans might gain an increase in power in that region out of proportion to the power of the other nations concerned.

In the years immediately preceding the First World War, the balance of power in the Balkans increased in importance; for, since the Triple Alliance between Austria, Germany, and Italy seemed approximately to balance the Triple Entente between France, Russia, and Great Britain, the power combination which gained a decisive advantage in the Balkans might easily gain a decisive advantage in the over-all European balance of power. It was that fear which motivated Austria in July 1914 to try to settle its accounts with Serbia once and for all and which induced Germany to support Austria unconditionally. It was the same fear which brought Russia to the support of Serbia, and France to the support of Russia. In his telegraphic message of August 2, 1914, to George V of England, the Russian Czar summed the situation up well when he said that the effect of the predominance of Austria over Serbia "would have been to upset balance of power in Balkans, which is of such vital interest to my Empire as well as to those Powers who desire

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[3] *Protocols of Conferences in London Relative to the Affairs of Belgium* (1830–31), p. 60.

maintenance of balance of power in Europe . . . I trust your country will not fail to support France and Russia in fighting to maintain balance of power in Europe."[4]

After the First World War, France maintained permanent alliances with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania and, in 1935, concluded an alliance — which was, however, not implemented — with the Soviet Union. This policy can be understood as a kind of preventive balance-of-power policy which anticipated Germany's comeback and attempted to maintain the status quo of Versailles in the face of such an eventuality. On the other hand, the formation in 1936 of an alliance between Germany, Italy, and Japan, called the Axis, was intended as a counterweight against the alliance between France and the Eastern European nations, which would at the same time neutralize the Soviet Union.

Thus the period between the two world wars stands in fact under the sign of the balance of power by alliances and counteralliances, although in theory the principle of the balance of power was supposed to have been superseded by the League-of-Nations principle of collective security. Yet, actually, collective security, as shall be shown later in greater detail,[5] did not abolish the balance of power. Rather it reaffirmed it in form of a universal alliance against any potential aggressor, the presumption being that such an alliance would always outweigh any potential aggressor. Collective security differs, however, from the balance of power in the principle of association by virtue of which the alliance is formed. Balance-of-power alliances are formed by certain individual nations against other individual nations or an alliance of them on the basis of what those individual nations regard as their separate national interests. The organizing principle of collective security is the respect for the moral and legal obligation to consider an attack by any nation upon any member of the alliance as an attack upon all members of the alliance. Consequently, collective security operates automatically, that is, aggression calls the counteralliance into operation at once and, therefore, protects peace and security with the greatest possible efficiency. Alliances within a balance-of-power system, on the other hand, are frequently uncertain in actual operation since they are dependent upon political considerations of the individual nations. The defection of Italy from the Triple Alliance in 1915 and the disintegration of the French system of alliances between 1935 and 1939 illustrate this weakness of the balance of power.

5: THE "HOLDER" OF THE BALANCE

Whenever the balance of power is to be realized by means of an alliance — and this has been generally so up to the end of the Second World War — two possible variations of this pattern have to be distinguished. To use the language of the metaphor of the balance, the system may consist of two scales in each of which are to be found the nation or nations identified with the

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[4] *British Documents on the Origins of the War. 1898–1914* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 126), XI, 276.
[5] See below, Chapter XXII.

same policy of the status quo or of imperialism. The continental nations of Europe have generally operated the balance of power in this way.

The system may, however, consist of two scales plus a third element, the "holder" of the balance or the "balancer." The balancer is not permanently identified with the policies of either nation or group of nations. Its only objective within the system is the maintenance of the balance, regardless of the concrete policies which the balance will serve. In consequence, the holder of the balance will throw its weight at one time in this scale, at another time in the other scale, guided only by one consideration, that is, the relative position of the scales. Thus it will put its weight always in the scale which seems to be higher than the other because it is lighter. The balancer may become in a relatively short span of history consecutively the friend and foe of all major powers, provided they all consecutively threaten the balance by approaching predominance over the others and are in turn threatened by others which are about to gain such predominance. While the holder of the balance has no permanent friends, it has no permanent foes either.

The balancer is in a position of "splendid isolation." It is isolated by its own choice; for, while the two scales of the balance must vie with each other to add its weight to theirs in order to gain the overweight necessary for success, it must refuse to enter into permanent ties with either side. The holder of the balance waits in the middle in watchful detachment to see which scale is likely to sink. Its isolation is "splendid"; for, since its support or lack of support is the decisive factor in the struggle for power, its foreign policy, if cleverly managed, is able to extract the highest price from those whom it supports. Since, however, this support, regardless of the price paid for it, is always uncertain and shifts from one side to the other in accordance with the movements of the balance, its policies are resented and subject to condemnation on moral grounds. Thus it has been said of the outstanding balancer in modern times, Great Britain, that it lets others fight its wars, that it keeps Europe divided in order to dominate the continent, and that the fickleness of its policies is such as to make alliances with Great Britain impossible. "Perfidious Albion" has become a by-word in the mouths of those who either were unable to gain Great Britain's support, however hard they tried, or else lost it after they had paid what seemed to them too high a price.

The holder of the balance occupies the key position in the system of the balance of power, since its position determines the outcome of the struggle for power. It has, therefore, been called the "arbiter" of the system who decides who will win and who will lose. By making it impossible for any nation or combination of nations to gain predominance over the others, it preserves its own independence as well as the independence of all the other nations, and is thus a most powerful factor in international politics.

The holder of the balance can use this power in three different ways. It can make its joining one or the other nation or alliance dependent upon certain conditions favorable to the maintenance or restoration of the balance. It can make its support of the peace settlement dependent upon similar conditions. It can, finally, in either situation see to it that the objectives of its own national policy, apart from the maintenance of the balance of power, are realized in the process of balancing the power of others.

France under Louis XIV and Italy in the decade before the First World War attempted to play this role of arbiter of the European balance of power. But France was too deeply involved in the struggle for power on the European continent, too much a part of its balance of power, and too much lacking in commanding superiority to play that role successfully. Italy, on the other hand, had not enough weight to throw around to give it the key position in the balance of power. For this reason it earned only the moral condemnation, but not the respect, which similar policies had brought Great Britain. Only Venice in the sixteenth century and Great Britain since the reign of Henry VIII were able to make the holding of the balance between other nations one of the cornerstones of their foreign policies, using the three methods mentioned above either severally or jointly.

The idea appeared for the first time with reference to the Venetians in a letter written in 1553 by Queen Mary of Hungary to the imperial ambassador in England. She pointed out that the Italians had good reason to oppose France; but, she continued, "You know how they fear the power of the one and of the other of the two princes [Charles V and Francis I] and how they are concerned to balance their power."[6] In the following years, on the occasion of Venice's refusals of French offers of alliance, French statesmen characterized the foreign policy of Venice in similar terms, with special reference to the aspects of isolation and detachment from alliances with either side. In 1554, for instance, Henry II of France was reported by a Venetian ambassador to have explained such refusals by the fear of Venice that in the event of the death of Charles V Spain might become inferior to France; Venice, however, tried to "keep things in balance (*tener le cose in equale stato*)." Another Venetian ambassador reported in 1558 that the French explained the foreign policy of Venice by its suspicion of the increase in power of France and Spain. Venice wanted to prevent "that the balance tip to either side (*que la bilancia non pendesse da alcuna parte*)." The ambassador added that "this policy is being praised and even admired by intelligent people; in these turbulent times the weak find protection nowhere but in the Republic of Venice and therefore all Italians, in particular, desire her independence and welcome her armaments."[7]

The classic example of the balancer has, however, been provided by Great Britain. To Henry VIII is attributed the maxim: *cui adhaereo praeest,* that is, "he whom I support will prevail." He is reported to have had himself painted holding in his right hand a pair of scales in perfect balance, one of them occupied by France, the other by Austria, and holding in his left hand a weight ready to be dropped in either scale. Of England under Elizabeth it was said "that France and Spain are as it were the Scales in the Balance of Europe and England the Tongue or the Holder of the Balance."[8] In 1624, a French pamphlet invited King Jacob to follow the glorious example of Elizabeth and Henry VIII "who played his role so well between the Emperor

[6] *Papiers d'État du Cardinal de Granvelle* (Paris, 1843), IV, 121.
[7] Eugeno Albéri, *Le Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti al Senato*, Series I (Firenze, 1862), II, 287, 464.
[8] William Camden, *Annales of the History of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princess Elizabeth, Late Queen of England* (London, 1635), p. 196.

Charles V and King Francis by making himself feared and flattered by both and by holding, as it were, the balance between them."

With the appearance of Louis XIV as a new aspirant for the universal monarchy, it became more and more common, in England and elsewhere, to consider it the English mission to act as "arbiter of Europe" by keeping the Hapsburgs and France in balance. This same standard was applied critically to the foreign policy of Charles II, who made common cause with Louis XIV against the Netherlands, and in support of the anti-French policies of William III. With the War of the Spanish Succession, that standard was erected into a dogma, especially in England. It remained, as applied to ever new combinations of powers, practically unchallenged until the Manchester liberals after the middle of the nineteenth century advocated complete and permanent detachment from the affairs of the European continent, that is, isolationism, as the principle of British foreign policy. As the tradition and practice of British diplomacy, this variety of the balance of power seems to have disappeared only in recent years with the decline of British, and the growth of American and Russian, power.[9]

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[9] On this point, cf. the detailed discussion below, pp. 273 ff.

CHAPTER XI

The Structure of the Balance

of Power

I. DOMINANT AND DEPENDENT SYSTEMS

We have spoken thus far of the balance of power as if it were one single system comprehending all nations actively engaged in international politics. Closer observation, however, reveals that such a system is frequently composed of a number of subsystems which are interrelated with each other, but which maintain within themselves a balance of power of their own. The interrelationship between the different systems is generally one of subordination in the sense that one dominates because of the relatively great weight accumulated in its scales, while the others are, as it were, attached to the scales of that dominant system.

Thus, in the sixteenth century, the dominant balance of power operated between France and the Hapsburgs, while at the same time an autonomous system kept the Italian states in equilibrium. In the latter part of the seventeenth century a separate balance of power developed in Northern Europe out of the challenge with which the rise of Swedish power confronted the nations adjacent to the Baltic Sea. The transformation of Prussia into a first-rate power in the eighteenth century brought about a particular German balance of power, the other scale of which had Austria as its main weight. This autonomous system, "a little Europe within the great," was dissolved only in 1866 with the expulsion of Austria from the Germanic Confederation as a consequence of the Prusso-Austrian War of the same year. The eighteenth century saw also the development of an Eastern balance of power occasioned by the ascendancy of Russia. The partitions of Poland, by virtue of the principle of compensations, between Russia, Prussia, and Austria are the first spectacular manifestations of that new system.

Throughout the nineteenth century until the present day, the balance of power in the Balkans has been of concern to the nations of Europe. As early as 1790 Turkey concluded a treaty with Prussia in which the latter promised to go to war with Austria and Russia "because of the prejudice which the enemies, in crossing the Danube, have brought to the desirable and necessary

balance of power." In the latter part of the nineteenth century one began to speak of an African balance of power with reference to a certain equilibrium among the colonial acquisitions of the great powers. Later on, the balance of power in the Western Hemisphere, in the Pacific, in the Far and Near East were added to the diplomatic vocabulary. One even spoke of an "Austrian equilibrium"; and of the Austrian monarchy with its antagonistic nationalities it was said that it "is constrained to apply to itself the rules of conduct which the powers of Europe with their perpetual rivalries follow with regard to each other." [1]

It is not by accident that the autonomy of such local balance-of-power systems is the greater and their subordination to a dominant system the less noticeable, the more removed they are physically from the center of the struggle for power, the more they operate at the periphery of the dominant system, out of reach of the dominant nations. Thus an Italian balance of power could develop during the fifteenth century in relative autonomy, while the great nations of Europe were occupied in other regions. For the better part of the history of Western civilization the different balance-of-power systems of Asia, Africa, and America were entirely independent of the constellations of the European nations, to the point of being hardly known to them.

The balance of power in the Western Hemisphere up to the Second World War and in Eastern Europe until the end of the eighteenth century owe their relative autonomous development to their location at the periphery of the power centers of the time. The partitions of Poland which were intended to preserve the balance of power in Eastern Europe were executed by the directly interested nations without interference of any other nation. The alliance concluded in 1851 between Brazil and Uruguay against Argentina for the purpose of maintaining the balance of power in South America had only a very remote connection with the European balance of power. On the other hand, it is hardly justified to speak of an autonomous African balance of power. Since there are at present no indigenous nations in Africa which could compete for power with each other and with non-African nations, Africa is solely an object of the struggle for power centered elsewhere, that is, one of the elements in the European and world balance of power.

However, the more intimately a local balance of power is connected with the dominant one the less opportunity it has to operate autonomously and the more it tends to become merely a localized manifestation of the dominant balance of power. The balance of power within the German Confederation from Frederick the Great to the War of 1866 presents an intermediate situation between full autonomy and complete integration. It combines a certain degree of autonomy with integration into the dominant system. While the equilibrium between Prussia and Austria was, as we have seen,[2] a precondition for the preservation of the liberties of the members of the Germanic Confederation, this equilibrium was also indispensable for the maintenance of the European balance of power as a whole.

The German balance thus fulfilled a dual function: <u>one within its own framework, another for the general system of which it was a part. Conversely,</u>

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[1] Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution française* (Paris: E. Plon, 1885), I, 443.
[2] See above, p. 133.

the fusion of Prussia and Austria or the domination of one by the other would not only have been destructive of the independence of the individual German states, but would as well have threatened the freedom of the other European nations with destruction. "If Europe," as Edmund Burke put it, "does not conceive the independence and the equilibrium of the empire to be in the very essence of the system of balance of power in Europe . . . all the politics of Europe for more than two centuries have been miserably errone-ous."[3] The perpetuation of the balance between Prussia and Austria was, therefore, in the interest not only of the other members of the Germanic Con-federation, but of all European nations.

When, as a consequence of the War of 1866, Prussia and later Germany gained a permanent advantage over Austria which destroyed the balance between the two nations and made Germany predominant in Europe, it be-came one of the functions of the European balance of power to preserve at least the independence of Austria against infringement by its stronger neigh-bor. It was in consequence of that permanent European interest that after the First World War the victorious Allies sought by legal, economic, and political measures to prevent the fusion of Austria with Germany. Moreover, it was within the logic of this situation that Hitler regarded the annexation of Aus-tria as a necessary stepping-stone on the road toward the overthrow of the European balance of power.

The balance of power in the Balkans has fulfilled a similar function since the last decades of the nineteenth century. Here, too, the maintenance of a balance of power among the Balkan nations has been regarded as a pre-requisite for the maintenance of the European balance. Whenever the local balance was threatened, the great nations of Europe intervened in order to restore it. The statement of the Russian Czar at the beginning of the First World War, quoted above,[4] clearly illustrates that connection.

2. STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE BALANCE OF POWER[5]

In recent times, however, the relations between the dominant balance of power and the local systems have shown an ever increasing tendency to change to the detriment of the autonomy of the local systems. The reasons for this development lie in the structural changes which the dominant balance of power has undergone since the First World War and which became manifest in the Second World War. We have already indicated the gradual expansion of the dominant balance-of-power system from Western and Central Europe to the rest of the continent and from there to other continents, until finally the First World War saw all the nations of the earth actively participating in a world-wide balance of power.

Hand in hand with the consummation of this expansion went a shift of the main weights of the balance from Europe to other continents. At the out-

[3] *Loc. cit.,* IV, 330.
[4] See above, pp. 141, 142.
[5] For other structural changes, see above, pp. 139, 140, and below, Chapter XIX.

break of the First World War in 1914, the main weights in the balance were predominantly European: Great Britain, France, and Russia in one scale, Germany and Austria in the other. At the end of the Second World War, the principal weights in each scale were either entirely non-European, as in the case of the United States, or predominantly non-European, as in the case of the Soviet Union. In consequence, the whole structure of the world balance of power has changed. At the end of the First World War and even at the beginning of the Second World War, the two scales of the balance, so to speak, were still in Europe: only the weights of the scales came from all over the earth. The main protagonists of the power contest and the principal stakes for which it was fought were still predominantly Europeon. To para-phrase the already quoted words of Canning, non-European powers were called in only for the purpose of redressing the balance of power of Europe.

Today the balance of power of Europe is no longer the center of world politics around which local balances would group themselves, either in inti-mate connection or in lesser or greater autonomy. Today the European bal-ance of power has become a mere function of the world-wide balance of which the United States and the Soviet Union are the main weights, placed on op-posite scales. The distribution of power in Europe is only one of the concrete issues over which the power contest between the United States and the Soviet Union is being waged.

What is true of the formerly dominant system is true of all the traditional local systems as well. The balance of power in the Balkans, no less than the balances in the Near and Far East, have shared the fate of the general Euro-pean system. They have become mere functions of the new world-wide balance, mere "theaters" where the power contest between the two great protagonists is fought out. One might say that of all the local balance-of-power systems only the South American system has retained a certain measure of autonomy, protected, as it is, by the predominance of the United States.[6]

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[6] For the causes for the destruction of most of those autonomous systems, see below, pp. 270 ff.

sideration, after the model of the compensations at the turn of the eighteenth century, the quality of the territory and the quality and quantity of the population within it, one still deals with fewer than all the factors of which the power of a nation is composed. The same holds true if one makes the quantity and quality of armaments the standard of comparison.

National character and above all national morale and the quality of government, especially in the conduct of foreign affairs, are the most important but also the most elusive, components of national power. It is impossible for the observer of the contemporary scene or the explorer of future trends to assess even with approximate accuracy the relative contributions which these elements may make to the power of different nations. Furthermore, the quality of these contributions is subject to incessant change, unnoticeable at the moment the change actually takes place and revealed only in the actual test of crisis and war. Rational calculation of the relative strength of several nations, which is the very lifeblood of the balance of power, becomes a series of guesses the correctness of which can be ascertained only in retrospect.[1]

An eighteenth-century opponent of the balance of power tried to demonstrate the absurdity of the calculations common at the time by asking which of two princes was more powerful: one who possessed three pounds of military strength, four pounds of statesmanship, five pounds of zeal, and two pounds of ambition, or one who had twelve pounds of military strength, but only one pound of all the other qualities? The author gives the advantage to the former prince, but whether his answer will be correct under all circumstances, even under the assumption that the quantitative determination of the relative weight of the different qualities were possible, is certainly open to question.

This uncertainty of power calculations is inherent in the nature of national power itself. It will, therefore, come into play even in the most simple pattern of the balance of power, that is, when one nation opposes another. This uncertainty is, however, immeasurably magnified when the weights in one or the other or in both scales are composed not of single units, but of alliances. Then it becomes necessary to compute not only one's own and the opponent's national power and to correlate one with the other, but to perform the same operation on the national power of one's allies and those of the opponent. The risk of guessing is greatly aggravated when one must assess the power of nations belonging to a different civilization from one's own. It is difficult enough to evaluate the power of Great Britain or of France. It is much more difficult to make a correct assessment of the power of China, Japan, or even the Soviet Union. The crowning uncertainty, however, lies in the fact that one cannot always be sure who are one's own allies and who are the opponent's. Alignments by virtue of alliance treaties are not always identical with the alliances which oppose each other in the actual contest of war.

One of the masters of the balance of power, Frederick the Great, made wise by sad experiences, called the attention of his successor to this problem. He said in his Political Testament of 1768:

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[1] Cf. the extensive discussion of this problem above, Chapter VIII.

A frequently deceptive art of conjecture serves as foundation for most of the great political designs. One takes as one's point of departure the most certain factor one knows of, combines it, as well as one can, with other factors, but imperfectly known, and draws therefrom the most correct conclusions possible. In order to make that clearer, I shall give an example. Russia seeks to gain the support of the King of Denmark. She promises him the duchy of Holstein-Gottorp, which belongs to the Russian Grand Duke, and hopes in this way to gain his support forever. But the King of Denmark is fickle. How can one foresee all the ideas that might pass through that young head? The favorites, mistresses and ministers, who will take hold of his mind and offer him advantages from another power which appear to him to be greater than those offered by Russia, are they not going to make him change sides as an ally? A similar uncertainty, although every time in another form, dominates all operations of foreign policy so that great alliances have often a result contrary to the one planned by their members.[2]

These words, written when the classical period of the balance of power was drawing to a close, lose nothing of their poignancy when tested by the events of recent history. The composition of the alliances and counteralliances which one might have foreseen in August 1938, immediately before the denouement of the Czechoslovakian crisis, was certainly quite different from that which came to pass a year later, at the outbreak of the Second World War, and from that which developed more than two years later in consequence of the attack upon Pearl Harbor. No statesman, however great his knowledge, wisdom, and foresight, could have anticipated all these developments and based his balance-of-power policies upon them.

Immediately before the outbreak of the First World War in July 1914, it was by no means certain whether Italy would fulfill its obligations under the Treaty of the Triple Alliance and join Germany and Austria in a war against France, Great Britain, and Russia, whether it would remain neutral, or whether it would join the other side. Nor were the responsible statesmen of Germany and Austria certain, as late as July 30, 1914, that Russia would oppose Austria in order to maintain the balance of power in the Balkans. On that day, the British Ambassador to Germany reported to his government as the opinion held by these statesmen "that a general war was out of the question as Russia neither could, nor wanted to, go to war."[3] According to the reports of the British Ambassador, the same belief was held at Vienna.

Nor was it evident to everybody concerned that Great Britain would enter the First World War on the side of France and Russia. As late as June 1, 1914, the British Secretary of Foreign Affairs declared in the House of Commons, confirming a declaration of the Prime Minister made the previous year, that Great Britain was bound by no obligation, unknown to Parliament and to the public, which might lead it into war. The British government was convinced that the secret exchange of letters between the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and the French Ambassador, which had taken place in November 1912, did not affect its freedom of action in case of a continental

[2] *Die politischen Testamente Friedrichs des Grossen* (Berlin, 1920), p. 192.
[3] *British Documents, loc. cit.,* p. 361.

counteralliances had led when he said to the British Ambassador on August 1, 1914, that Germany, France, "and perhaps England" had been drawn into the war, "none of whom wanted war in the least and . . . that it came from 'this d——d system of alliances' which were the curse of modern times."[7]

2. THE UNREALITY OF THE BALANCE OF POWER

This uncertainty of all power calculations not only makes the balance of power incapable of practical application, it leads also to its very negation in practice. Since no nation can be sure that its calculation of the distribution of power at any particular moment in history is correct, it must at least make sure that, whatever errors it may commit, they will not put the nation at a disadvantage in the contest for power. In other words, the nation must try to have at least a margin of safety which will allow it to make erroneous calculations and still maintain the balance of power. To that effect, all nations actively engaged in the struggle for power must actually aim not at a balance, that is, equality of power, but at superiority of power in their own behalf. And since no nation can foresee how large its miscalculations will turn out to be, all nations must ultimately seek the maximum of power available to them. Only so can they hope to attain the maximum margin of safety commensurate with the maximum of errors they might commit. The limitless aspiration for power, potentially always present, as we have seen,[8] in the power drives of nations, finds in the balance of power a mighty incentive to transform itself into an actuality.

Since the desire to attain a maximum of power is universal, all nations must always be afraid that their own miscalculations and the power increases of other nations might add up to an inferiority for themselves which they must at all costs try to avoid. Hence, it is the tendency of all nations who have gained an apparent edge over their competitors to consolidate that advantage and to use it for changing the distribution of power permanently in their favor. This can be done through diplomatic pressure by bringing the full weight of that advantage to bear upon the other nations, compelling them to make the concessions which will consolidate the temporary advantage into a permanent superiority. It can also be done by war. Since in a balance-of-power system all nations live in constant fear of being deprived at the first opportune moment, of their power position by their rivals, all nations have a vital interest in anticipating such a development and doing unto the others what they do not want the others to do unto them.

Preventive war, however abhorred in diplomatic language and abhorrent to democratic public opinion, is in fact a natural outgrowth of the balance of power. Here again, the events leading to the outbreak of the First World War are instructive; for it was on that occasion that foreign affairs were conducted for the last time according to the classical rules of the balance of

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[7] *British Documents, loc. cit.*, p. 284.
[8] See above, p. 36 n. 16, p. 48.

power. Austria was resolved to change the balance of power in the Balkans in its favor once and for all. It believed that, while Russia was not yet ready to strike, its power was on the increase and that, therefore, postponement of decisive action would make the distribution of power less favorable to itself. Similar calculations were made in Berlin with respect to the distribution of power between Germany and Russia. Russia, on the other hand, was resolved not to permit Austria to change the distribution of power in its favor by crushing Serbia. Russia calculated that such an instant increase in the power of its prospective enemy might more than outweigh any probable future increase in its own power. It was partly in consideration of these Russian calculations that Great Britain refused until the last moment to declare openly its support of the Franco-Russian Alliance. As the British Ambassador to Germany put it on July 30, 1914: "A statement to that effect at the present stage, while it might cause Germany to hesitate, might equally urge Russia on; and if Russia attacked Austria, Germany would have to come in whether she feared the British fleet or not." [9]

It will forever be impossible to prove or disprove the claim that by its stabilizing influence the balance of power has aided in avoiding many wars. One cannot retrace the course of history, taking a hypothetical situation as one's point of departure. But, while nobody can tell how many wars there would have been without the balance of power, it is not hard to see that most of the wars which have been fought since the beginning of the modern state system have their origin in the balance of power. Three types of wars are intimately connected with the mechanics of the balance of power: preventive war, already referred to, where normally both sides pursue imperialistic aims, anti-imperialistic war, and imperialistic war itself.

The opposition, under the conditions of the balance of power, between one status quo nation or an alliance of them and one imperialistic power or a group of them is very likely to lead to war. In most instances, from Charles V to Hitler and Hirohito, they actually did lead to war. The status quo nations, which by definition are dedicated to peaceful pursuits and want only to hold what they have, will hardly be able to keep pace with the dynamic and rapid increase in power characteristic of a nation which is bent upon imperialistic expansion.

The relative increases in the power of Great Britain and France, on the one hand, and of Germany, on the other, from 1933 to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, illustrate vividly the different pace and dynamics in the power increases of status quo and imperialistic nations. In such an armament race the status quo nations are bound to lose, and their relative position cannot fail to deteriorate at an accelerated pace the longer the race lasts. Time is on the side of the imperialistic nations, and as time goes on, their scale sinks lower and lower under the ever increasing weight of their power, while the scale of the status quo nations rises ever higher. Thus it becomes more and more difficult for the latter to redress the balance, and they cannot fail to realize that, if the trend is not forcibly reversed, the position of the imperialistic nations must become well-nigh unassailable, while

[9] *British Documents, loc. cit.,* p. 361.

their own chances for redressing the balance will be irretrievably lost. This was the situation in which Great Britain and France found themselves in September 1939. In such a situation, war with its incalculable possibilities seems to be the only alternative to an unglorious absorption into the power orbit of the imperialistic nation. The dynamics of international politics, as they play between status quo and imperialistic nations, lead of necessity to such a disturbance of the balance of power that war appears as the only policy which offers the status quo nations at least a chance to redress the balance of power in their favor.

Yet the very act of redressing the balance carries within itself the elements of a new disturbance. The dynamics of power politics as outlined previously make this development inevitable. Yesterday's defender of the status quo is transformed by victory into the imperialist of today against whom yesterday's vanquished will seek revenge tomorrow. The ambition of the victor who took up arms in order to restore the balance, as well as the resentment of the loser who could not overthrow it, tend toward making the new balance a virtually invisible point of transition from one disturbance to the next. Thus the balancing process has frequently led to the substitution of one predominant power disturbing the balance for another one. Charles V of Hapsburg was thwarted in his aspirations for a universal monarchy by France, only to be succeeded by Louis XIV of France whose similar aspirations united all of Europe against him. Once the balance had been restored against him, a new disturbing factor arose in Frederick the Great of Prussia. The bid for world domination by France under Napoleon I was followed by a similar bid on the part of the Holy Alliance under the leadership of the most potent of Napoleon's former enemies, Austria and Russia. The defeat of the latter brought in its wake the rise of Prussia to dominance in Germany and of Germany in Europe. Twenty years after its defeat in the First World War Germany was again the predominant nation in Europe, while Japan had risen to a similar position in Asia. The very moment these two nations were removed as active factors in the balance of power a new power contest took shape between the United States and the Soviet Union.

a) The Balance of Power as Ideology

Our discussion has thus far proceeded under the assumption that the balance of power is a device for the self-defense of nations whose independence and existence is threatened by a disproportionate increase in the power of other nations. What we have said of the balance of power is true under the assumption that the balance of power is used *bona fide* for its avowed purposes of self-protection. Yet we have already seen how the power drives of nations take hold of ideal principles and transform them into ideologies in order to disguise, rationalize, and justify themselves. They have done this with the balance of power. What we have said above about the popularity of anti-imperialistic ideologies in general applies to the balance of power.

A nation seeking empire has often claimed that all it wanted was equilibrium. A nation seeking only to maintain the status quo has often tried to give a change in the status quo the appearance of an attack upon the balance

of power. When, at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War in 1756, England and France found themselves at war, British writers justified the policy of their country in terms of the necessities of the European balance of power, while French publicists claimed that France was compelled to oppose English supremacy on the sea and in North America in order to restore the "balance of commerce."

When the Allied Powers in 1813 submitted their conditions of peace to Napoleon, they invoked the principle of the balance of power. When Napoleon rejected these conditions, he, too, invoked "the equilibrium of rights and interests." When, early in 1814, the Allies confronted the representative of Napoleon with an ultimatum demanding that France, in the name of the balance of power, give up all conquests made since 1792, the French representative replied: "Did the allied sovereigns not . . . want to establish a just equilibrium in Europe? Do they not declare that they want it still today? To maintain the same relative power which she always has had this is also the sole actual desire of France. But Europe is no longer what it was twenty years ago." And he arrived at the conclusion that in the light of geography and strategy even the retention by France of the left bank of the Rhine would hardly be sufficient to restore the balance of power in Europe. The allied representatives declared in reply: "France, by retreating into the dimensions of 1792, remains one of the strongest powers on the continent by virtue of her central position, her population, the riches of her soil, the nature of her frontiers, the number and distribution of her strong points." Thus both sides tried to apply the principle of the balance of power to the same situation and arrived at irreconcilable results with the effect that the efforts to bring the war to a conclusion ended in failure.

A similar situation occurred forty years later for similar reasons. At the Conference of Vienna, which in 1855 tried to bring the Crimean War to an end, Russia agreed with its opponents to make the maintenance of the balance of power in the Black Sea the basis of the settlement. Yet, while Russia declared that "the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea . . . is absolutely necessary for the European equilibrium," its adversaries sought to put an end to that preponderance and declared that the Russian Navy was "still too strong in comparison to the Turkish fleet." Peace was concluded in 1856 on the latter terms.

The difficulties in assessing correctly the relative power positions of nations has made the invocation of the balance of power one of the favored ideologies of international politics. Thus it has come about that the term is being used in a very loose and unprecise manner. When a nation would like to justify one of its steps on the international scene, it is likely to refer to it as serving the maintenance or restoration of the balance of power. When a nation would like to discredit certain policies pursued by another nation, it is likely to condemn them as a threat to, or a disturbance of, the balance of power. Since it is the inherent tendency of the balance of power in the proper meaning of the term to preserve the status quo, the term has, in the vocabulary of status quo nations, become a synonym for the status quo and for any distribution of power existing at any particular moment. Any change in the existing distribution of power is, therefore, opposed as disturbing the balance

of power. In this way a nation interested in the preservation of a certain distribution of power tries to make its interest appear to be the outgrowth of the fundamental, universally accepted principle of the modern state system and, hence, to be identical with an interest common to all nations. The nation itself, far from defending a selfish, particular concern, poses as the guardian of that general principle, that is, as the agent of the international community.

In this sense one speaks, for instance, of the balance of power in the Western Hemisphere which might be disturbed by the policies of non-American nations, or of the balance of power in the Mediterranean which must be defended against Russian intrusion. Yet what one means to defend in either case is not the balance of power, but a particular distribution of power regarded as favorable to a particular nation or group of nations. The *New York Times* wrote in one of its reports on the Foreign Ministers' Conference in Moscow in 1947 that "The new unity of France, Britain and the United States . . . may be only temporary but it does alter the balance of power perceptibly." [10] What it actually meant was not that the balance of power in the proper meaning of the term had been altered, but that the distribution of power which existed after the conference was more favorable to the Western powers than the one that existed before.

The use of the balance of power as an ideology greatly increases the innate difficulties which the mechanics of the balance of power present to the impartial observer. Yet it must be noted that the ready use as an ideology to which the balance of power lends itself is not an accident. It is a potentiality inherent in its very essence. The contrast between pretended precision and the actual lack of it, between the pretended aspiration for balance and the actual aim of predominance — this contrast which, as we have seen, is of the very essence of the balance of power, makes the latter in a certain measure an ideology to begin with. The balance of power thus appears as a system of international politics which assumes a reality and a function that it actually does not have, and which, therefore, tends to disguise, rationalize, and justify international politics as it actually is.

3. THE INADEQUACY OF THE BALANCE OF POWER

New light will be shed upon the nature of the balance of power by a consideration of the actual contribution which the balance of power, during the period of its flowering in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, has made to the stability of the modern state system and to the preservation of the independence of its members. Was it the balance of power alone which attained these beneficial results, or was, during that period of history, another factor in operation without which the balance of power could not have attained these results?

[10] April 27, 1947, p. E3.

a) Restraining Influence of a Moral Consensus

Gibbon pointed to such a factor in 1781 at a moment when his country was fighting a losing war with its American colonies, France, Spain, and Holland. He then proposed:

> . . . to consider Europe as one great republic, whose various inhabitants have attained almost the same level of politeness and cultivation. The balance of power will continue to fluctuate, and the prosperity of our own or the neighboring kingdoms may be alternately exalted or depressed; but these events cannot essentially injure our general state of happiness, the system of arts, and laws, and manners, which so advantageously distinguish, above the rest of mankind, the Europeans and their colonies. . . . The abuses of tyranny are restrained by the mutual influence of fear and shame; republics have acquired order and stability; monarchies have imbibed the principles of freedom, or, at least, of moderation; and some sense of honour and justice is introduced into the most defective constitutions by the general manners of the times. In peace, the progress of knowledge and industry is accelerated by the emulation of so many active rivals: in war, the European forces are exercised by temperate and undecisive contests.[11]

The awareness of an intellectual and moral unity upon whose foundations the balance of power reposes and which makes its beneficial operations possible was the common possession of the great writers of that age. We shall mention only three of them, Fénelon, Rousseau, and Vattel.

Fénelon, the great philosopher of the reign of Louis XIV and mentor of the latter's grandson, wrote in the *Supplement to the Examination of Conscience about the Duties of Royalty:*

> This attention for the maintenance of a kind of equality and of equilibrium among neighboring nations assures tranquillity for all. In this respect, all nations which are neighbors and have commercial relations form a great body and a kind of community. For instance, christendom forms a kind of general republic which has its common interests, fears, and precautions. All members which compose this great body owe it to each other for the common good, and owe it also to themselves, in the interest of national security, to forestall any step on the part of any member which might overturn the equilibrium and bring about the

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[11] *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (The Modern Library Edition), II, 93–5. A similarly brilliant account of the beneficial results of the balance of power is found in an anonymous contribution to the *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. I, January 1803, p. 348: "But had it not been for that wholesome jealousy of rival neighbours, which modern politicians have learned to cherish, how many conquests and changes of dominion would have taken place, instead of wars, in which a few useless lives were lost, and some superfluous millions were squandered? How many fair portions of the globe might have been deluged in blood, instead of some hundreds of sailors fighting harmlessly on the barren plains of the ocean, and some thousands of soldiers carrying on a scientific, and regular, and quiet, system of warfare, in countries set apart for the purpose, and resorted to as the arena where the disputes of nations may be determined? We may indeed look to the history of the last century as the proudest area in the annals of the species; the period most distinguished for learning, and skill, and industry; for the milder virtues, and for common sense; for refinement in government, and an equal diffusion of liberty; above all, for that perfect knowledge of the arts of administration, which has established certain general rules of conduct among nations; has prevented the overthrow of empires, and the absorption of weak states into the bodies of devouring neighbours; has set bounds to the march of conquest, and rendered the unsheathing of the sword a measure of the last adoption; whereas, in other times, it was always resorted to in the first instance."

inevitable ruin of all the other members of the same body. Whatever changes or impairs this general system of Europe is too dangerous and brings in its train infinite evils.[12]

Rousseau took up the same theme by stating that "The nations of Europe form among themselves an invisible nation. . . . The actual system of Europe has exactly that degree of solidity which maintains it in a state of perpetual agitation without overturning it." [13] And, according to Vattel, the most influential of the eighteenth-century writers on international law:

> Europe forms a political system, a body where the whole is connected by the relations and different interests of nations inhabiting this part of the world. It is not as anciently a confused heap of detached pieces, each of which thought itself very little concerned in the fate of others, and seldom regarded things which did not immediately relate to it. The confined attention of sovereigns . . . makes Europe a kind of republic, the members of which, though independent, unite, through the ties of common interest, for the maintenance of order and liberty. Hence arose that famous scheme of the political equilibrium or balance of power; by which is understood such a disposition of things as no power is able absolutely to predominate, or to prescribe laws to others.[14]

The statements of the writers are echoed in the declarations of the statesmen. From 1648 to the French Revolution of 1789, the princes and their advisers took the moral and political unity of Europe for granted and referred only in passing to the "republic of Europe," "the community of Christian princes," or "the political system of Europe." But the challenge of the Napoleonic Empire compelled them to make explicit the moral and intellectual foundations upon which the old balance of power had reposed. The Holy Alliance and the Concert of Europe, both of which shall be dealt with later,[15] are attempts at giving institutionalized direction to these moral and intellectual forces which had been the lifeblood of the balance of power.

The Treaty of the Holy Alliance of September 26, 1815, obligated its signatories — all the sovereigns of Europe except three — to nothing more than to act in relation to each other and to their subjects in accordance with Christian principles. Yet the other treaties, which tried to reconstitute the European political system and which are popularly known by the name of the Holy Alliance, were directed against the recurrence of revolution anywhere, especially, of course, in France. Since the French Revolution had been the great dynamic force which had destroyed the balance of power, it was believed that any revolution would carry with it a similar threat. Thus the principle of legitimacy and the inviolability of the frontiers of 1815 became the foundation stones upon which at least Austria, Prussia, and Russia tried to re-erect the political structure of Europe.

As late as 1860, when France obtained the cession of Savoy and Nice as compensation for the increase of territory obtained by Sardinia in Italy, England intervened by invoking one of the principles of 1815. "Her Majesty's

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[12] *Œuvres* (Paris, 1870), III, 349, 350.
[13] *Œuvres complètes*, IX, 469.
[14] *The Law of Nations* (Philadelphia, 1829), Book III, Chapter III, pp. 377–8.
[15] See below, Chapter XXV.

Government," Earl Russell, the British Foreign Secretary, wrote to the British Ambassador to France, "must be allowed to remark that a demand for cession of a neighbor's territory, made by a State so powerful as France, and whose former and not very remote policy of territorial aggrandizement brought countless calamities upon Europe, cannot well fail to give umbrage to every State interested in the Balance of Power and in the maintenance of the general peace."

The Concert of Europe — diplomacy by conferences among the great powers which would meet all threats to the political system by concerted action — became the instrument by which first the principles of the Holy Alliance and then, after the latter's disintegration culminating in the liberal revolutions of 1848, the common interests of Europe were to be realized. The Concert of Europe functioned on many occasions during the century from its inception in 1814 to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. The conception underlying it, that is, the political unity of Europe, or, in the words of Castlereagh, "the general system of Europe," was referred to in many official declarations. Thus the allied powers declared toward the end of 1813 that they "shall not lay down their arms . . . before the political status of Europe has been anew reaffirmed and before immutable principles have taken their rights over vain pretentions in order to assure Europe a real peace." In the declaration of February 5, 1814, from which the Concert of Europe is generally dated, the representatives of Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia stated that they did not speak solely in the name of their respective countries, "but in the name of Europe which forms but a single whole."

The same nations, which were joined by France, established in Protocol 19 of the Conference of London of 1831 the independence of Belgium and, in the interest of the balance of power, put its neutrality under their joint guaranty. In justification, they declared: "Every nation has its laws, but Europe, too, has her law; the social order has given it to her." During the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, French Minister Thiers, searching in vain for aid from the other European nations in order to prevent the overthrow of the balance of power by Germany, complained that "Europe was not to be found." In that phrase he paid his respects to the same principle of European unity which since 1648 has been the lifeblood of the balance of power. It was to the same principle that British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey appealed in vain when on the eve of the First World War he invited the nations of Europe to a conference in order to settle their differences. One might even say that British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, when in 1938 he forced Czechoslovakia to cede the Sudetenland to Nazi Germany, acted under the mistaken assumption that the moral, intellectual, and political unity of Europe did still exist and that Nazi Germany formed an integral part of it.

b) Moral Consensus of the Modern State System

The confidence in the stability of the modern state system that emanates from all these declarations and actions derives, it will be noted, not from the

balance of power, but from a number of elements, intellectual and moral in nature, upon which both the balance of power and the stability of the modern state system repose. "In politics as in mechanics," as John Stuart Mill put it, "the power which is to keep the engine going must be sought for *outside* the machinery; and if it is not forthcoming, or is insufficient to surmount the obstacles which may reasonably be expected, the contrivance will fail." [16] What, for instance, Gibbon has pointed to with particular eloquence and insight as the fuel which keeps the motor of the balance of power moving are the intellectual and moral foundations of Western civilizations, the intellectual and moral climate within which the protagonists of eighteenth-century society moved and which permeated all their thoughts and actions. These men knew Europe as "one great republic" with common standards of

[16] *Considerations on Representative Government* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1882), p. 21. Cf. also the penetrating remarks on pp. 235–6 on the importance of the moral factor for the maintenance of the balance of power in domestic politics: "When it is said that the question is only one of political morality, this does not extenuate its importance. Questions of constitutional morality are of no less practical moment than those relating to the constitution itself. The very existence of some governments, and all that renders others endurable, rests on the practical observance of doctrines of constitutional morality; traditional notions in the minds of the several constituted authorities, which modify the use that might otherwise be made of their powers. In unbalanced governments — pure monarchy, pure aristocracy, pure democracy — such maxims are the only barrier which restrains the government from the utmost excesses in the direction of its characteristic tendency. In imperfectly balanced governments, where some attempt is made to set constitutional limits to the impulses of the strongest power, but where that power is strong enough to overstep them with at least temporary impunity, it is only by doctrines of constitutional morality, recognized and sustained by opinion, that any regard at all is preserved for the checks and limitations of the constitution. In well-balanced governments, in which the supreme power is divided, and each sharer is protected against the usurpations of the others in the only manner possible, namely, by being armed for defense with weapons as stron as the others can wield for attack, the government can only be carried on by forbearance on a sides to exercise those extreme powers, unless provoked by conduct equally extreme on the pa of some other sharer of power; and in this case we may say that only by the regard paid maxims of constitutional morality is the constitution kept in existence."

Cf. on this point also the analogy between industrial warfare and the international balance of power in R. H. Tawney, *The Acquisitive Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1920), pp. 40, 41: "That motive produces industrial warfare, not as a regrettable incident, but as an inevitable result. It produces industrial war, because its teaching is that each individual or group has a right to what they can get, and denies that there is any principle, other than the mechanism of the market, which determines what they ought to get. For, since the income available for distribution is limited, and since, therefore, when certain limits have been passed, what one group gains another group must lose, it is evident that if the relative incomes of different groups are not to be determined by their functions, there is no method other than mutual self-assertion which is left to determine them. Self-interest, indeed, may cause them to refrain from using their full strength to enforce their claims, and, in so far as this happens, peace is secured in industry, as men have attempted to secure it in international affairs, by a balance of power. But the maintenance of such a peace is contingent upon the estimate of the parties to it that they have more to lose than to gain by an overt struggle, and is not the result of their acceptance of any standard of remuneration as an equitable settlement of their claims. Hence it is precarious, insincere and short. It is without finality, because there can be no finality in the mere addition of increments of income, any more than in the gratification of any other desire for material goods. When demands are conceded the old struggle recommences upon a new level, and will always recommence as long as men seek to end it merely by increasing remuneration, not by finding a principle upon which all remuneration, whether large or small, should be based."

See also p. 50: "But the balance, whether in international politics or in industry, is unstable, because it reposes not on the common recognition of a principle by which the claims of nations and individuals are limited, but on an attempt to find an equipoise which may avoid a conflict without adjuring the assertion of unlimited claims. No such equipoise can be found, because, in a world where the possibilities of increasing military or industrial power are illimitable, no such equipoise can exist." (Reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

"politeness and cultivation" and a common "system of arts, and laws, and manners." The common awareness of these common standards restrained their ambitions "by the mutual influence of fear and shame," imposed "moderation" upon their actions, and instilled in all of them "some sense of honour and justice." In consequence, the struggle for power on the international scene was in the nature of "temperate and undecisive contests."

Of the temperateness and undecisiveness of the political contests, from 1648 to the Napoleonic Wars and then again from 1815 to 1914, the balance of power is not so much the cause as the metaphorical and symbolic expression or, at best, the technique of realization. Before the balance of power could impose its restraints upon the power aspirations of nations through the mechanical interplay of opposing forces, the competing nations had first to restrain themselves by accepting the system of the balance of power as the common framework of their endeavors. However much they desired to alter the distribution of the weight in the two scales, they had to agree in a silent compact, as it were, that, whatever the outcome of the contest, the two scales would still be there at the end of it. They had to agree that, however high one might have risen and however low the other might have sunk, the scales would still be joined together as a pair, hanging from the same beam and, hence, able to rise and fall again as the future constellation of weights would determine. Whatever changes in the status quo nations might seek, they all had at least to recognize as unchangeable one factor, the existence of a pair of scales, the "status quo" of the balance of power itself. And whenever a nation might tend to forget that indispensable precondition of independence and stability, as Austria did in 1756 with regard to Prussia, or France from 1919–23 with regard to Germany, the consensus of all the other nations would not allow it to forget that precondition for long.

This consensus grew in the intellectual and moral climate of the age and drew its strength from the actual power relations which under normal conditions made an attempt at overthrowing the system of the balance of power itself a hopeless undertaking. This consensus, in turn, as an intellectual and moral force, reacted upon the intellectual and moral climate and upon the power relations, strengthening the tendencies toward moderation and equilibrium. As Professor Quincy Wright has put it:

> The States were so bounded and organized that aggression could not succeed unless it was so moderated and so directed that the prevailing opinion of the Powers approved it. Such approval was generally given to the Balkan revolts which gradually disintegrated the Ottoman Empire, to the Belgian revolt which separated that country from the Netherlands, to Prussian and Sardinian aggressions which united modern Germany and Italy, and to numerous aggressions in Africa, Asia and the Pacific which increased European empires, and extended European civilization to these areas.[17]

It is this consensus, both child and father, as it were, of common moral standards and a common civilization as well as of common interests, which kept in check the limitless desire for power, potentially inherent, as we know,

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[17] "The Balance of Power," in Weigert and Stefansson, *Compass of the World* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944), pp. 53–4.

in all imperialisms, and prevented it from becoming a political actuality. Where such a consensus no longer exists or has become weak and is no longer sure of itself, as in the period starting with the partitions of Poland and ending with the Napoleonic Wars, the balance of power is incapable of fulfilling its functions for international stability and national independence.

Such a consensus prevailed from 1648 to 1772 and from 1815 to 1933. In the former period, the state system resembled nothing so much as a competitive society of princes, each of whom accepted the reason of state, that is, the rational pursuit, within certain moral limitations, of the power objectives of the individual state, as the ultimate standard of international behavior. Each expected, and was justified in expecting, everybody else to share this standard. The passions of the religious wars yielded to the rationalism and the skeptical moderation of the Enlightenment. In that tolerant atmosphere, national hatreds and collective enmities, nourished by principles of any kind, could hardly flourish. Everybody took it for granted that the egotistical motives which animated his own actions drove all others to similar actions. It was then a matter of skill and luck who would come out on top. International politics became indeed an aristocratic pastime, a sport for princes, all recognizing the same rules of the game and playing for the same limited stakes.

After the interlude of the Napoleonic Wars, the dual fear of revolution and of a renewal of French imperialism called into being the morality of the Holy Alliance with its blend of Christian, monarchical, and European principles. The Concert of Europe in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and the League of Nations after the First World War, added to this heritage the idea of the national state. This idea became, as principle of national self-determination, one of the cornerstones upon which successive generations, from the liberal revolutions of 1848 to the outbreak of the Second World War, tried to erect a stable political structure. What the French Foreign Minister De la Valette wrote in 1866 to a French diplomatic representative became one of the basic convictions of this period of history — proclaimed again by Woodrow Wilson and made one of the standards of the Peace Treaties of 1919— : "The emperor . . . sees a real equilibrium only in the satisfied wishes of the nations of Europe." [18]

[18] The importance of the moral factor for the preservation of the independence of small nations is well pointed out by Alfred Cobban, *National Self-Determination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948) pp. 170, 171: "But even the policies of great empires are influenced by the climate of opinion, and there has for long been a prejudice in favour of the rights of small independent states. With the sources of this prejudice we need not concern ourselves, but its existence is a fact which the student of international affairs cannot ignore. The various factors we have mentioned all undoubtedly have their importance, but in our opinion it was not the strength of national feeling in the smaller states, or even the effects of the balance of power, so much as the general recognition that the destruction of an independent sovereignty was an exceptional, and normally an unjustifiable, act which ultimately protected many of the small states of Europe, some no larger than a single city, from absorption by the greater powers. Even in the eighteenth century, when the power of the larger states was increasing rapidly, contemporary opinion, influenced by the classical city-state ideal, held up the smaller states for admiration and believed in their independence. During the nineteenth century the growth of the nationalist ideal did much to undermine this view, but in 1919, as we have seen, it still exercised considerable influence."

What is left of this heritage today? What kind of consensus unites the nations of the world in the period following the Second World War? Upon the examination of the component elements of this consensus will depend the estimate of the role which the balance of power can be expected to play today for the freedom and stability of the community of nations.

PART FIVE

LIMITATIONS

OF INTERNATIONAL POWER:

INTERNATIONAL MORALITY

AND WORLD PUBLIC OPINION

CHAPTER XIII

Ethics, Mores, and Law as Restraints on Power

We have seen in the preceding chapter that power is a crude and unreliable method of limiting the aspirations for power on the international scene. If the motivations behind the struggle for power and the mechanisms through which it operates were all that needs to be known about international politics, the international scene would indeed resemble the state of nature described by Hobbes as a "war of every man against every man."[1] International politics would be governed exclusively by those considerations of political expediency of which Machiavelli has given the most acute and candid account. In such a world the weak would be at the mercy of the strong. Might would indeed make right.

Actually, however, the very threat of such a world where power reigns not only supreme, but without rival, engenders that revolt against power, which is as universal as the aspiration for power itself. To stave off this revolt, to pacify the resentment and opposition that arise when the drive for power is recognized for what it is, those who seek power employ, as we have seen, ideologies for the concealment of their aims. What is actually aspiration for power, then, appears to be something different, something that is in harmony with the demands of reason, morality, and justice. The substance, of which the ideologies of international politics are but the reflection, is to be found in the normative orders of ethics, mores, and law.

From the Bible to the ethics and constitutional arrangements of modern democracy, the main function of these normative systems has been to keep aspirations for power within socially tolerable bounds. All ethics, mores, and legal systems dominant in Western civilization recognize the ubiquity of power drives and condemn them. Conversely, political philosophies, such as Machiavelli's and Hobbes's, which regard the ubiquity of power drives as an ultimate fact of social life to be accepted rather than condemned and restrained, have met with the disapproval of prevailing opinion. They have lacked the intellectual and practical influence which has made political

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[1] *Leviathan,* Chapter XIII.

philosophies, such as St. Augustine's and Locke's, potent forces in Western civilization.

On the other hand, that very tradition of Western civilization which attempts to restrain the power of the strong for the sake of the weak has been opposed as effeminate, sentimental, and decadent. The opponents have been those who, like Nietzsche, Mussolini, and Hitler, not only accept the will to power and the struggle for power as elemental social facts, but glorify their unrestrained manifestations and postulate this absence of restraint as an ideal of society and a rule of conduct for the individual. But in the long run philosophies and political systems which have made the lust and the struggle for power their mainstay have proved impotent and self-destructive. Their weakness demonstrates the strength of the Western tradition which seeks, if not to eliminate, at least to regulate and restrain the power drives which otherwise would either tear society apart or else deliver the life and happiness of the weak to the arbitrary will of those in power.

It is at these two points that ethics, mores, and law intervene in order to protect society against disruption and the individual against enslavement and extinction. When a society or certain of its members are unable to protect themselves with their own strength against the power drives of others, when, in other words, the mechanics of power politics are found wanting, as sooner or later they must, the normative systems try to supplement power politics with their own rules of conduct. This is the message the normative systems give to strong and weak alike: Superior power gives no right, either moral or legal, to do with that power all that it is physically capable of doing. Power is subject to limitations, in the interest of society as a whole and in the interest of its individual members, which are not the result of the mechanics of the struggle for power, but are superimposed upon that struggle in the form of norms or rules of conduct by the will of the members of society themselves.

Three types of norms or rules of conduct operate in all higher societies: ethics, mores, and law. Their distinctive characteristics have been much debated in the literature of philosophy and jurisprudence. For the purpose of this study it is sufficient to point out that every rule of conduct has two elements: the command and the sanction. No particular command is peculiar to any particular type of norm — "thou shalt not kill" can be a command of ethics, mores, or law. It is the sanction that differentiates these three different types of rules of conduct.

"Thou shalt not kill" is a command of ethics, mores, or law according to whether, in case of its violation, a sanction peculiar to ethics or to mores or to law is applied to punish the violator and prevent further violations. If A kills B and afterward feels pangs of conscience or of remorse, we are in the presence of a sanction peculiar to ethics and, hence, of an ethical norm. If A kills B and unorganized society reacts with spontaneous demonstrations of disapproval, such as business boycott, social ostracism, and the like, we have to do with a sanction peculiar to the mores, and, hence, to a norm of the mores. If, finally, A kills B and organized society reacts in the form of a rational procedure with predetermined police action, indictment, trial, verdict, and punishment, the sanction is of a legal nature and the norm, therefore, belongs in the category of law.

All domestic societies are regulated by an intricate maze of rules of conduct of this kind, supporting or contradicting each other or operating independently. The more important society considers those interests and values which it tries to safeguard by rules of conduct, the stronger are the sanctions with which it threatens an infraction of its rules. Society exerts its greatest pressure and, therefore, has the best chance of enforcing its rules of conduct against its recalcitrant members when it brings all the different kinds of sanctions at its disposal simultaneously to bear upon the infractor of its rules. It is weakest and, therefore, its sanctions are most likely to be ineffective when only one type of sanction supports its interests and values. When one rule of conduct requires an action which another rule of conduct condemns, the fate of the interest or value concerned depends upon the relative strength of the sanctions supporting the contradictory commands.

Against a threat to its own existence by treason or by revolution, or a threat to the existence of its individual members by murder, society marshals all three types of sanction. Thus ethics, mores, and law, reinforcing each other, give threefold protection to the life of society and to the lives of the individuals who compose it. The would-be traitor or killer faces the pangs of his conscience, the spontaneous reactions of society in the form, for instance, of ostracism, and the punishment of the law. The same situation prevails where not the existence of society or of its individual members, but their property is to be protected. Property, too, is surrounded by the triple wall of ethics, mores, and law. Between the would-be thief and cheat and the property he covets, society interposes all the sanctions it is able to employ.

Where less highly priced interests and values are at stake, society may call upon only one type of sanction. Thus certain kinds of competitive practices in business and politics, such as lying, are opposed only by ethics. The mores will come into play only under extreme conditions, if, for instance, the amount and degree of lying exceed the measure which society regards as tolerable. The law will remain silent in the case of ordinary lying, if for no other reason than that no law prohibiting it can be enforced. It will speak only in cases of qualified lying, such as perjury and cheating, where the lie threatens interests and values beyond mere truth. The rules of fashion, on the other hand, are enforced exclusively by the mores, for the issues involved are not important enough for ethics and law to be concerned about them. It is, finally, the law alone which takes cognizance of violations of traffic regulations. Ethics and mores do not participate in their enforcement; for to establish some kind of mechanical order in the field of traffic the sanctions of the law are generally sufficient.

The problem of the relative strength of different injunctions becomes acute when there is conflict between different rules of conduct. The classic example, much discussed in the literature of jurisprudence, of a conflict between two rules of the same legal system is the prohibition of dueling in the criminal codes of certain European countries, while the military codes of the same countries require officers to settle certain disputes by way of duels. A system of ethics which commands us to obey God rather than man and at the same time to give unto Caesar what is Caesar's presents a similar conflict when a law of the state contradicts one of God's commandments. Conflicts of this kind

are particularly frequent in the political sphere. Rival governments — a revolutionary government and a legitimate government, a government in exile and a "Quisling" government — demand obedience from the same group of people. The rules of conduct with which a politician is expected to comply are often at odds with the norms which address themselves to all members of society. The ethics and mores of politics are generally considered to permit greater leeway than the general ethics and mores of society in certain actions, such as "campaign oratory" and promises in general.

Conflicts between different rules of conduct are decided by the relative pressure which the sanctions of the conflicting rules are able to exert upon the will of the individual. Unable to comply with all the norms addressed to him at the same time, he must choose the one to obey and violate the others. The relative strength of these pressures is, in turn, the expression of the relative strength of the social forces which support one set of values and interests against another. Thus the normative order of society whose purpose it is to keep the power aspirations of its individual members within socially tolerable bounds is itself in a certain measure the result of social forces contending with each other for the domination of society.

Social life consists to an overwhelming extent in continuous reactions, which have become largely automatic, to the pressures which society exerts upon its members through its rules of conduct. These rules of conduct watch over the individual from morning till night, molding his actions into conformity with the standards of society. One might even say that society as a dynamic force is nothing but the sum total of its rules of conduct imposing patterns of action upon its members. What we call civilization is in a sense nothing but the automatic reactions of the members of a society to the rules of conduct by which that society endeavors to make its members conform to certain objective standards, to restrain their aspirations for power, and to domesticate and pacify them in all socially important respects. The civilization with which we are here of course mainly concerned — Western civilization — has been to a large extent successful in this endeavor. Western civilization has not, however, as many nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers believed, altogether banished the struggle for power from the domestic scene and replaced it with something different and better, such as co-operation, harmony, permanent peace, nor is it on its way to do so. This misconception of the role which the aspirations and the struggle for power play in politics has been treated in the first chapter of this book.

The best that Western civilization has been able to achieve — which is, as far as we can see, the best that any civilization can achieve — has been to mitigate the struggle for power on the domestic scene, to civilize its means, and to direct it toward objectives, which, if atttained, minimize the extent to which life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness of the individual members of society are involved in the struggle for power. More particularly, the crude methods of personal combat have been replaced by the refined instruments of social, commercial, and professional competition. The struggle for power is being fought, rather than with deadly weapons, with competitive examinations, with competition for social distinctions, with periodical elections for

public and private offices, and, above all, with competition for the possession of money and of things measurable in money.

In the domestic societies of Western civilization the possession of money has become the outstanding symbol of the possession of power. Through the competition for the acquisition of money the power aspirations of the individual find a civilized outlet in harmony with the rules of conduct laid down by society. The different normative injunctions against homicide and against individual and collective violence of any kind aim at creating the normative preconditions for such a civilized redirection of the struggle for power. All the social instrumentalities and institutions relevant to the different competitive devices of society serve the purpose, not of eliminating the struggle for power, but of creating civilized substitutes for the brutality and crudeness of an unlimited and unregulated struggle for power.

Such is, in brief and sketchy outline, the way in which ethics, mores, and law limit the struggle for power in the domestic societies of Western civilization. What can we say in this respect of international society? What rules of ethics, mores, and law are effective on the international scene? What functions do they fulfill for international society? What kind of international ethics, international mores in the form of world public opinion, and international law is there which would delimit, regulate, and civilize the struggle for power among nations in the same way as the domestic normative orders fulfill this function for the struggle for power among individuals belonging to the same domestic society?

CHAPTER XIV

International Morality

A discussion of international morality must guard against the two extremes either of overrating the influence of ethics upon international politics or else of denying that statesmen and diplomats are moved by anything else but considerations of material power.

On the one hand, there is the dual error of confounding the moral rules which people actually observe with those they pretend to observe as well as with those which writers declare they ought to observe. "On no subject of human interest, except theology," said Professor John Chipman Gray, "has there been so much loose writing and nebulous speculation as on international law." [1] The same must be said of international morality. Writers have put forward moral precepts which statesmen and diplomats ought to take to heart in order to make relations between nations more peaceful and less anarchic, such as the keeping of promises, trust in the other's word, fair dealing, respect for international law, protection of minorities, repudiation of war as an instrument of national policy. But they have rarely asked themselves whether and to what extent such precepts, however desirable in themselves, actually determine the actions of men. Furthermore, since statesmen and diplomats are wont to justify their actions and objectives in moral terms, regardless of their actual motives, it would be equally erroneous to take those protestations of selfless and peaceful intentions, of humanitarian purposes, and international ideals at their face value. It is pertinent to ask whether they are mere ideologies concealing the true motives of action or whether they express a genuine concern for the compliance of international policies with ethical standards.

On the other hand, there is the misconception, usually associated with the general depreciation and moral condemnation of power politics, discussed above,[2] that international politics is so thoroughly evil that it is no use looking for ethical limitations of the aspirations for power on the international scene. Yet, if we ask ourselves what statesmen and diplomats are capable of doing to further the power objectives of their respective nations and what they actually do, we realize that they do less than they probably could and less than they actually did in other periods of history. They refuse to consider certain ends and to use certain means, either altogether or under certain con-

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[1] *Nature and Sources of the Law* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), p. 127.
[2] See pp. 15 ff.

ditions, not because in the light of expediency they appear impractical or unwise, but because certain moral rules interpose an absolute barrier. Moral rules do not permit certain policies to be considered at all from the point of view of expediency. Such ethical inhibitions operate in our time on different levels with different effectiveness. Their restraining function is most obvious and most effective in affirming the sacredness of human life in times of peace.

I. THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE

a) Protection of Human Life in Peace

International politics can be defined, as we have seen, as a continuing effort to maintain and to increase the power of one's own nation and to keep in check or reduce the power of other nations. The relative power of nations depends, however, as we have also pointed out,[3] upon the quantity and quality of human beings in terms of size and quality of population, size and quality of military establishment, quality of government, and, more particularly, of diplomacy. Viewed as a series of technical tasks into which ethical considerations do not enter, international politics would have to consider as one of its legitimate tasks the drastic reduction or even the elimination of the population of a rival nation, of its most prominent military and political leaders, and of its ablest diplomats. And when international politics was considered exclusively as a technique, without ethical significance, for the purpose of maintaining and gaining power, such methods were used without moral scruples and as a matter of course.

According to its official records, the Republic of Venice, from 1415 to 1525, planned or attempted about two hundred assassinations for purposes of international politics. Among the prospective victims were two emperors, two kings of France, and three sultans. The documents record virtually no offer of assassination to have been rejected by the Venetian government. From 1456 to 1472, it accepted twenty offers to kill the Sultan Mahomet II, the main antagonist of Venice during that period. In 1514, John of Ragusa offered to poison anybody selected by the government of Venice for an annual salary of fifteen hundred ducats. The Venetian government hired the man "on trial," as we would say today, and asked him to show what he could do with Emperor Maximilian. In the same period the cardinals brought their own butlers and wine to a papal coronation dinner for fear they might otherwise be poisoned. This custom is reported to have been general in Rome without the host's taking offense at it.

Obviously, such methods to attain political ends are no longer practiced today. Yet the political motives for employing them exist today as they did when practices of this kind actually prevailed. It is not a matter of indifference for the nations engaged in the competition for power whether or not their competitor can avail itself of the services of outstanding military and political leaders. Thus they may hope that an outstanding leader or governing group

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[3] See above, pp. 88 ff.

will be compelled to give up the reins of power, either through a political upheaval or through infirmity and death. We know now that during the Second World War speculations as to how long Hitler and Mussolini would stay alive or at least in power formed an important part of the power calculations of the United Nations, and that the news of President Roosevelt's death revived Hitler's hopes in victory. While these lines are being written, one of the major factors in American policy toward the Soviet Union seems to be the expectation that the group governing the Soviet Union will be unable to keep itself in power. The technical difficulties of engineering such removals from power by violent means are not greater today than they were in previous periods of history. Rather the contrary is likely to be the case. Such removals are still as desirable and feasible as they always were. What has changed is the influence of civilization which makes some policies that are desirable and feasible ethically reprehensible and, hence, normally impossible of execution.

Ethical limitations of the same kind protect in times of peace the lives not only of outstanding individuals, but also of large groups, even of whole nations whose destruction would be both politically desirable and feasible. In the problem of Germany, as seen both by the Germans and by the rest of the world, modern history provides a striking illustration of the influence of ethics upon international politics. The fundamental fact of international politics from the German point of view has been from Bismarck to Hitler the "encirclement" of Germany by powerful nations in the East and in the West. Bismarck, however ruthless and immoral his particular moves on the chessboard of international politics may have been, rarely deviated from the basic rules of the game which had prevailed in the society of Christian princes of the eighteenth century. It was a fraudulent and treacherous game, but there were a few things which no member of that aristocratic society would stoop to do. Thus, confronted with the fundamental fact of Germany's political existence — the proximity of Russia and France — Bismarck accepted the inevitability of that fact and tried to turn it to Germany's advantage by maintaining close relations with Russia and by isolating France.

Hitler, on the other hand, did not recognize the social framework within whose limitations international politics had operated from the end of the Thirty Years' War virtually to his own ascent to power. He was free of the moral scruples which had compelled Bismarck to accept the existence of France and Russia as the inescapable fact upon which to build a German foreign policy. Hitler undertook to change that fact by destroying physically Germany's eastern and western neighbors. Considered as a mere problem of political technique devoid of ethical significance, Hitler's solution was much more thorough and politically expedient than Bismarck's; for it promised to solve the problem of Germany's international position once and for all as far as the eastern and western neighbors of Germany were concerned. Furthermore, in itself, Hitler's solution proved to be as feasible as it would have been in Bismarck's time. It might have succeeded had it not been for certain errors in over-all judgment, errors which the political genius of Bismarck might well have avoided.

The German problem, as it presents itself to the non-German world and

especially to the nations threatened with German hegemony, was formulated with brutal frankness by Clemenceau when he declared that there were twenty million Germans too many. This statement points to the inescapable fact, which has confronted Europe and the world since the Franco-German War of 1870, that Germany is by virtue of size and quality of population the most powerful nation of Europe. To reconcile this fact with the security of the other European nations and of the rest of the world is the task of political reconstruction which faced the world after the First World War and which confronts it again after the Second. That, since Clemenceau, the German problem has always been posed in terms which take the existence of "twenty million Germans too many" for granted reveals the same ethical limitations on the pursuit of power which we found in Bismarck's foreign policy and which we did not find in Hitler's. For there are two ways of dealing with a problem of international politics, such as the German.

One is the method by which the Romans irrevocably solved the Carthaginian problem. It is the method of solving a technical political problem by the appropriate means without regard for any transcendent ethical considerations. Since there were too many Carthaginians from the point of view of the power aspirations of Rome, Cato would end his every speech by proclaiming: *"Ceterum censeo Carthaginem esse delendam"* ("As for the rest, I am of the opinion that Carthage must be destroyed"). With its destruction the Carthaginian problem, as seen by Rome, was solved forever. No threat to Rome's security and ambition was ever again to rise from that desolate place that once was Carthage. Similarly, if the Germans had been successful in their over-all plans and if their concentration camps and extermination camps could have finished their tasks, the "nightmare of coalitions" would have been forever banished from the minds of German statesmen.

A foreign policy which does not admit mass extermination as a means to its end does not impose this limitation upon itself because of considerations of political expediency. On the contrary, expediency would counsel such a thorough and effective operation. The limitation derives from an absolute moral principle, the violation of which no consideration of national advantage can justify. A foreign policy of this kind, therefore, actually sacrifices the national interest where its consistent pursuit would necessitate the violation of an ethical principle, such as the prohibition of mass killing in times of peace. This point cannot be too strongly made; for frequently the opinion is advanced that this respect for human life is the outgrowth of "the obligation not to inflict *unnecessary* death or suffering on other human beings, i.e., death or suffering not necessary for the attainment of some higher purpose which is held, rightly or wrongly, to justify a derogation from the general obligation."[4] On the contrary, the fact of the matter is that nations recognize a moral obligation to refrain from the infliction of death and suffering under certain conditions despite the possibility of justifying such conduct in the light of a higher purpose, such as the national interest.

[4] E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-39* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1939), p. 196.

b) Protection of Human Life in War

Similar ethical limitations are placed upon international policies in times of war. They concern civilians and combatants unable or unwilling to fight. From the beginning of history through the better part of the Middle Ages, belligerents were held to be free, according to ethics as well as law, to kill all enemies whether or not they were members of the armed forces, or else to treat them in any way they saw fit. Men, women, and children were often put to the sword or sold into slavery by the victor without any adverse moral reactions taking place. In chapter iv of Book III of *On the Law of War and Peace* under the heading "On the Right of Killing Enemies in a Public War and on Other Violence against the Person," Hugo Grotius presents an impressive catalogue of acts of violence committed in ancient history against enemy persons without discrimination. Grotius himself, writing in the third decade of the seventeenth century, still regarded most of them as justified in law and ethics, provided the war was waged for a just cause.[5]

This absence of moral restraints upon killing in war resulted from the nature of war itself. In those times war was considered a contest between all the inhabitants of the territories of the belligerent states. The enemy was less a state in the modern sense of a legal abstraction than all the individuals owing allegiance to a certain lord or living within a certain territory. Thus every individual citizen of the enemy state became an enemy of every individual citizen of the other side.

Since the end of the Thirty Years' War, the conception has become prevalent that war is not a contest between whole populations, but only between the armies of the belligerent states. In consequence, the distinction between combatants and noncombatants has become one of the fundamental legal and moral principles governing the actions of belligerents. War is considered to be a contest between the armed forces of the belligerent states, and, since the civilian populations do not participate actively in the armed contest, they are not to be made its object. Consequently, it is considered to be a moral and legal duty not to attack, wound, or kill noncombatant civilians purposely. Injuries and death suffered by them as incidents of military operations, such as the bombardment of a town or a battle taking place in an inhabited area, are regretted as sometimes unavoidable concomitants of war. However, to avoid them to the utmost is again considered a moral and legal duty. The Hague Conventions with respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land of 1899 and 1907 gave express and virtually universal legal sanction to that principle.

A corresponding development has taken place with regard to members of the armed forces unwilling or unable to fight. It follows from the conception of war prevailing in antiquity and in the better part of the Middle Ages that no exception to the moral and legal right to kill all enemies could be made for certain categories of disabled combatants. Thus Grotius could still state as the prevailing moral and legal conviction of his time: "The right to inflict injury extends even over captives, and without limitation of time. . . . The right

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[5] See especially § III.

to inflict injury extends even over those who wish to surrender, but whose surrender is not accepted." [6]

Yet, as the logical outgrowth of the conception of war as a contest between armed forces, the idea developed that only those who are actually able and willing to participate actively in warfare ought to be the object of deliberate armed action. Those who were no longer engaged in actual warfare because of sickness, wounds, or because they had been made prisoners or were willing to be made prisoners ought not to be harmed. This tendency toward the humanization of warfare started in the sixteenth century and culminated in the great multilateral treaties of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Practically all civilized nations have adhered to these treaties. Between 1581 and 1864, 291 international agreements were concluded for the purpose of protecting the lives of the wounded and sick. The Geneva Convention of 1864, superseded by those of 1906 and 1929, translated into concrete and detailed legal obligations the moral convictions of the age as to the treatment to be accorded to the wounded, the sick, and the medical persons in charge of them. The International Red Cross is both the symbol and the outstanding institutional realization of those moral convictions.

As concerns prisoners of war, their lot was still miserable even in the eighteenth century, although they were as a rule no longer killed, but were treated as criminals and used as objects of exploitation by being released only for ransom. Article 24 of the Treaty of Friendship, concluded in 1785 between the United States and Prussia, for the first time clearly indicated a change in the moral convictions on that matter. It prohibited the confinement of prisoners of war in convict prisons as well as the use of irons and stipulated their treatment as military personnel. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 as well as the Geneva Convention of 1929 laid down a detailed system of legal rules intended to assure humane treatment of prisoners of war.

From the same humanitarian concern with the life and sufferings of human beings exposed to the destructiveness of war emanate all the international treaties concluded since the mid-nineteenth century for the purpose of humanizing warfare. They prohibit the use of certain weapons, limit the use of others, define the rights and duties of neutrals — in short, they try to infuse into warfare a spirit of decency and of respect for the common humanity of all its prospective victims and to restrict violence to the minimum compatible with the goal of war, that is, breaking the enemy's will to resist. The Declaration of Paris of 1856 limited maritime warfare. The Declaration of St. Petersburg of 1868 prohibited the use of lightweight projectiles charged with explosives or inflammable substances. The Hague Declaration of 1899 prohibited the use of expanding (dumdum) bullets. A number of international conventions prohibited gas, chemical, and bacteriological warfare. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 codified the laws of war on land and sea and the rights and duties of neutrals. The London Protocol of 1936 limited the use of submarines against merchant vessels. And, in our times, attempts are being made to outlaw atomic warfare. All these efforts bear witness to the

[6] *Loc. cit.*, § X, XI.

virtually universal growth of a moral reluctance to use violence without limitation as an instrument of international politics.

There may be legal arguments against the validity or effectiveness of these international treaties, derived from the wholesale disregard or violations of their prohibitions. Yet this is no argument against the existence of a moral conscience which feels ill at ease in the presence of violence or, at least, certain kinds of violence on the international scene. The existence of such a conscience is attested to, on the one hand, by the attempts to bring the practice of states into harmony with moral principles through international agreements. On the other hand, it reveals itself in the general justifications and excuses defending alleged violations of these agreements in moral terms. Legal agreements of this kind are universally adhered to and nations try to live up to them, at least in a certain measure. Therefore, the protestations of innocence or of moral justification by which accusations in such matters are uniformly met are more than mere ideologies. They are the indirect recognition of certain moral limitations which most nations frequently violate while feeling they ought not to violate them.

c) Moral Condemnation of War

Finally, there is the attitude toward war itself which, since the turn of the century, has reflected an ever increasing awareness on the part of most statesmen of certain ethical limitations restricting the use of war as an instrument of international politics. Statesmen have decried the ravages of war and have justified their own participation in them in terms of self-defense or religious duty since the beginning of history. The avoidance of war itself, that is, of any war, has become an aim of statecraft only in the last half-century. The two Hague peace conferences of 1899 and 1907, the League of Nations of 1919, the Briand-Kellogg Pact of 1928 outlawing aggressive war, and the United Nations in our day — all have the avoidance of war as such as their ultimate objective.

At the foundation of these and other legal instruments and organizations, of which Part Six of this book will treat in detail, there is the conviction that war, and especially modern war, is not only a terrible thing to be avoided for reasons of expediency, but also an evil thing to be shunned on moral grounds. The student of the different collections of diplomatic documents concerning the origins of the First World War is struck by the hesitancy on the part of almost all responsible statesmen, with the exception perhaps of those of Vienna and St. Petersburg, to take steps which might irrevocably lead to war. This hesitancy and the almost general dismay among the statesmen when war finally proved to be inevitable contrasts sharply with the deliberate care with which, as late as the nineteenth century, wars were planned and incidents fabricated for the purpose of making war inevitable and placing the blame for starting it on the other side.

In the years preceding the Second World War the policies of the Western powers were animated, to their great political and military disadvantage, by the desire to avoid war at any price. This desire overrode all other considerations of national policy. It is especially in the refusal to consider seriously the

possibility of preventive war, regardless of its expediency from the point of view of the national interest, that the ethical condemnation of war as such has manifested itself in recent times in the Western world. When war comes, it must come as a natural catastrophe or as the evil deed of another nation, not as a foreseen and planned culmination of one's own foreign policy. Only thus might the moral scruples, rising from the violated ethical norm which holds that there ought to be no war at all, be stilled, if they can be stilled at all.

d) International Morality and Total War

Thus in contrast to antiquity and the better part of the Middle Ages, the modern age places moral limitations upon the conduct of foreign affairs in so far as they might affect the lives of individuals or groups of individuals. There are, however, factors in the present condition of mankind which point toward a definite weakening of those moral limitations. Let us remember that the absence of moral limitations with regard to the destruction of life was concomitant with the total character of warfare in which whole populations faced each other as personal enemies. Let us remember, too, that the gradual limitation of killing in war to certain groups and its subjection to certain conditions coincided with the gradual development of limited war in which only armies faced each other as active opponents. With war taking on in recent times, to an ever greater degree and in different respects, a total character, the moral limitations upon killing are observed to an ever lessening degree. Indeed, their very existence in the consciences of political and military leaders as well as of the common people becomes ever more precarious and is threatened with extinction.

War in our time has become total in four different respects: (1) with regard to the fraction of the population engaged in activities essential for the conduct of the war, (2) with regard to the fraction of the population affected by the conduct of the war, (3) with respect to the fraction of the population completely identified in its convictions and emotions with the conduct of the war, and (4) with respect to the objective of the war.

Mass armies supported by the productive effort of the majority of the civilian population have replaced the relatively small armies of previous centuries which consumed only a small portion of the national product. The success of the civilian population in keeping the armed forces supplied may be as important for the outcome of the war as the military effort itself. Therefore, the defeat of the civilian population — the breaking of its ability and will to produce — may be as important as the defeat of the armed forces — the breaking of their ability and will to resist. Thus the character of modern war, drawing its weapons from a vast industrial machine, blurs the distinction between soldier and civilian. The industrial worker, the farmer, the railroad engineer, and the scientist are not innocent bystanders cheering on the armed forces from the sidelines. They are as intrinsic and indispensable a part of the military organization as the soldiers, sailors, and airmen. Thus a modern nation at war must wish to disrupt and destroy the productive processes of its enemy, and the modern technology of war provides the means for the realization of that desire. The importance of civilian production for

modern war and the interest in injuring enemy production were already generally recognized in the First World War. Then, however, the technological means of affecting the civilian productive processes directly were only in their infancy. The belligerents had to resort to indirect means, such as blockades and submarine warfare. They attempted to interfere directly with civilian life through air attacks and long-range bombardment only sporadically and with indifferent results.

The Second World War has made the latter methods of direct interference the most effective instrument for the destruction of a nation's productive capacity. The interest in the mass destruction of civilian life and property coincided with the ability to carry such mass destruction through, and this combination has been too strong for the moral convictions of the modern world to resist. Voicing the moral convictions of the first decades of the century, Secretary of State Cordell Hull declared on June 11, 1938, with reference to the bombardment of Canton by Japan, that the administration disapproved of the sale of aircraft and aircraft armaments to countries which had engaged in the bombing of civilian populations. In his speech of December 2, 1939, President Roosevelt declared a similar moral embargo against the Soviet Union in view of its military operations against Finnish civilians. Only a few years later all belligerents engaged in practices of this kind on a scale dwarfing those which American statesmen had condemned on moral grounds. Warsaw and Rotterdam, London and Coventry, Cologne and Nuremberg, Hiroshima and Nagasaki are stepping-stones, not only in the development of the modern technology of war, but also in the development of the modern morality of warfare.

The national interest, as created by the character of modern war, and the possibility of satisfying that interest, as presented by the modern technology of warfare, have had a deteriorating effect upon the moral limitations of international policies. This deterioration is further accentuated by the emotional involvement of the great masses of the warring populations in modern war. As the religious wars of the latter sixteenth and of the first half of the seventeenth centuries were followed by the dynastic wars of the latter seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and as the latter yielded to the national wars of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, so war in our time tends to revert to the religious type by becoming ideological in character. The citizen of a modern warring nation, in contrast to his ancestors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, does not fight for the glory of his prince or the unity and greatness of his nation, but for an "ideal," a set of "principles," a "way of life," for which he claims a monopoly of truth and virtue. In consequence, he fights to the death or to "unconditional surrender" all those who adhere to another, a false and evil, "ideal" and "way of life." Since it is the latter which he fights in whatever persons they manifest themselves, the distinctions between fighting and disabled soldiers, combatants and civilians — if they are not eliminated altogether — are subordinated to the one distinction which really matters: the distinction between the representatives of the right and the wrong philosophy and way of life. The moral duty to spare the wounded, the sick, the surrendering and unarmed enemy, and to respect him as a human being who was an enemy only by virtue of being found on the other side of the

fence, is superseded by the moral duty to punish and to wipe off the face of the earth the professors and practitioners of evil.

Under the impact of this fundamental change in the conception of warfare, not only were the moral limitations upon killing in war, to which we have referred above, extensively violated during the Second World War, but there has developed a tendency to justify on moral grounds the refusal to take prisoners, the killing of prisoners, and the indiscriminate killing of members of the armed forces and of civilians, and thus to assuage one's moral scruples, if not to shake them off altogether. Thus, while the moral limitations upon killing in times of peace in support of international policies remain intact today, the moral limitations upon killing in war have proved to be largely ineffective in our time. What is more important for the purposes of our present discussion, they have shown a tendency under the impact of a fundamentally altered conception of war to weaken and disappear altogether as rules of conduct.

More than half a century ago, in an era of general optimism, a great scholar clearly foresaw the possibility of this development and analyzed its elements. John Westlake, Whewell Professor of International Law at the University of Cambridge, wrote in 1894:

> It is almost a truism to say that the mitigation of war must depend on the parties to it feeling that they belong to a larger whole than their respective tribes or states, a whole in which the enemy too is comprised, so that duties arising out of that larger citizenship are owed even to him. This sentiment has never been wholly wanting in Europe since the commencement of historical times, but there have been great variations in the nature and extent of the whole to which the wider attachment was felt. . . . In our own time there is a cosmopolitan sentiment, a belief in a commonwealth of mankind similar to that of the Stoics, but stronger because the soil has been prepared by Christianity, and by the mutual respect which great states tolerably equal in power and similar in civilization cannot help feeling for one another. . . . There have been periods during which the level has fallen, and one such period it belongs to our subject to notice. The wars of religion which followed the Reformation were among the most terrible in which the beast in man ever broke loose, and yet they occurred in an age of comparative enlightenment. Zeal for a cause, however worthy the cause may be, is one of the strongest and most dangerous irritants to which human passion is subject; and the tie of Protestant to Protestant and of Catholic to Catholic, cutting across the state tie instead of embracing it unweakened in a more comprehensive one, enfeebled the ordinary checks to passion when they were most wanted. Such a degradation of war would tend to recur if socialism attained to the consistency and power of a militant creed, and met the present idea of the state on the field of battle. It is possible that we might then see in war a license equal to that which anarchism shows us in peace! [7]

[7] *Chapters on the Principles of International Law* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1894), pp. 267 ff.

2. UNIVERSAL MORALITY VS. NATIONALISTIC UNIVERSALISM

The deterioration of moral limitations in international politics which has occurred in recent years with regard to the protection of life is only a special instance of a general and, for the purposes of this discussion, much more far-reaching dissolution of an ethical system which in the past imposed its restraints upon the day-by-day operations of the foreign office, but does so no longer. Two factors have brought about this dissolution: the substitution of democratic for aristocratic responsibility in foreign affairs and the substitution of nationalistic standards of action for universal ones.

a) Personal Ethics of the Aristocratic International

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and to a lessening degree up to the First World War, international morality was the concern of a personal sovereign, that is, an individually determined prince and his successors, and of a relatively small, cohesive, and homogeneous group of aristocratic rulers. The prince and the aristocratic rulers of a particular nation were in constant intimate contact with the princes and aristocratic rulers of other nations. They were joined together by family ties, a common language (which was French), common cultural values, a common style of life, and common moral convictions about what a gentleman was and was not allowed to do in his relations with another gentleman, whether of his own or of a foreign nation. The princes competing for power considered themselves to be competitors in a game whose rules were accepted by all the other competitors. The members of their diplomatic and military services looked upon themselves as employees who served their employer either by virtue of the accident of birth, reinforced often, but by no means always, by a sense of personal loyalty to the monarch, or because of the promise of pay, influence, and glory which he held out to them.

The desire for material gain especially provided for the members of this aristocratic society a common bond which was stronger than the ties of dynastic or national loyalty. Thus it was proper and common for a government to pay the foreign minister or diplomat of another country a pension. Lord Robert Cecil, the Minister of Elizabeth, received one from Spain. Sir Henry Wotton, British Ambassador to Venice in the seventeenth century, accepted one from Savoy while applying for one from Spain. The documents which the French revolutionary government published in 1793 show that France subsidized Austrian statesmen between 1757 and 1769 to the tune of 82,652,479 livres, with the Austrian Chancellor Kaunitz receiving 100,000. Nor was it regarded any less proper or less usual for a government to compensate foreign statesmen for their co-operation in the conclusion of treaties. In 1716, French Cardinal Dubois offered British Minister Stanhope 600,000 livres for an alliance with France. He reported that, while not accepting the proposition at that time, Stanhope "listened graciously without being displeased." After the conclusion of the Treaty of Basel of 1795, by which Prussia with-

drew from the war against France, Prussian Minister Hardenberg received from the French government valuables worth 30,000 francs and complained of the insignificance of the gift. In 1801, the Margrave of Baden spent 500,000 francs in the form of "diplomatic presents," of which French Foreign Minister Talleyrand received 150,000. It was originally intended to give him only 100,000, but the amount was increased after it had become known that he had received from Prussia a snuffbox worth 66,000 francs as well as 100,000 francs in cash.

The Prussian Ambassador in Paris summed up well the main rule of this game when he reported to his government in 1802: "Experience has taught everybody who is here on diplomatic business that one ought never to give anything before the deal is definitely closed, but it has also proved that the allurement of gain will often work wonders."

However much transactions of this kind were lacking in nobility, those participating in them could not be passionately devoted to the cause of the countries whose interests were in their care. Obviously they had loyalties besides and above the one to the country which employed them. Furthermore, the expectation of material gain at the conclusion of a treaty could not fail to act as a powerful incentive for coming speedily to an understanding with the other side. Stalemates, adjournments *sine die,* and long-drawn-out wars were not likely to find favor with statesmen who had a very personal stake in the conclusion of treaties. In these two respects the commercialization of statecraft in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was bound to blunt the edge of international controversies and confine the aspirations for power of individual nations within relatively narrow limits.

In that period of history the Austrian Ambassador to France felt more at home at the court of Versailles than among his own nonaristocratic compatriots. He had closer social and moral ties with the members of the French aristocracy and the other aristocratic members of the diplomatic corps than with the Austrians of humble origin. Consequently, the diplomatic and military personnel fluctuated to a not inconsiderable degree from one monarchical employer to another. It was not rare that a French diplomat or officer, for some reason of self-interest, would enter the services of the King of Prussia and would further the international objectives of Prussia, or fight in the Prussian Army, against France. During the eighteenth century there was, for instance, an enormous influx of Germans into all branches of the Russian government, many of whom were dismissed in a kind of purge and returned to their countries of origin.

In 1756, shortly before the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, Frederick the Great sent the Scottish Earl Marischall as his Ambassador to Spain in order to get information about the Spanish intentions. The Scottish Ambassador of Prussia had a friend in Spain, an Irishman by the name of Wall, who happened to be Spanish Foreign Minister and who told him what he wanted to know. The Scot transmitted this information to the British Prime Minister who, in turn, passed it on to the King of Prussia. As late as 1792, shortly before the outbreak of the War of the First Coalition against France, the French government offered the supreme command of the French forces to the Duke of Brunswick who, however, decided to accept an offer from the King of

Prussia to lead the Prussian Army against France. As late as 1815, at the Congress of Vienna, Alexander I of Russia had as ministers and advisers in foreign affairs two Germans, one Greek, one Corsican, one Swiss, one Pole — and one Russian.

Bismarck's experience in 1862, on the occasion of his recall as Prussian Ambassador to Russia is significant for the persistence of this international cohesion of the aristocracy. When he expressed to the Czar his regret at the necessity of leaving St. Petersburg, the Czar, misunderstanding this remark, asked Bismarck whether he was inclined to enter the Russian diplomatic service. Bismarck reported in his memoirs that he declined the offer "courteously." [8] What is important and significant for the purposes of our discussion is not that Bismarck declined the offer — many such offers have certainly been declined before and perhaps a few even after — but that he did so "courteously," and that even his report, written more than thirty years after the event, showed no trace of moral indignation. Only half a century ago the offer to an ambassador, who had just been appointed prime minister, to transfer his loyalties from one country to another was considered by the recipient as a sort of business proposition which did not at all insinuate the violation of moral standards.

Let us imagine that a similar offer were being made in our time by Mr. Stalin to the American Ambassador or by the American President to any diplomat accredited in Washington, and let us visualize the private embarrassment of the individual concerned and the public indignation following the incident, and we have the measure of the profundity of the change which has transformed the ethics of international politics in recent times. Today such an offer would be regarded as an invitation to treason, that is, the violation of the most fundamental of all moral obligations in international affairs: loyalty to one's own country. When it was made and even when it was reported shortly before the close of the nineteenth century, it was a proposition to be accepted or rejected on its merits without any lack of moral propriety attaching to it.

The moral standards of conduct with which the international aristocracy complied were of necessity of a supranational character. They applied not to all Prussians, Austrians, or Frenchmen, but to all men who by virtue of their birth and education were able to comprehend them and to act in accordance with them. It was in the concept and the rules of natural law that this cosmopolitan society found the source of its precepts of morality. The individual members of this society, therefore, felt themselves to be personally responsible for compliance with those moral rules of conduct; for it was to them as rational human beings, as individuals, that this moral code was addressed. When it was suggested to Louis XV that he counterfeit the bills of the Bank of England, the King rejected such a proposition which "could be considered here only with all the indignation and all the horror which it deserves." When a similar proposition was made in 1792 with respect to the French currency in order to save Louis XVI, the Austrian Emperor Francis II declared that "such an infamous project is not to be accepted."

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[8] *Loc. cit.,* I, 341.

This sense of a highly personal moral obligation to be met by those in charge of foreign affairs with regard to their colleagues in other countries explains the emphasis with which the writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries counseled the monarch to safeguard his "honor" and his "reputation" as his most precious possessions. Any action which Louis XV undertook on the international scene was his personal act in which his personal sense of moral obligation revealed itself and in which, therefore, his personal honor was engaged. A violation of his moral obligations, as they were recognized by his fellow-monarchs for themselves, would call into action not only his conscience, but also the spontaneous reactions of the supranational aristocratic society which would make him pay for the violation of its mores with a loss of prestige, that is, a loss of power.

b) Destruction of International Morality

When in the course of the nineteenth century democratic selection and responsibility of government officials replaced government by the aristocracy, the structure of international society and, with it, of international morality underwent a fundamental change. Until virtually the end of the nineteenth century, aristocratic rulers were responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs in most countries. In the new age their place has been taken by officials elected or appointed regardless of class distinctions. These officials are legally and morally responsible for their official acts not to a monarch, that is, a specific individual, but to a collectivity, that is, a parliamentary majority, or the people as a whole. An important shift in public opinion may easily call for a change in the personnel making foreign policy. They will be replaced by another group of individuals taken from whatever group of the population prevails at the moment.

Government officials are no longer exclusively recruited from aristocratic groups, but from virtually the whole population. The present American Secretary of State is a former general. The French Foreign Minister is a former college professor. The former General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union has taken the place of the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. A former professional revolutionary is responsible for Russian foreign policy.

In countries such as Great Britain, France, or Italy, where the government needs the support of a majority of parliament for its continuation in office, any change in the parliamentary majority necessitates a change in the composition of the government. Even in a country such as the United States, where not Congress, but only general elections can put an administration into office or remove it, the turnover of the policy-makers in the State Department is considerably enough. Within eighteen months, from July 1945, to January 1947, the United States has had three secretaries of state. Of all the policy-making officials of the State Department, that is, the under-secretary and the assistant secretaries, who held office in October 1945, none was still in office two years later. The fluctuation of the policy-makers in international affairs and their responsibility to an indefinite collective entity has far-reaching con-

sequences for the effectiveness, nay, for the very existence of an international moral order.

This transformation within the individual nations changed international morality as a system of moral restraints from a reality into a mere figure of speech. When we say that George III of England was subject to certain moral restraints in his dealings with Louis XVI of France or Catharine the Great of Russia, we are referring to something real, something which can be identified with the conscience and the actions of certain specific individuals. When we say that the British Commonwealth of Nations or even Great Britain alone has moral obligations toward the United States or France, we are making use of a fiction. By virtue of this fiction international law deals with nations as though they were individual persons, but nothing in the sphere of moral obligations corresponds to this legal concept. Whatever the conscience of George VI as the constitutional head of the British Commonwealth and of Great Britain demands of the conduct of the foreign affairs of Great Britain and of the Commonwealth is irrelevant for the actual conduct of those affairs; for George VI is not responsible for those affairs and has no actual influence upon them. What of the Prime Ministers, and the Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs of Great Britain and of the Dominions? They are but members of the cabinet, which as a collective body determines foreign policy, as any other policy, by majority decision. The cabinet as a whole is politically responsible to the majority party whose political preferences it is supposed to translate into political action. It is legally responsible to Parliament of which it is, constitutionally speaking, only a committee. Parliament, however, is responsible to the electorate from which it has received the mandate to govern and from which its individual members hope to receive another mandate at the next general election.

The individual members of the electorate, finally, may have no moral convictions of a supranational character at all which determine their actions on election day and in between, or, if they have such convictions, they will be most heterogeneous in content. In other words, there will be those who act according to the moral maxim, "Right or wrong — my country." There will be those who apply to their own actions with regard to international affairs as well as to the actions of the government the standard of Christian ethics. There will be those who apply the standard of the United Nations or of world government or of humanitarian ethics. The fluctuating members of the policy-making group or of the permanent bureaucracy of the Foreign Office may or may not reflect these and similar divisions of opinion. In any case, the reference to a moral rule of conduct requires an individual conscience from which it emanates, and there is no individual conscience from which what we call the international morality of Great Britain or of any other nation could emanate.

An individual statesman may follow the dictates of his own conscience with regard to international affairs. If he does, it is to him as an individual that these moral convictions are attributed and not to the nation to which he belongs and in whose name he may even actually speak. Thus, when Lord Morley and John Burns felt that the participation of Great Britain in the First World War was incompatible with their moral convictions, they resigned

from the British cabinet. This was their personal act and those were their personal convictions. When at the same moment the German Chancellor admitted as head of the German government the illegality and immorality of the violation of Belgium's neutrality, justified only by a state of necessity, he spoke for himself only. The voice of his conscience could not be and was not identified with the conscience of the collectivity called Germany. The moral principles which guided Laval as French Minister of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister were his, not those of France, and nobody pretended the latter to be the case.

Moral rules have their seat in the consciences of individual men. Government by clearly identifiable men, who can be held personally accountable for their acts, is, therefore, the precondition for the existence of an effective system of international ethics. Where responsibility for government is widely distributed among a great number of individuals with different conceptions as to what is morally required in international affairs, or with no such conceptions at all, international morality as an effective system of restraints upon international policy becomes impossible. It is for this reason that Dean Roscoe Pound could say as far back as 1923: "It might be maintained plausibly, that a moral . . . order among states, was nearer attainment in the middle of the eighteenth century than it is today." [9]

c) Destruction of International Society

While the democratic selection and responsibility of government officials destroyed international morality as an effective system of restraints, nationalism destroyed the international society itself within which that morality had operated. The French Revolution of 1789 marks the beginning of the new epoch of history which witnesses the gradual decline of the cosmopolitan aristocratic society and of the restraining influence of its morality upon international politics. Says Professor G. P. Gooch:

> While patriotism is as old as the instinct of human association, nationalism as an articulate creed issued from the volcanic fires of the French Revolution. The tide of battle turned at Valmy; and on the evening after the skirmish Goethe . . . replied to a request for his opinion in the historic words, "From to-day begins a new era, and you will be able to say that you were present at its birth." [10]

It was a slow process of corrosion with the old order resisting valiantly, as illustrated by the Holy Alliance and incidents such as the one discussed above when as late as 1862 the Russian Czar invited Bismarck to enter the Russian diplomatic service.[11] Yet the decline of the international society and its morality, which had united the monarchs and the nobility of Christendom, is unmistakable toward the end of the nineteenth century. It has nowhere become more painfully patent than in the theatrical hollowness of William II's

[9] Philosophical Theory and International Law, *Bibliotheca Visseriana* (Leyden, 1923), I, 74.
[10] *Studies in Diplomacy and Statecraft* (London, New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, 1942), pp. 300, 301.
[11] See above, p. 186.

verbal attempts at reviving it. He wrote to the Russian Czar in 1895, with regard to the French:

> The Republicans are revolutionists *de natura*. The blood of Their Majesties is still on that country. Has it since then ever been happy or quiet again? Has it not staggered from bloodshed to bloodshed? Nicky, take my word on it, the curse of God has stricken that people forever. We Christian Kings and Emperors have one holy duty imposed on us by Heaven, that is to uphold the principle of By the Grace of God.

And the anachronism of William II's still-born plan, conceived on the eve of the Spanish-American War, to unite the European powers in support of the Spanish monarchy against the American republic, dismayed his advisers.

But even in 1914, on the eve of the First World War, there is in many of the statements and dispatches of statesmen and diplomats a melancholy undertone of regret that individuals who had so much in common should now be compelled to separate and identify themselves with the warring groups on the different sides of the frontiers. This, however, was only a feeble reminiscence which no longer had the power to influence the actions of men. By then, these men had naturally less in common with each other than they had with the respective peoples from which they had risen to the heights of power and whose will and interests they represented in their relations with other nations. What separated the French Foreign Minister from his opposite number in Berlin was much more important than what united them. Conversely, what united the French Foreign Minister with the French nation was much more important than anything which might set him apart from it. The place of the one international society to which all members of the different governing groups belonged and which provided a common framework for the different national societies had been taken by the national societies themselves. The national societies now gave to their representatives on the international scene the standards of conduct which the international society had formerly supplied.

When, in the course of the nineteenth century, this fragmentation of the aristocratic international society into its national segments was well on its way to consummation, the protagonists of nationalism were convinced that this development would strengthen the bonds of international morality rather than weaken them. For they believed that, once the national aspirations of the liberated peoples were satisfied and aristocratic rule replaced by popular government, nothing could divide the nations of the earth. Conscious of being members of the same humanity and inspired by the same ideals of freedom, tolerance, and peace, they would pursue their national destinies in harmony. Actually the spirit of nationalism, once it had materialized in national states, proved to be not universalistic and humanitarian, but particularistic and exclusive. When the international society of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was destroyed, it became obvious that there was nothing to take the place of that unifying and restraining element which had been a real society superimposed upon the particular national societies. The international solidarity of the working class under the banner of socialism proved to be an illusion. Organized religion tended to identify itself with

the national state rather than to transcend it. Thus the nation became the ultimate point of reference for the allegiance of the individual, and the members of the different nations all had their own particular object of allegiance.

We have in Lord Keynes's portrait of Clemenceau a vivid sketch of this new morality of nationalism:

> He felt about France what Pericles felt of Athens — unique value in her, nothing else mattering. . . . He had one illusion — France; and one disillusion — mankind, including Frenchmen, and his colleages not least. . . . Nations are real things, of whom you love one and feel for the rest indifference — or hatred. The glory of the nation you love is a desirable end — but generally to be obtained at your neighbor's expense. Prudence required some measure of lip-service to the "ideals" of foolish Americans and hypocritical Englishmen, but it would be stupid to believe that there is much room in the world, as it really is, for such affairs as the League of Nations, or any sense in the principle of self-determination except as an ingenious formula for rearranging the balance of power in one's own interests.[12]

This fragmentation of a formerly cohesive international society into a multiplicity of morally self-sufficient national communities, which have ceased to operate within a common framework of moral precepts, is but the outward symptom of the profound change which in recent times has transformed the relations between universal moral precepts and the particular systems of national ethics. The transformation has proceeded in two different ways. It has weakened, to the point of ineffectiveness, the universal, supranational moral rules of conduct, which before the age of nationalism had imposed a system — however precarious and wide-meshed — of limitations upon the international policies of individual nations, and it has finally endowed, in the minds and aspirations of individual nations, their particular national systems of ethics with universal validity.

d) Victory of Nationalism over Internationalism

The crucial test of the vitality of a moral system occurs when its control of the consciences and actions of men is challenged by another system of morality. Thus the relative strength of the ethics of humility and self-denial of the Sermon on the Mount and of the ethics of self-advancement and power of modern Western society is determined by the extent to which either system of morality is able to mold the actions or at least the consciences of men in accordance with its precepts. Every human being, in so far as he is responsive to ethical appeals at all, is from time to time confronted with such a conflict of conscience, which tests the relative strength of conflicting moral commands. A similar test must determine the respective strength, with regard to the conduct of foreign affairs, of the supranational ethics and the ethics of nationalism. To the supranational ethics, composed of Christian, cosmopolitan, and humanitarian elements, the diplomatic language of the time pays its tribute and many individual writers postulate it. But the ethics of nationalism have been on the ascendancy throughout the world for the last century and a half.

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[12] *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1920), pp. 32, 33.

Now it is indeed true that national ethics, as formulated in the philosophy of reason of state of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or in the concept of the national interest of the nineteenth and twentieth, has in most conflict situations proved itself to be superior to universal moral rules of conduct. This is obvious from a consideration of the most elemental and also the most important conflict situation of this kind, the one between the universal ethical precept, "Thou shalt not kill," and the command of a particular national ethics. "Thou shalt kill under certain conditions the enemies of thy country." The individual to whom these two moral rules of conduct are addressed is confronted with a conflict between his allegiance to humanity as a whole, manifesting itself in the respect for human life as such, irrespective of nationality or any other particular characteristic, and his loyalty to a particular nation whose interests he is called upon to promote at the price of the lives of the members of another nation. Most individuals today and during all of modern history have resolved this conflict in favor of loyalty to the nation. In this respect, however, three factors distinguish the present age from previous ones.

First, there is the enormously increased ability of the nation-state to exert moral compulsion upon its members. This ability is the result partly of the almost divine prestige which the nation enjoys in our time, partly of the control over the instruments molding public opinion which economic and technological developments have put at the disposal of the state.

Second, there is the extent to which loyalty to the nation requires the individual to disregard universal moral rules of conduct. The modern technology of war has given the individual opportunities for mass destruction unknown to previous ages. Today a nation may ask one single individual to destroy the lives of hundreds of thousands of people by dropping one atomic bomb. The compliance with a demand of such enormous consequences demonstrates the weakness of supranational ethics more impressively than the limited violations of universal standards, committed in pre-atomic times, were able to.

Finally, there is today, in consequence of the two other factors, much less chance for the individual to be loyal to supranational ethics when they are in conflict with the moral demands of the nation. The individual, faced with the enormity of the deeds which he is asked to commit in the name of the nation, and with the overwhelming weight of moral pressure which the nation exerts upon him, would require almost superhuman moral strength to resist those demands. The magnitude of the infractions of universal ethics committed on behalf of the nation and of the moral compulsion exerted in favor of them affects the qualitative relationship of the two systems of ethics. It puts in bold relief the desperate weakness of universal ethics in its conflict with the morality of the nation and decides the conflict in favor of the nation before it has really started.

e) Transformation of Nationalism

It is at this point that this hopeless impotence of universal ethics becomes an important factor in bringing about a significant and far-reaching change in

the relations between supranational and national systems of morality. It is one of the factors which lead to the identification of both.[13] The individual comes to realize that the flouting of universal standards of morality is not the handiwork of a few wicked men, but the inevitable outgrowth of the conditions under which nations exist and pursue their aims. He experiences in his own conscience the feebleness of universal standards and the preponderance of national ethics as forces motivating the actions of men on the international scene, and his conscience does not cease being ill at ease.

Although the continuous discomfort of a perpetually uneasy conscience is too much for him to bear, he is too strongly attached to the concept of universal ethics to give it up altogether. Thus he identifies the morality of his own nation with the commands of supranational ethics. He pours, as it were, the contents of his national morality into the now almost empty bottle of universal ethics. So each nation comes to know again a universal morality, that is, its own national morality, which is taken to be the one which all the other nations ought to accept as their own. Instead of the universality of an ethics to which all nations adhere, we end up with the particularity of national ethics which claims the right to, and aspires toward, universal recognition. There are then as many ethical codes claiming universality as there are politically active nations.

Nations no longer oppose each other, as they did from the Treaty of Westphalia to the Napoleonic Wars and then again from the end of the latter to the First World War, within a framework of shared beliefs and common values, which imposes effective limitations upon the ends and means of their struggle for power. They oppose each other now as the standard-bearers of ethical systems, each of them of national origin and each of them claiming and aspiring to provide a supranational framework of moral standards which all the other nations ought to accept and within which their international policies ought to operate. The moral code of one nation flings the challenge of its universal claim into the face of another which reciprocates in kind. Compromise, the virtue of the old diplomacy, becomes the treason of the new; for the mutual accommodation of conflicting claims, possible or legitimate within a common framework of moral standards, amounts to surrender when the moral standards themselves are the stakes of the conflict. Thus the stage is set for a contest among nations whose stakes are no longer their relative positions within a political and moral system accepted by all, but the ability to impose upon the other contestants a new universal political and moral system recreated in the image of the victorious nation's political and moral convictions.

The first inkling of this development from one genuinely universal to a multiplicity of particular moral systems claiming, and competing for, universality can be detected in the contest between Napoleon and the nations allied against him. On both sides the contest was fought in the name of particular principles claiming universal validity: here the principles of the French Revolution, there the principle of legitimacy. However, with the defeat of Napoleon and the failure of the Holy Alliance to uphold its principles in

13. For other factors, see below, pp. 304, 305.

competition with the rising movement of nationalism, this attempt at erecting a particular code of ethics into a universal one came to an end and thus remained a mere historic interlude.

The present period of history in which generally and, as it seems, permanently universal moral rules of conduct are replaced by particular ones claiming universality was ushered in by Woodrow Wilson's war "to make the world safe for democracy." It is not by accident and it has deep significance that those who shared Wilson's philosophy called that war also a "crusade" for democracy. The First World War, as seen from Wilson's perspective, has indeed this in common with the Crusades of the Middle Ages: it was waged for the purpose of making one moral system, held by one group, prevail in the rest of the world. A few months after the democratic crusade had gotten under way, in October 1917, the foundations were laid in Russia for another moral and political structure which on its part, while accepted only by a fraction of humanity, was claimed to provide the common roof under which all humankind would eventually live together in justice and in peace. While, in the twenties, this latter claim was supported by insufficient power and, hence, was little more than a theoretical postulate, democratic universalism retired from the scene of active politics and isolationism took its place. It was only in the theoretical challenge which the priests of the new Marxian universalism flung in the face of the democratic world and in the moral, political, and economic ostracism with which the latter met the challenge that the conflict between the two universalisms made itself felt at that time in the field of international politics.

In the thirties the philosophy of nazism, grown in the soil of a particular nation, proclaimed itself the new moral code which would replace the vicious creed of bolshevism and the decadent morality of democracy and would impose itself upon mankind. The Second World War, viewed in the light of our present discussion, tested in the form of an armed conflict the validity of this claim of nazism to universality, and nazism lost the test. Yet, in the minds of many on the side of the United Nations, the principles of the Atlantic Charter and of the Declaration of Yalta made the Second World War also a contest for universal democracy, and democracy, too, lost the test. With the termination of the Second World War the two remaining moral and political systems claiming universal validity, democracy and communism, entered into active competition for the dominion of the world, and that is the situation in which we find ourselves today.

It would be the most dangerous of illusions to overlook or even to belittle the depth of the difference which exists between that situation and the condition of the modern state system from the end of the religious wars to the entrance of the United States into the First World War. One needs only to pick at random any conflict which occurred in that latter period, with the exception of the Napoleonic Wars, and compare it with the conflicts which have torn the world apart in the last three decades in order to realize the importance of that difference.

Let us compare with the international issues of our time the issues which brought France and the Hapsburgs into almost continual conflict from the beginning of the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, or which

pitted Great Britain and Prussia against France in the eighteenth century. These issues were territorial aggrandizement and dynastic competition. What was then at stake was an increase or decrease of glory, wealth, and power. Neither the Austrian nor the British nor the French nor the Prussian "way of life," that is, their system of beliefs and ethical convictions, was at stake. This is exactly what is at stake today. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, none of the contestants on the international scene aspired to impose its own particular system of ethics, provided it had one, upon the others. The very possibility of such an aspiration never occurred to them, since they were aware only of one universal moral code to which they all gave unquestioning allegiance.

That common "system of arts, and laws, and manners," "the same level of politeness and cultivation," and the "sense of honour and justice," which Gibbon had detected in "the general manners of the times" and which for Fénelon, Rousseau, and Vattel were a lived and living reality,[14] have today in the main become a historic reminiscence, lingering on in learned treatises, utopian tracts, and diplomatic documents, but no longer capable of moving men to action. Only shreds and fragments survive of this system of supranational ethics which exerts its restraining influence upon international politics, as we have seen, only in isolated instances, such as killing in peacetime and preventive war. As for the influence of that system of supranational ethics upon the conscience of the actors on the international scene, it is rather like the feeble rays, barely visible above the horizon of consciousness, of a sun which has already set. Since the First World War, with ever increasing intensity and generality, each of the contestants in the international arena claims in its "way of life" to possess the whole truth of morality and politics which the others may reject only at their peril. With fierce exclusiveness all contestants equate their national conceptions of morality with what all mankind must and will ultimately accept and live by. In this, the ethics of international politics reverts to the politics and morality of tribalism, of the Crusades, and of the religious wars.[15]

However much the content and objectives of today's ethics of nationalistic universalism may differ from those of primitive tribes or of the Thirty Years' War, they do not differ in the function which they fulfill for international politics, and in the moral climate which they create. The morality of the particular group, far from limiting the struggle for power on the international

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14 See the references above, pp. 160, 161.
15 To what extent the profession of universalistic principles of morality can go hand in hand with utter depravity in action is clearly demonstrated in the case of Timur, the Mongol would-be conqueror of the world, who in the fourteenth century conquered and destroyed Southern Asia and Asia Minor. After having killed hundreds of thousands of people — on December 12, 1398, he massacred 100,000 Hindu prisoners before Delhi — for the glory of God and of Mohammedanism, he said to a representative of conquered Aleppo: "I am not a man of blood; and God is my witness that in all my wars I have never been the aggressor, and that my enemies have always been the authors of their own calamity."

Gibbon, who reports this statement, adds: "During this peaceful conversation the streets of Aleppo streamed with blood, and re-echoed with the cries of mothers and children, with the shrieks of violated virgins. The rich plunder that was abandoned to his soldiers might stimulate their avarice; but their cruelty was enforced by the peremptory command of producing an adequate number of heads, which, according to his custom, were curiously piled in columns and pyramids. . . ." *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Modern Library Edition), II, 1243.

scene, gives that struggle a ferociousness and intensity not known to other ages. For the claim to universality which inspires the moral code of one particular group is incompatible with the identical claim of another group; the world has room for only one, and the other must yield or be destroyed. Thus, carrying their idols before them, the nationalistic masses of our time meet in the international arena, each group convinced that it executes the mandate of history, that it does for humanity what it seems to do for itself, and that it fulfills a sacred mission ordained by providence, however defined.

Little do they know that they meet under an empty sky from which the gods have departed.

CHAPTER XV

World Public Opinion

Little need be said about world public opinion which is not already implicit in the discussion of the preceding chapter. Yet the warning with which we started the discussion of international morality must here be repeated with special emphasis. We are here concerned with the actuality of world public opinion. We want to know of what it consists, how it manifests itself, what functions it fulfills in the field of international politics, and, more particularly, in what ways it imposes restraints upon the struggle for power on the international scene. There is, however, hardly a concept in the modern literature of international affairs which, in the last three decades, has been employed by statesmen and writers with greater effusiveness and less analytical precision than the concept of world public opinion.

World public opinion was supposed to be the foundation for the League of Nations. It was to be the enforcement agency for the Briand-Kellogg Pact, the decisions of the Permanent Court of International Justice, and international law in general. "The great weapon we rely upon," declared Lord Robert Cecil in the House of Commons on July 21, 1919, "is public opinion . . . and if we are wrong about it, then the whole thing is wrong."[1] As late as April 17, 1939, less than five months before the outbreak of the Second World War, Cordell Hull, then American Secretary of State, maintained that "a public opinion, the most potent of all forces for peace, is more strongly developing throughout the world."[2] Today we hear that world public opinion will use the United Nations as its instrument, or vice versa. *Life*, in an editorial "United Nations: A Balance Sheet," says that "The Charter relies heavily on a well-informed world opinion. The concept of U.N. as a forum, where international differences can be aired in public and judged by the public, has been thoroughly validated by events."[3] The General Assembly of the United Nations, in particular, is declared to be "the open conscience of the world."[4] In a report published in 1947 under the title *Security under the United Nations* the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace declares:

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[1] *The Parliamentary Debates: Official Report.* Fifth Series. Vol. 118. House of Commons, p. 992.

[2] *New York Times*, April 18, 1939, p. 2.

[3] September 15, 1947, p. 40.

[4] Leland M. Goodrich and Edward Hambro, *Charter of the United Nations* (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1946), p. 95.

"We appeal for a world public opinion in support of the United Nations." Yet the *New York Times* goes so far as to state as a matter of fact that the Assembly of the United Nations "has considerable reserve powers under the Charter . . . at least to the extent of mobilizing world opinion, which, in the last analysis, determines the international balance of power." [5]

Two all-important questions must be answered before the possible meaning of these and innumerable similar assertions and appeals can be ascertained: What do we mean when we speak of world public opinion, and how does this world public opinion manifest itself under the moral and social conditions of the mid-twentieth century?

World public opinion is obviously a public opinion which transcends national boundaries and which unites members of different nations in a consensus with regard to at least certain fundamental international issues. This consensus makes itself felt in spontaneous reactions throughout the world against whatever move on the chessboard of international politics is disapproved by that consensus. Whenever the government of any nation proclaims a certain policy or takes a certain action on the international scene, which contravenes the opinion of mankind, humanity will rise regardless of national affiliations and at least try to impose its will through spontaneous sanctions upon the recalcitrant government. The latter, then, finds itself in about the same position as an individual or a group of individuals who have violated the mores of their national society or of one of its subdivisions and are by society's pressure either compelled to conform with its standards or be ostracized.

If such is the meaning of the common references to world public opinion, does such a world public opinion exist at present and does it exert a restraining influence upon the international policies of national governments? The answer is bound to be in the negative. Modern history has not recorded one instance of a government having been deterred from a certain international policy by the spontaneous reaction of a supranational public opinion. There have been attempts in recent history at mobilizing world public opinion against the foreign policy of a certain government — the Japanese aggressions against China since 1931, the German foreign policies since 1935, the Italian attack against Ethiopia in 1936. Yet, even if one supposed for the sake of argument that these attempts were successful in a certain measure and that a world public opinion actually existed in those instances, it certainly had no restraining effect upon the policies it opposed. But the supposition itself, as we shall see, is not supported by facts.

The reason why an affirmative answer is being given so often to these questions is to be found in the misinterpretation of two factors which, actually present in the international situation, point to the possible development of a world public opinion, and in the neglect of a third one which at present makes such a development impossible. The two factors from which the mistaken belief in the existence of a world public opinion originates are the common experience of certain psychological traits and elemental aspirations which unite all mankind, and the technological unification of the world. What has

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[5] November 15, 1947, p. 16.

been neglected is the fact that everywhere in the world public opinion with regard to international affairs is molded by the agencies of national policies. These agencies, as pointed out previously,[6] claim for their national conceptions of morality supranational, that is, universal recognition.

I. PSYCHOLOGICAL UNITY OF THE WORLD

There is at the bottom of all political contentions and conflicts an irreducible minimum of psychological traits and aspirations which are the common possession of all mankind. All human beings want to live and, hence, want the things which are necessary for life. All human beings want to be free and, hence, want to have those opportunities for self-expression and self-development which their particular culture considers to be desirable. All human beings seek power and, hence, seek social distinctions, again varying with the particular pattern of their culture, which put them ahead of and above their fellow men.

Upon this psychological foundation, the same for all men, rises an edifice of philosophical convictions, ethical postulates, and political aspirations. These, too, might be shared by all men under certain conditions, but actually they are not. They might be shared by all if the conditions under which men can satisfy their desire to live, to be free, and to have power, were similar all over the world, and if the conditions under which such satisfaction is withheld and must be striven for, were also similar everywhere. If this were so, the experience, common to all men, of what men seek, of what they are able to obtain, of what they are denied, and of what they must struggle for would indeed create a community of convictions, postulates, and aspirations, which would provide the common standards of evaluation for world public opinion. Any violation of the standards of this world public opinion, against and by whomever committed, would call forth spontaneous reactions on the part of humanity; for, in view of the hypothetical similarity of all conditions, all men would fear that what happens to one group might happen to any group.

Actually, however, reality does not correspond to our assumption of similarity of conditions throughout the world. The variations in the standard of living range from mass starvation to abundance; the variations in freedom, from tyranny to democracy, from economic slavery to equality; the variations in power, from extreme inequalities and unbridled one-man rule to wide distribution of power subject to constitutional limitations. This nation enjoys freedom, yet starves; that nation is well fed, but longs for freedom; still another enjoys security of life and individual freedom, but smarts under the rule of an autocratic government. In consequence, while philosophically the similarities of standards are considerable throughout the world — most political philosophies agree in their evaluation of the common good, of law, peace, and order, of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness — moral judgments and political evaluations show wide divergencies. The same moral and political concepts take on different meanings in different environments. Justice and

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[6] See above, pp. 193 ff.

democracy come to mean one thing here, something quite different there. A move on the international scene decried by one group as immoral and unjust is praised by another as the opposite. Thus the contrast between the community of psychological traits and elemental aspirations, on the one hand, and the absence of shared experiences, universal moral convictions, and common political aspirations, on the other, far from providing evidence for the existence of a world public opinion, rather demonstrates its impossibility, as humanity is constituted in our age.

2. AMBIGUITY OF TECHNOLOGICAL UNIFICATION

That same age, however, has provided a phenomenon which seems to have brought a world public opinion close to realization, if it has not actually created it — the technological unification of the world. When we say that this is "One World," we mean not only that the modern development of communications has virtually obliterated geographical distances with regard to physical contacts and exchange of information and ideas among the members of the human race. We mean also that this virtually unlimited opportunity for physical and intellectual communication has created that community of experience embracing all humanity, from which a world public opinion can grow. Yet that conclusion is not borne out by the facts. Two considerations show that nothing in the moral and political spheres corresponds to the technological unification of the world; that, quite the contrary, the world is today further removed from moral and political unification than it was under much less favorable technological conditions.

First of all, modern technology, while enormously facilitating communications among different countries, has also given their governments and private agencies unprecedented power to make such communications impossible. Two hundred years ago it was easier for a literate Russian to learn about French political thought and action than it is today. An Englishman who wanted to spread his political ideas among the French had then a better chance than he has today. It was then simpler for a Spaniard to migrate or even to travel to the North American continent than it is today. For modern technology has not only made it technologically possible for the individual to communicate with other individuals regardless of geographical distances, it has also made it technologically possible for governments and private agencies of communication to cut off such communications altogether if they see fit to do so. And while the communications between individuals have remained largely in the realm of technical possibility, government and private controls have become a technical and political actuality.

Fifty years ago, the American citizen who wanted to visit a foreign country needed only to command the means of transportation in order to go there. Today the "One World" of technology will avail him nothing if he lacks one of those governmental papers without which no human being is able to cross a frontier. Yet, only in 1914, the stigma of backwardness and almost of barbarism attached to Russia and Turkey as the only two major countries which required a passport for leaving or entering the national territory. We ought

not to forget that it is modern technology which has made totalitarian governments possible by enabling them to put their citizens on a moral and intellectual diet, feeding them certain ideas and information and cutting them off from others. It is also modern technology which has made the collection and dissemination of news and of ideas a big business requiring considerable accumulations of capital.

In the technologically primitive age, when printing was done by hand, any man of moderate means could reach the public ear by having a book, pamphlet, or newspaper printed and distributed at his own expense. Today the great mass of the people everywhere have no influence upon the mouthpieces of public opinion. With few exceptions, only men and organizations of considerable means and those who hold opinions approved by them can make themselves heard in the arena of public opinion. In virtually all countries the overwhelming weight of these opinions supports what the respective governments consider in their relations with foreign governments to be the national interest. Little information and few ideas unfavorable to the national point of view are allowed to reach the public. These assertions are too obvious to require elaboration. This is indeed "One World" technologically, but it is not for this reason that it is or will become "One World" morally and politically. The technological universe which is technically possible has no counterpart in the actual conditions under which information and ideas are exchanged among the members of different nations.

Yet, even if information and ideas were allowed to move freely over the globe, the existence of a world public opinion would by no means be assured. Those who believe that world public opinion is the direct result of the free flow of news and of ideas fail to distinguish between the technical process of transmission and the thing to be transmitted. They deal only with the former and completely disregard the latter. However, the information and ideas to be transmitted are the reflection of the experiences which have molded the philosophies, ethics, and political conceptions of different peoples. Were those experiences and their intellectual derivatives identical throughout humanity the free flow of information and of ideas would indeed create by itself a world public opinion. Actually, however, as we have seen, there is no identity of experience uniting mankind above the elemental aspirations which are common to all men. Since this is so, the American, Indian, and Russian — each will consider the same news item from his particular philosophic, moral, and political perspective, and the different perspectives will give the news a different color. The same report on the civil war in Greece or the Russo-Iranian Treaty concerning oil concessions will have a different weight as a newsworthy item, aside from any opinion to be formed about it, in the eyes of different observers.

Not only will the different perspective color the same piece of information, it will also affect the selection of what is newsworthy from among the infinite number of daily occurrences throughout the world. "All the News That's Fit to Print" means one thing for the *New York Times,* another thing for *Pravda,* and another thing for the *Hindustan Times.* A comparison of the actual content of those different newspapers on any particular day bears out that contention. When it comes to the interpretation of the news in the light

of philosophy, morality, and politics, the cleavages which separate the members of different nations from each other become fully manifest. The same item of information and the same idea mean something different to an American, a Russian, and an Indian; for that item of information and that idea are perceived by, assimilated to, and filtered through minds which are conditioned by different experiences and molded by different conceptions of what is true, good, and politically desirable and expedient.

Thus, even if we lived in a world actually unified by modern technology with men, news, and ideas moving freely regardless of national boundaries, we would not have a world public opinion. For while the minds of men would be capable of communicating with each other without political impediments, they would not meet. Even if the American, Russian, and Indian could speak to each other, they would speak with different tongues, and if they uttered the same words, they would signify different objects, values, and aspirations to each of them. So it is with concepts, such as democracy, freedom, security. The disillusion of differently constituted minds communicating the same words, which embody their most firmly held convictions, deepest emotions, and most ardent aspirations, without finding the expected sympathetic response, has driven the members of different nations further apart rather than united them. It has tended to harden the core of the different national public opinions and to strengthen their claims for exclusiveness rather than to merge them into a world public opinion.

3. THE BARRIER OF NATIONALISM

In order to illustrate the importance of this last observation, let us consider Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points. During the last months of the First World War, the Fourteen Points were accepted by so substantial a portion of humanity, regardless of national boundaries and of allegiance to one or the other of the belligerent camps, as principles for a just and enduring peace settlement that there indeed seemed to exist a world public opinion in support of them. Yet, as Mr. Walter Lippmann's brilliant analysis of the public opinion supporting the Fourteen Points has made clear:

> It would be a mistake to suppose that the apparently unanimous enthusiasm which greeted the Fourteen Points represented agreement on a program. Everyone seemed to find something that he liked and stressed this aspect and that detail. But no one risked a discussion. The phrases, so pregnant with the underlying conflicts of the civilized world, were accepted. They stood for opposing ideas, but they evoked a common emotion. And to that extent they played a part in rallying the western peoples for the desperate ten months of war which they had still to endure.
> As long as the Fourteen Points dealt with that hazy and happy future when the agony was to be over, the real conflicts of interpretation were not made manifest. They were plans for the settlement of a wholly invisible environment, and because these plans inspired all groups each with its own private hope, all hopes ran together as a public hope. . . . As you ascend the hierarchy in order to include more and more factions you may for a time preserve the emotional connection though you lose the intellectual. But even the emotion becomes thinner.

As you go further away from experience, you go higher into generalization or subtlety. As you go up in the balloon you throw more and more concrete objects overboard, and when you have reached the top with some phrase like the Rights of Humanity or the World Made Safe for Democracy, you see far and wide, but you see very little. Yet the people whose emotions are entrained do not remain passive. As the public appeal becomes more and more all things to all men, as the emotion is stirred while the meaning is dispersed, their very private meanings are given a universal application. Whatever you want badly is the Rights of Humanity. For the phrase, ever more vacant, capable of meaning almost anything, soon comes to mean pretty nearly everything. Mr. Wilson's phrases were understood in endlessly different ways in every corner of the earth. . . . And so, when the day of settlement came, everybody expected everything. The European authors of the treaty had a large choice, and they chose to realize those expectations which were held by those of their countrymen who wielded the most power at home.

They came down the hierarchy from the Rights of Humanity to the Rights of France, Britain and Italy. They did not abandon the use of symbols. They abandoned only those which after the war had no permanent roots in the imagination of their constituents. They preserved the unity of France by the use of symbolism, but they would not risk anything for the unity of Europe. The symbol France was deeply attached, the symbol Europe had only a recent history. . . .[7]

Mr. Lippmann's analysis of the apparent world public opinion supporting Wilson's Fourteen Points lays bare the crux of the problem — the interposition of nationalism with all its intellectual, moral, and political concomitants between the convictions and aspirations of humanity and the world-wide issues which face men everywhere. While men everywhere subscribed to the words of the Fourteen Points, it was the particular nationalisms, molding and directing the minds of men, which infused their particular meanings into these words, painted them with their particular color, and made them symbols of their particular aspirations.

Yet nationalism has the same effect upon issues with regard to which humanity has developed not only common verbal expressions, such as the Fourteen Points, democracy, freedom, and security, but also an actual consensus bearing upon the substance of the case. In contemporary international politics there is no opinion more widely held anywhere in the world than the abhorrence of war, the opposition to it, and the desire to avoid it. When they think and speak of war in this context, the men in the streets in Washington, in Moscow, in Chungking, in New Delhi, in London, in Paris, and in Madrid have pretty much the same thing in mind, that is, war waged with the modern means of mass destruction. There appears to exist a genuine world public opinion with respect to war. But here again the appearances are deceptive. Humanity is united in its opposition to war in so far as that opposition manifests itself in philosophic terms, moral postulates, and abstract political aspirations, that is, with regard to war as such, with regard to war in the abstract. But humanity thus united reveals its impotence, and the apparent world public opinion splits into its national components, when the issue is no

longer war as such, in the abstract, but a particular war, this particular war; not any war, but war here and now.

When actual war threatens in our time, as it did in the recurring crises of 1938–39, humanity remains united in its horror of war as such and in opposition to it. But men are incapable of translating this abstract opposition to war as such into concrete action against this particular war. While most members of the human race, *qua* members of the human race, consider war under the conditions of the mid-twentieth century an evil which will make the winner only slightly less miserable than the loser, most members of the human race, *qua* Americans, Chinese, Englishmen, and Russians, look at a particular war, as they have always done, from the point of view of their particular nations. They oppose wars which do not affect what they regard as their national interest, such as Italy's war against Ethiopia, yet they are unwilling to take or to support any action which might be effective in preventing or putting an end to the war. For, if it is to be effective, such action must be drastic, involving certain disadvantages and risks for what is considered to be the national interest. Customers may be lost and friends estranged; even the risk of an armed conflagration for other than national objectives might have to be faced.

The sanctions against Italy, after it had attacked Ethiopia, are the classic example of this general condemnation of war by so-called world public opinion and of its unwillingness to take effective action seemingly not required by what is considered to be the national interest. Winston Churchill trenchantly formulated this dilemma between condemnation of war in the abstract and the unwillingness to act effectively in a concrete situation, when he said of the representatives of the British sector of that "world public opinion": "First the Prime Minister had declared that sanctions meant war; secondly, he was resolved that there must be no war; and thirdly, he decided upon sanctions. It was evidently impossible to comply with these three conditions." [8]

World public opinion, however, ceases to operate at all as one united force whenever a war threatens or breaks out which affects the interests of a number of nations. Under such circumstances, the universal condemnation of war undergoes a significant change in focus. The opposition to war as such is transformed into opposition to the nation which threatens to start, or actually has started, a particular war, and it so happens that this nation is always identical with the national enemy whose belligerent attitude threatens the national interest and, therefore, must be opposed as a war-monger. In other words, out of the common soil of the universal condemnation of war there arise specific acts of condemnation directed against whoever threatens through war the interests of particular nations. There will then be as many war-mongers condemned by national public opinions as there are nations threatening the interests of others through war.

The situation throughout the world from 1938 on is instructive in this respect. Throughout this last decade all nations have uniformly been opposed to war in general. Yet, when it came to the formation of an active public opinion which would take action in order to prevent or to oppose a particular

[8] *London Evening Standard*, June 26, 1936.

war, the lines were drawn according to the national interest involved in the particular situation. Thus the public opinion of Great Britain and France, throughout that period, condemned Germany as a potential or actual threat of war, yet it condemned the Soviet Union on that count only from August 1939 to June 1941, that is, during the operation of the Russo-German pact. Since the end of 1945, public opinion in these two countries has again become critical of the foreign policies of the Soviet Union as a threat to world peace.

Russian public opinion, on the other hand, opposed Germany as the main threat to peace until the signing of the pact with Germany in August 1939. From then until the German attack against the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Western democracies were regarded as war-mongers. Germany's attack swung Russian opinion against it and until about the end of 1945 Germany held its former place in the Russian public mind as a threat to peace. Since the end of 1945, with ever increasing emphasis, Russian public opinion has come to consider the United States as the main threat to peace. American public opinion coincided in different degrees of intensity with the British and French point of view up to the end of 1945. Then, returning the Russian compliment, it started to regard the Soviet Union as the main menace to peace. The intensity of this opinion in the United States has mounted at a rate paralleling the rising intensity of opinion in the Soviet Union.

Thus, whenever a concrete threat to peace develops, war is opposed not by a world public opinion, but by the public opinions of those nations whose interests are threatened by that war. It follows that it is obviously futile to base one's hopes for the preservation of peace in the world, as it is presently constituted, upon a world public opinion which exists only as a general sentiment, but not as a source of action capable of preventing a threatening war.

Wherever one probes beneath the surface of popular phraseology, one finds that a world public opinion restraining the international policies of national governments does not exist. A final general consideration of the nature of public opinion, as it becomes active in the mores of society, will show that under present world conditions this cannot be otherwise. While one can visualize a society without an active public opinion and while there have doubtless existed and still exist authoritarian societies whose public opinion does not operate as an active force in the sphere of international politics, obviously no public opinion can exist without a society. Society, however, means consensus concerning certain basic moral and social issues. This consensus is predominantly moral in character when the mores of society deal with political issues. In other words, when public opinion in the form of the mores becomes operative with regard to a political problem, the people generally try to bring their moral standards to bear upon that problem and to have it solved in accordance with those standards. A public opinion capable of exerting a restraining influence upon political action presupposes a society and a common morality from which it receives its standards of action, and a world public opinion of this kind requires a world society and a morality by which humanity as a whole judges political actions on the international scene.

As we have seen, such a world society and such a universal morality do not exist. Between the elemental aspirations for life, freedom, and power,

which unite mankind and which could provide the roots for a world society and universal morality, and the political philosophies, ethics, and objectives actually held by the members of the human race, there intervenes the nation. The nation fills the minds and hearts of men everywhere with particular experiences and, derived from them, with particular concepts of political philosophy, particular standards of political morality, and particular goals of political action. Inevitably, then, the members of the human race live and act politically not as members of one world society applying standards of universal ethics, but as members of their respective national societies guided by their national standards of morality. In politics the nation, and not humanity, is the ultimate fact. Inevitably, then, what is real are national public opinions fashioned in the image of the political philosophies, ethics, and aspirations of the respective nations. A world public opinion restraining the international policies of national governments is a mere postulate; the reality of international affairs shows as yet hardly a trace of it.

When a nation invokes "world public opinion" or "the conscience of mankind" in order to assure itself, as well as other nations, that its international policies meet the test of standards shared by men everywhere, it appeals to nothing real. It only yields to the general tendency, with which we have dealt before, to raise a particular national conception of morality to the dignity of universal laws binding upon all mankind. The confidence with which all the antagonists in the international arena believe themselves to be supported by world public opinion with respect to one and the same issue only serves to underline the irrationality of the appeal. In the twentieth century, as we have seen, people want to believe that they champion not only, and perhaps not even primarily, their own national interests, but the ideals of humanity as well. For a scientific civilization which receives most of its information about what other people think from public-opinion polls, world public opinion becomes the mythical arbiter who can be counted upon to support one's own, as well as everybody else's, aspirations and actions. For those more philosophically inclined, the "judgment of history" fulfills a similar function. For the religious, there is the "will of God" to support their cause, and believers witness the strange and singularly blasphemous spectacle of one and the same God blessing through his ministers the arms on either side of the battle line and leading both armies either to deserved victory or to undeserved defeat.

CHAPTER XIX

The New Balance of Power

The destruction of that intellectual and moral consensus which controlled the struggle for power for almost three centuries deprived the balance of power of the vital energy which made it a living principle of international politics. Concomitant with the destruction of that vital energy, the system of the balance of power has undergone three structural changes which considerably impair its operations.[1]

I. INFLEXIBILITY OF THE NEW BALANCE OF POWER

The most obvious of these structural changes which impaired the operation of the balance of power is to be found in the drastic numerical reduction of the players in the game. At the end of the Thirty Years' War, for instance, the German Empire was composed of 900 sovereign states which the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 reduced to 355. The Napoleonic interventions, of which the most notable is the dictated reforms of the Reichstag of Ratisbone of 1803, eliminated more than 200 of the sovereign German states. When the Germanic Confederation was founded in 1815, only thirty-six sovereign states were left to join it. The unification of Italy in 1859 eliminated seven sovereign states, the unification of Germany in 1871, twenty-four. In 1815, at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, eight nations — Austria, France, Great Britain, Portugal, Russia, Prussia, Spain, and Sweden — had the diplomatic rank of great powers. With Portugal, Spain, and Sweden granted such rank only out of traditional courtesy and soon to lose that undeserved status altogether, the number of actually great powers was really reduced to five. In the sixties, Italy and the United States joined them, followed toward the end of the century by Japan.

At the outbreak of the First World War, there were then again eight great powers, of which for the first time two were located totally outside Europe: Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States. The end of the First World War found Austria definitely,

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[1] See above, pp. 139, 140, 148 ff., for other changes which occurred earlier in the century.

and Germany and Russia temporarily, removed from that list. Two decades later, at the outbreak of the Second World War, one could count seven great powers, Germany and the Soviet Union having again become first-rate powers and the others having retained their status. The end of the Second World War saw this number reduced to three, namely, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States, while China and France, in view of their past or their potentialities, are treated in negotiations and organizations as though they were great powers. In the aftermath of the Second World War, British power has declined to such an extent as to be distinctly inferior to the power of the United States and of the Soviet Union, the only two great powers left at present.

This reduction in the number of states which are able to play a major role in international politics has an important effect upon the operation of the balance of power. This effect gains added importance from the reduction in the absolute number of states through the consolidations of 1648 and 1803 and the national unifications of the nineteenth century. These reductions were only temporarily offset in 1919 by the creation of new states in Eastern and Central Europe; for these states have in the meantime either disappeared as states, for example, the Baltic states, or, in any case, have ceased to be independent factors on the international scene. This development has deprived the balance of power of much of its flexibility and uncertainty and, in consequence, of its restraining effect upon the nations actively engaged in the struggle for power.

In former times, as we have seen, the balance of power operated in the main by way of coalitions among a number of nations. The principal nations, while differing in power, were still of the same order of magnitude. In the eighteenth century, for instance, Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, and Sweden belonged in the same class, in so far as their relative power was concerned. Fluctuations in their power would affect their respective positions in the hierarchy of powers, but not their position as great powers. Similarly, in the period from 1870 to 1914, the game of power politics was played by eight players of the first rank of which six, those of Europe, kept at the game constantly. Under such circumstances no player could go very far in his aspirations for power without being sure of the support of at least one or the other of his co-players, and nobody could generally be too sure of that support. There was virtually no nation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which was not compelled to retreat from an advanced position and retrace its steps because it did not receive the diplomatic or military support from other nations upon which it had counted. This was especially true of Russia in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, if Germany, in violation of the rules of the game, had not in 1914 given Austria a free hand in its dealings with Serbia, there is little doubt that Austria would not have dared to go as far as it did, and that the First World War might have been avoided.

The greater the number of active players, the greater the number of possible combinations and the greater also the uncertainty as to the combinations which will actually oppose each other and as to the role which the individual players will actually perform in them. Both William II in 1914 and Hitler in

1939 refused to believe that Great Britain, and ultimately the United States, too, would join the rank of their enemies, and both discounted the effect of American intervention. It is obvious that these miscalculations as to who would fight against whom meant for Germany the difference between victory and defeat. Whenever coalitions of nations comparable in power confront each other, calculations of this kind will of necessity be close, since the defection of one prospective member or the addition of an unexpected one cannot fail to affect the balance of power considerably, if not decisively. Thus in the eighteenth century, when princes used to change their alignments with the greatest of ease, such calculations were frequently almost indistinguishable from wild guesses. In consequence, the extreme flexibility of the balance of power resulting from the utter unreliability of alliances made it imperative for all players to be cautious in their moves on the chessboard of international politics and, since risks were hard to calculate, to take as small risks as possible. In the First World War it was still of very great importance, bearing upon the ultimate outcome of the conflict, whether Italy would remain neutral or enter the war on the side of the Allies. It was in recognition of that importance that both sides made great efforts, by competing in promises of territorial aggrandizement, to influence Italy's decision. The same situation then prevailed, to a lesser degree, even with respect to so relatively weak a power as Greece.

This aspect of the balance of power has undergone a radical transformation in recent years. In the Second World War, the decisions of such countries as Italy, Spain, or Turkey, or even France, to join or not to join one or the other side were mere episodes, welcomed or feared, to be sure, by the belligerents, but in no way even remotely capable of transforming victory into defeat, or vice versa. The disparity in the power of nations of the first rank, such as the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, Japan, and Germany, on the one hand, and all the remaining nations, on the other, was then already so great that the defection of one, or the addition of another, ally could no longer overturn the balance of power and thus materially affect the ultimate outcome of the struggle. Under the influence of changes in alignments one scale might rise somewhat and the other sink still more under a heavier weight, yet these changes could not reverse the relation of the scales which were determined by the preponderant weights of the first-rate powers. It was only the position of the major countries — the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain, on the one hand, Germany and Japan, on the other — that really mattered. This situation, first noticeable in the Second World War, is now accentuated in the polarity between the United States and the Soviet Union and has become the paramount feature of international politics. The power of the United States and of the Soviet Union in comparison with the power of their actual or prospective allies has become so overwhelming that through their own preponderant weight they determine the balance of power between them. That balance cannot be decisively affected by changes in the alignments of their allies, at least for the foreseeable future.

As a result, the flexibility of the balance of power and, with it, its restraining influence upon the power aspirations of the main protagonists on the international scene have disappeared. Two great powers, each incomparably stronger

than any other power or possible combination of other powers, oppose each other. Neither of them need fear surprises from actual or prospective allies. The disparity of power between major and minor nations is so great that the minor powers have not only lost their ability to tip the scales. They have also lost that freedom of movement which in former times enabled them to play so important and often decisive a role in the balance of power. What was formerly true only of a relatively small number of nations, such as certain Latin-American countries in their relations with the United States and Portugal in its relations of Great Britain, is true now of most, if not all, of them: they are in the orbit of one or the other of the two giants whose political, military, and economic preponderance can hold them there even against their will.

This is the exact opposite of the era of ever shifting alliances and new combinations demanding constant vigilance, circumspection, and caution, of which the eighteenth century is the classic exposition. That era lasted through the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth. Even during the Second World War, it played an important role at least with regard to the anticipated actions of the major belligerents.

Today neither the United States nor the Soviet Union need look over its shoulder, as they still did during the Second World War, lest the defection of one major ally or the addition of one to the other side might upset the balance of power. Nor are they any longer constrained to accommodate their policies to the wishes of doubtful allies and exacting neutrals. No such fears and considerations need restrain their ambitions and actions; they are, as a pair of nations has rarely been before, masters of their own policies and of their own fates. The line between the two camps is clearly drawn, and the weight of those few which might still straddle the fence is so small as to be virtually negligible, or, as in the case of China and India, a matter of future development rather than a concern of the present. There are no longer neutrals which, as "honest brokers," can mitigate international conflicts and contribute to their peaceful settlement or else, by maneuvering between the two camps and threatening to join the one or the other as occasion might require, erect effective barriers to limitless aspirations for power.

2. DISAPPEARANCE OF THE BALANCER[2]

The second change in the structure of the balance of power, which we are witnessing today, is but the inevitable result of the change just discussed. It is the disappearance of the balancer, the "holder" of the balance. Both naval supremacy and virtual immunity from foreign attack for more than three centuries enabled Great Britain to perform this function for the balance of power. Today Great Britain is no longer capable of performing it; for the United States has far surpassed Great Britain in naval strength, and the modern technology of war has deprived navies of uncontested mastery of the seas. Modern instruments of warfare have not only put an end to the invulnerability of the British Isles, but have also transformed from an advantage into a lia-

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[2] Cf. also the discussion of the "holder" of the balance, above. pp. 142 ff.

bility the concentration of population and industries on a relatively small territory in close proximity to a continent.

In the great contest between France and the Hapsburgs around which the modern state system evolved (at least until the "diplomatic revolution" of 1756 when France allied itself with the Hapsburgs against Prussia), Great Britain was able to play the controlling and restraining role of the balancer because it was strong enough in comparison with the two contenders and their allies to make likely the victory of whichever side it joined. This was again true in the Napoleonic Wars and throughout the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. Today Great Britain's friendship is no longer of decisive importance. Its role as the "holder" of the balance has come to an end, leaving the modern state system without the benefits of restraint and pacification which it bestowed upon that system in former times. Even as late as the Second World War, the neutrality of Great Britain or its alignment with Germany and Japan instead of with the United Nations might easily have meant for the latter the difference between victory and defeat. Now, in view of the probable trends in the technology of warfare and the distribution of power between the United States and the Soviet Union, it may well be that the attitude of Great Britain in an armed conflict between these two powers would not decisively affect the ultimate outcome. In the metaphorical language of the balance of power one might say, rather crudely but not without truth, that, while in the Russian scale there is a weight of seventy, the weight of the American scale amounts to a hundred of which seventy is the United States' own strength, ten that of Great Britain, and the remainder that of the other actual or prospective allies. Thus, even if the British weight were removed from the American scale and placed into the Russian, the heavier weights would still be in the American scale.

It follows from what has been said above that the decline of the relative power of Great Britain and its resultant inability to keep its key position in the balance of power is not an isolated occurrence solely attributable to Great Britain. Rather it is the consequence of a structural change which affects the functioning of the balance of power in all its manifestations. It is, therefore, impossible that the privileged and dominating place which Great Britain has held for so long could be inherited by another nation. It is not so much that the power of the traditional holder of the place has declined, incapaciting it for its traditional role, as that the place itself no longer exists. With two giants strong enough to determine the position of the scales with their own weight alone, there can be no chance for a third power to exert a decisive influence. It is, therefore, futile at the present moment to hope that another nation or group of nations will take the place vacated by Great Britain. Such hopes have for a time been entertained by France, and their most eloquent spokesman has been General DeGaulle. He has advocated in a number of speeches that either France alone or a United Europe under French leadership should perform the pacifying and restraining task of the "holder" of the balance between the colossus of the East and the colossus of the West. He made this point with particular emphasis in his speech of July 28, 1946, at Bar-le-Duc. He opened his address with a brilliant analysis of the transformation of the balance of power:

It is certain indeed that, with respect to what it was before this thirty-year war the face of the world has altered in every way. A third of a century ago we were living in a universe where six or eight great nations, apparently equal in strength, each by differing and subtle accords associating others with it, managed to establish a balance everywhere in which the less powerful found themselves relatively guaranteed and where international law was recognized, since a violator would have faced a coalition of moral or material interests, and where, in the last analysis, strategy conceived and prepared with a view to future conflicts involved only rapid and limited destruction.

But a cyclone has passed. An inventory can be made. When we take into account the collapse of Germany and Japan and the weakening of Europe, Soviet Russia and the United States are now alone in holding the first rank. It seems as if the destiny of the world, which in modern times has in turn smiled on the Holy Roman Empire, Spain, France, Britain and the German Reich, conferring on each in turn a kind of pre-eminence, has now decided to divide its favor in two. From this decision arises a factor of division that has been substituted for the balance of yore.

After referring to the anxieties caused by the expansionist tendencies of the United States and the Soviet Union, DeGaulle raised the question of restoring a stable balance of power.

Who then can re-establish the equilibrium, if not the old world, between the two new ones? Old Europe, which, during so many centuries was the guide of the universe, is in a position to constitute in the heart of a world that tends to divide itself into two, the necessary element of compensation and understanding.

The nations of the ancient west have for their vital arteries the North Sea, the Mediterranean, the Rhine; they are geographically situated between the two new masses. Resolved to conserve an independence that would be gravely exposed in the event of a conflagration, they are physically and morally drawn together by the massive effort of the Russians as well as by the liberal advance of the Americans. Of global strength because of their own resources and those of the vast territories that are linked to them by destiny, spreading afar their influences and their activities, what will be their weight if they manage to combine their policies in spite of the difficulties among them from age to age! [8]

However, it is not only the weakness of France in comparison with the United States and the Soviet Union which incapacitates it even more than Great Britain to perform that task. Above all, General DeGaulle's argument leaves out of account the decisive fact that Great Britain was capable of making its beneficial contributions to peace and stability only because it was geographically remote from the centers of friction and conflict, because it had no vital interests in the stakes of these conflicts as such, and because it had the opportunity of satisfying its aspirations for power in areas beyond the seas which generally were beyond the reach of the main contenders for power. ·

It was that threefold aloofness, together with its resources of power, which enabled Great Britain to play its role as "holder" of the balance. In none of these three respects is France or a United Europe aloof from the centers of

[8] *New York Times*, July 29, 1946, p. 1; cf. for later speeches, *ibid.*, June 30, 1947, p. 1; July 10, 1947, p. 3.

THE BALANCE OF POWER
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

GREAT BRITAIN

HOUSE OF HAPSBURG

HOUSE OF BOURBON

THE BALANCE OF POWER
IN THE
MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY

U.S. Sphere of Influence   U.S.S.R. Sphere of Influence
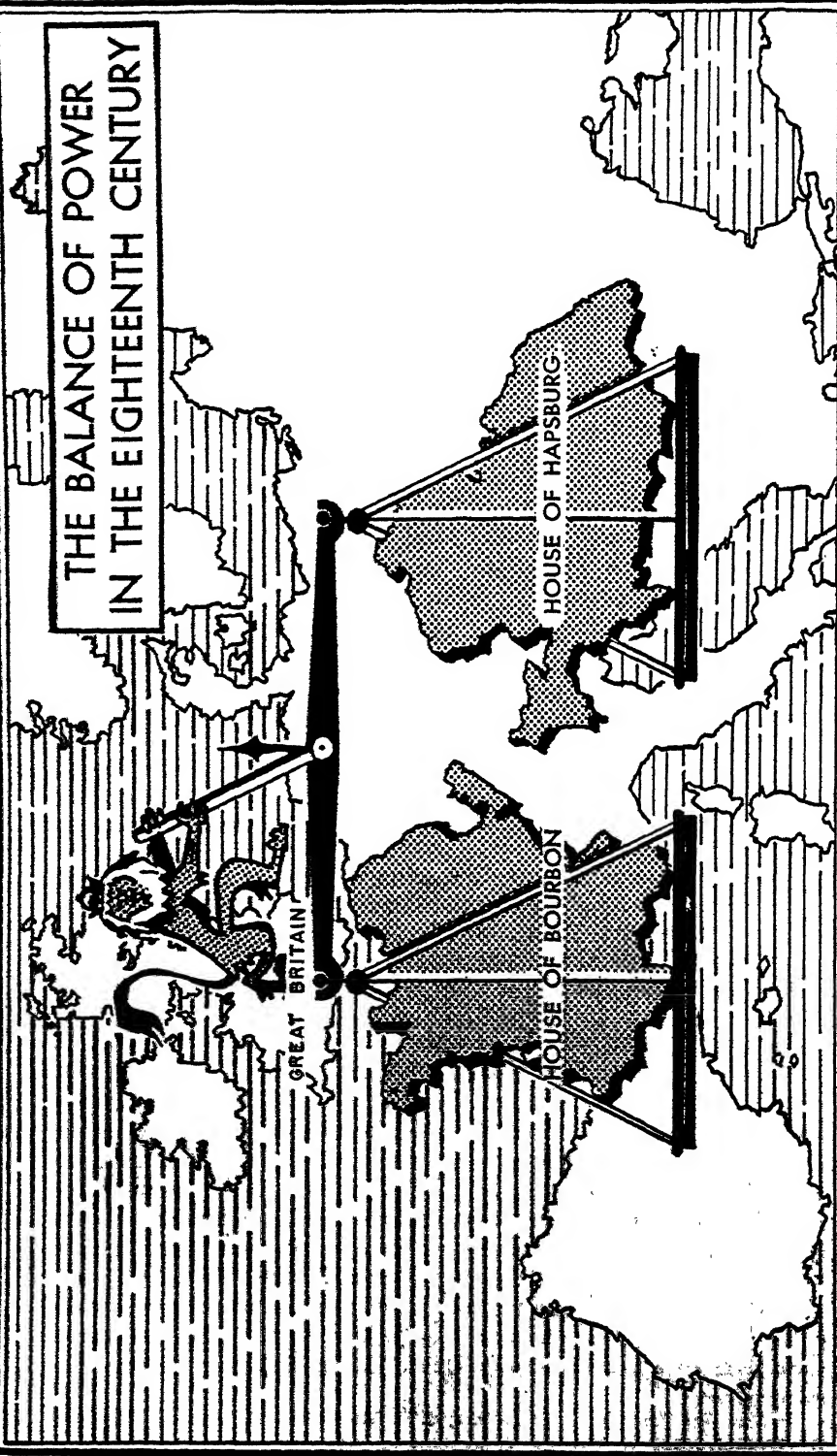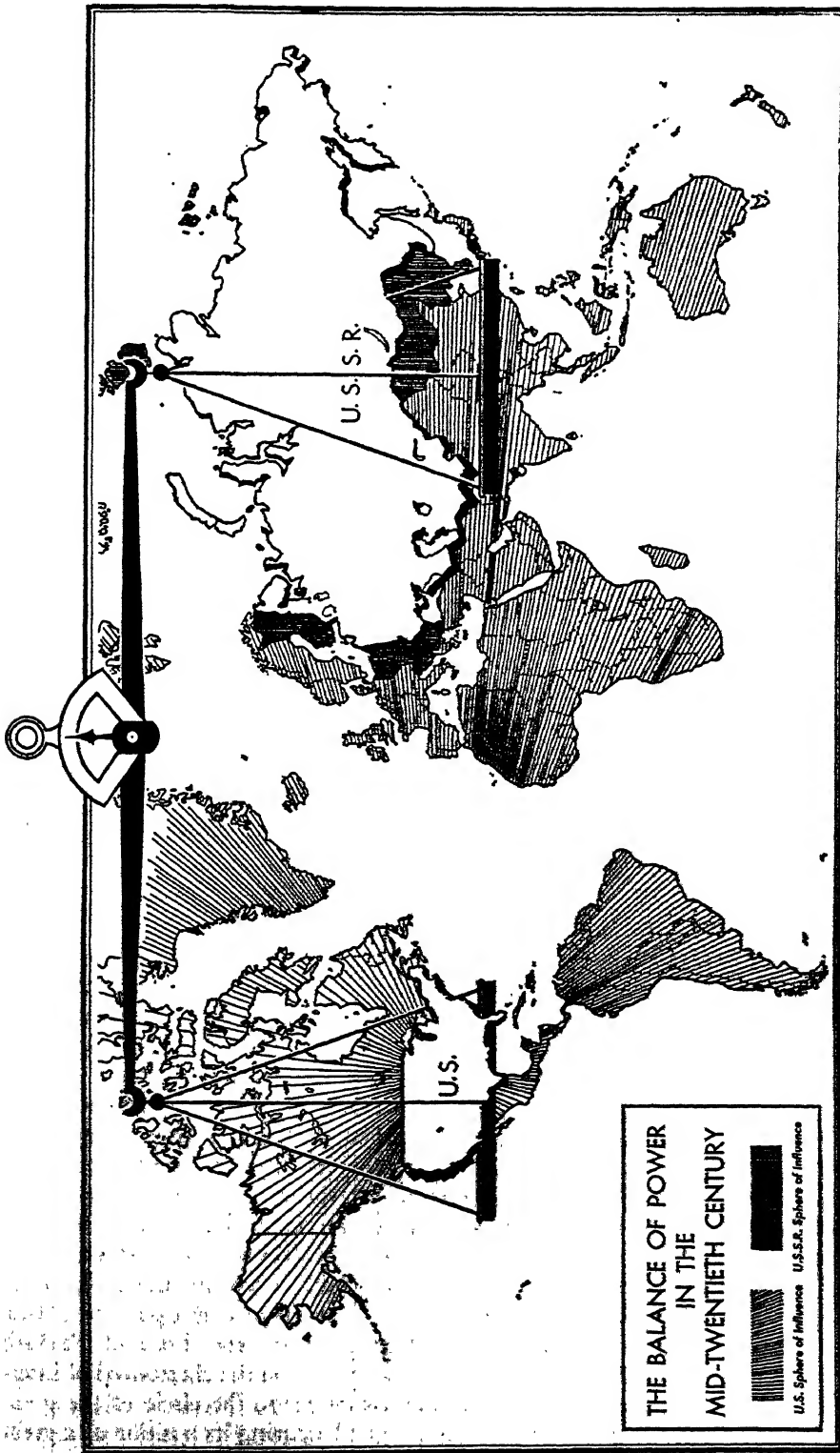
conflict. Quite the contrary, they are deeply implicated in them in all three respects. For they are at once the battlefield and the prize of victory in an armed conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. They are permanently and vitally interested in the victory of one or the other side. And they are unable to seek satisfaction for their aspirations for power anywhere but on the European continent itself. It is for these reasons that neither France nor Europe as a whole could enjoy that freedom of maneuver which the "holder" of the balance must have in order to fulfill its function.

3. DISAPPEARANCE OF THE COLONIAL FRONTIER

With this discussion we are broaching a third change in the structure of the balance of power, namely, the disappearance of the colonial frontier. The balance of power owed the moderating and restraining influence which it exerted in its classical period not only to the moral climate within which it operated and to its own mechanics, but also in good measure to the circumstance that the nations participating in it rarely needed to put all their national energies into the political and military struggles in which they were engaged with each other. Nations in that period sought power through the acquisition of territory, then considered the symbol and substance of national power. Trying to take land away from a powerful neighbor was one method of gaining power. There was, however, a much less risky opportunity for achieving that end. That opportunity was provided by the wide expanses of three continents: Africa, the Americas, and the part of Asia bordering on the Eastern oceans.

Throughout the history of the balance of power, Great Britain found in this opportunity the main source of its power and of its detachment from the issues which involved the other nations in continuous conflict. Spain dissipated its strength in exploiting that opportunity and thus removed itself from the struggle for power as a force to be reckoned with. What for Great Britain and Spain was a constant and major concern attracted the energies of the other nations to a lesser degree or only sporadically. The policies of France in the eighteenth century present instructive examples of the reciprocal effect of colonial expansion and imperialistic attacks upon the existing balance of power; the more intense these attacks were, the less attention was paid to colonial expansion, and vice versa. The United States and Russia were for long stages of their history totally absorbed by the task of pushing their frontiers forward into the politically empty spaces of their continents and during those periods they took no active part in the balance of power. The Austrian monarchy was too much concerned, especially during the nineteenth century, with maintaining its control over the restive non-German nationalities of Central and Southeastern Europe, which made up the bulk of its empire, to be capable of more than limited excursions into power politics. Furthermore, until deep into the eighteenth century, the threat of Turkish aggression limited Austria's freedom of movement on the chessboard of international politics. Prussia, finally, as the late-comer to the circle of the great powers, had to be satisfied with defending and securing its position as a great

power. Besides, it was too weak internally and in too unfavorable a geographi-
cal position to think of a program of unlimited expansion. Even after Bis-
marck had made Prussian power predominant in Germany and German
power predominant in Europe, his policy was aimed at preserving, not at
expanding that power.

In the period between 1870 and 1914, the stability of the status quo in
Europe was the direct result, on the one hand, of the risks implicit in even the
smallest move at the frontiers of the great powers themselves and, on the
other, of the opportunity of changing the status quo in outlying regions with-
out incurring the danger of a general conflagration. As Professor Toynbee
observes:

> At the center [of the group of states forming the balance of power], every
> move that any one state makes with a view to its own aggrandizement is jeal-
> ously watched and adroitly countered by all its neighbors, and the sovereignty
> over a few square feet of territory and a few hundred "souls" becomes a subject
> for the bitterest and stubbornest contention. . . . In the easy circumstances of
> the periphery, quite a mediocre political talent is often able to work wonders. . . .
> The domain of the United States can be expanded unobtrusively right across
> North America from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the domain of Russia right
> across Asia from Baltic to Pacific, in an age when the best statesmanship of
> France or Germany cannot avail to obtain unchallenged possession of an Alsace
> or a Posen.[4]

With the unification of Germany in 1870, the consolidation of the great
nation states was consummated and territorial gains in Europe could hence-
forth be made only at the expense of the great powers or their allies. There-
after, for more than four decades, the great issues of world politics were con-
nected with African names, such as Egypt, Tunis, Morocco, the Congo, South
Africa, and with the decrepit Asiatic empires of China and Persia. Local wars
arose as a result of these issues — the Boer War of 1899–1902 between Great
Britain and the Boer Republics, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05 and the
Russo-Turkish and Italo-Turkish Wars of 1877 and 1911–12 respectively. But
it should be noted that in all these wars one of the great powers fought against
what might be called a "peripheric" power, a power which was either the
designated object of the former's expansion or, as in the exceptional case of
Japan, an outside competitor. In no case was it necessary for a great power to
take up arms against another great power in order to expand into the politi-
cally empty spaces of Africa and Asia.

The policy of compensations could here operate with a maximum of suc-
cess, for there was so much political no-man's-land that one could compensate
one's self and allow others to do the same. There was always the possibility
of compromise without compromising one's vital interests, of retreating
while saving one's face, of sidestepping and postponing. The period from
1870 to 1914, then, was a period of diplomatic bargains and horse trading for
other people's lands, of postponed conflicts and sidestepped issues, and it was
also the period of continuous peace among the great powers.

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[4] Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University
Press, 1934), III, 302. (Reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

MAIN ISSUES OF
WORLD POLITICS 1870-1914
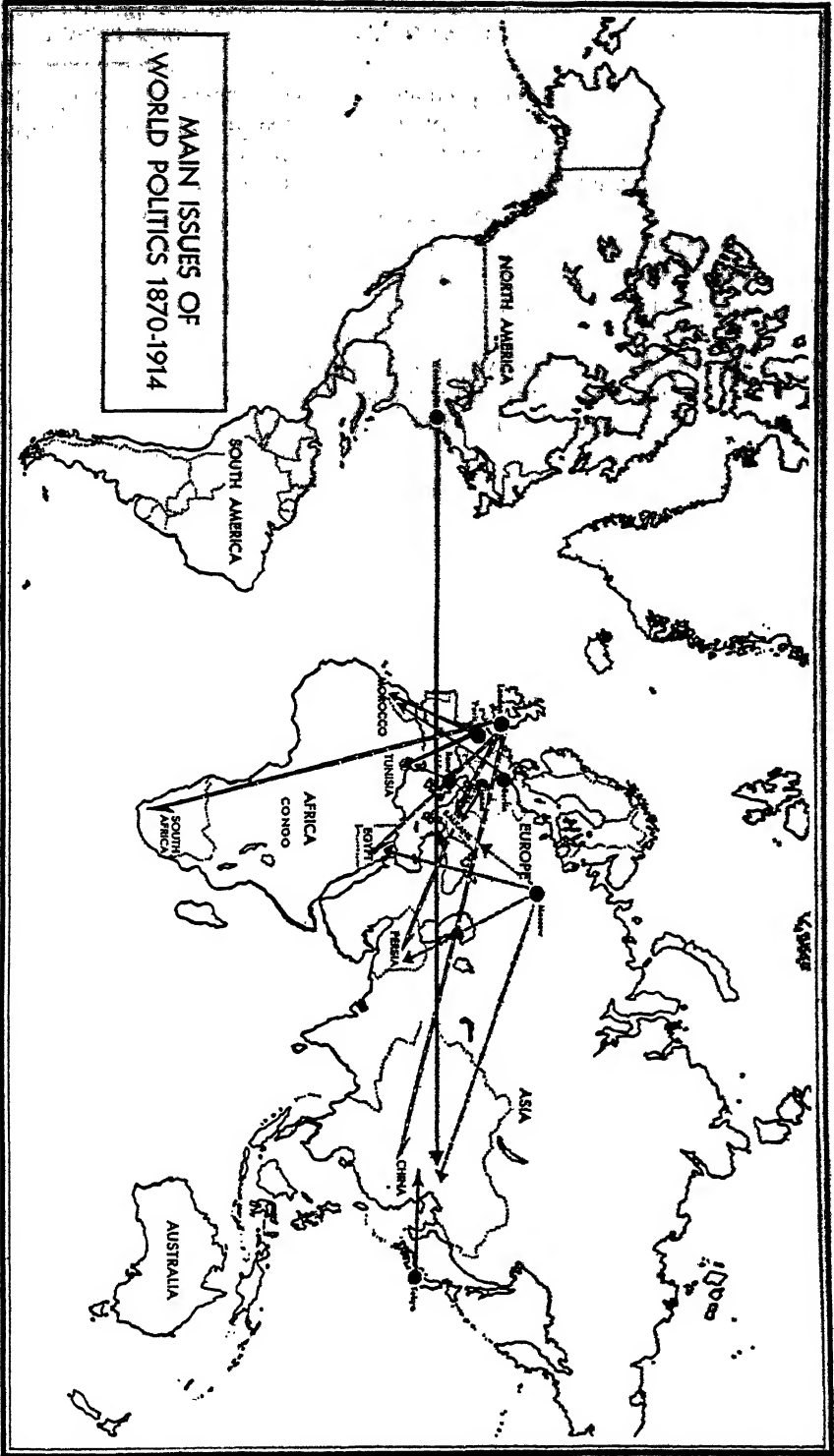
MAIN ISSUES OF
WORLD POLITICS IN THE
MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY

NORTH AMERICA

SOUTH AMERICA

Washington

AFRICA

EUROPE

GERMANY

Trieste

GREECE

TURKEY

Moscow

IRAN

ASIA

CHINA

AUSTRALIA
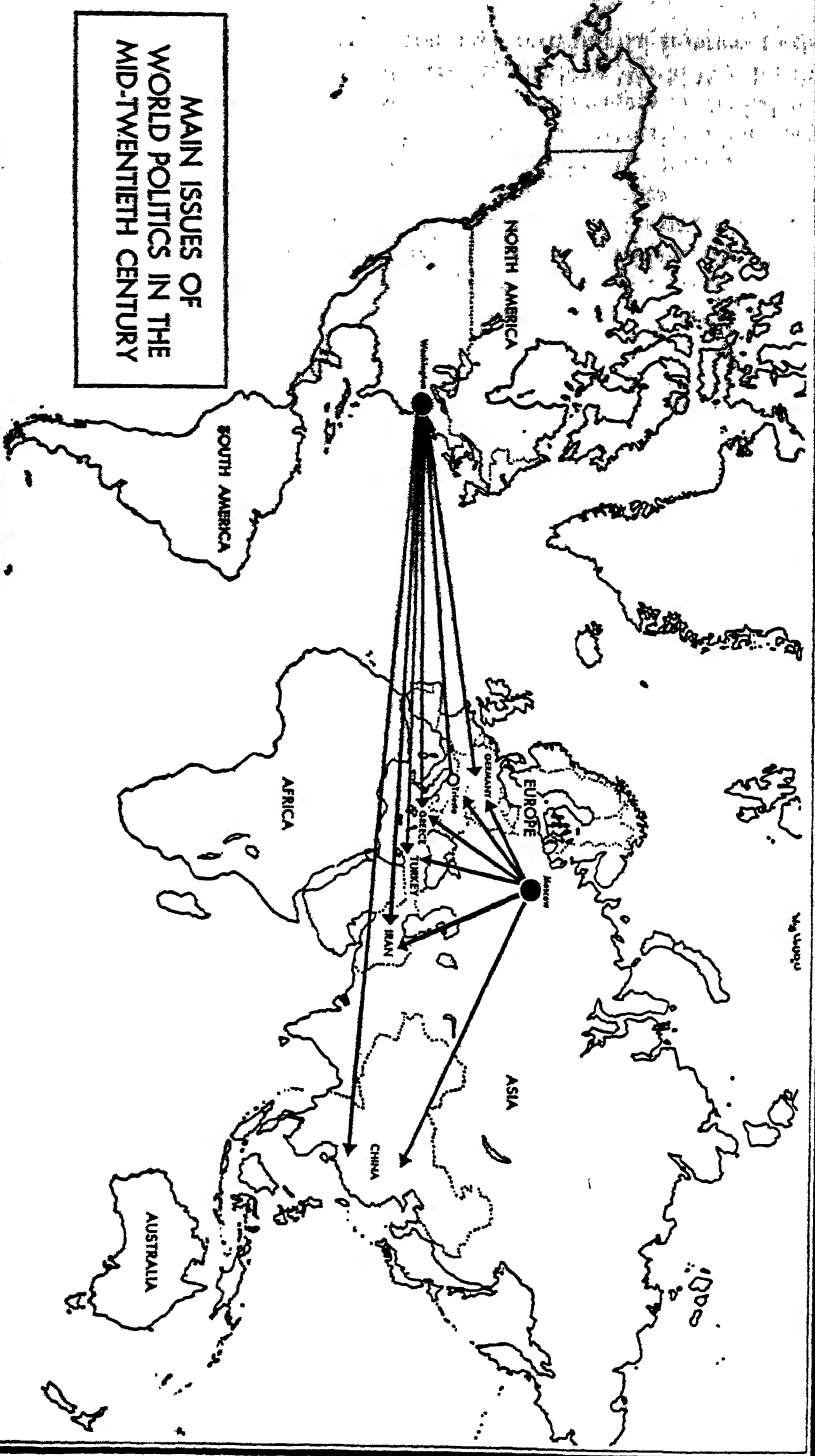
Yet it is significant that the most persistent and the most explosive of the great issues of that period, while still located at the periphery of the circle of the great powers, was closer to it geographically and weighed more directly upon the distribution of political and military power within it than any other of the great issues of that epoch. That issue was how to distribute the inheritance of the European part of the Turkish Empire, also called the Eastern or the Balkan Question. Out of it arose the conflagration of the First World War. The Balkan Question more than any other issue of that period was likely to lead to open conflict among the great powers — especially since the vital interests of one of them, Austria, were directly affected by the national aspirations of Serbia. It is, however, doubtful that this outcome was inevitable. One might even plausibly maintain that if the other great powers, especially Germany, had dealt with the Balkan Question in 1914, as they had done successfully at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, that is, in recognition of its peripheric character, the First World War might well have been avoided.

When Bismarck declared in 1876 [5] that, as far as the interests of Germany were concerned, the Balkans were not worth "the good bones of one single Pomeranian musketeer," he affirmed emphatically the peripheric character of the Balkan Question in view of the political and military interests of Germany. When the German government in July 1914 promised to support whatever steps Austria decided to take against Serbia, it did the exact opposite, and for no good reason. Germany identifed itself with the Austrian interest in the prostration of Serbia as though it was its own, while Russia identified itself with Serbia's defense of its independence. Thus a conflict at the periphery of the European state system transformed itself into a struggle which threatened to affect the over-all distribution of power within that system.

Bargaining had become impossible if it was not to be the bargaining away of one's own vital interests. Concessions at somebody else's expense could no longer be made, because identification of one's own interests with the interests of the smaller nations involved had turned concessions at the apparent expense of others into concessions at one's own expense. The conflict could not be postponed because, as we have seen, most of the great powers feared that postponement would strengthen the other side for an armed conflict which was considered to be inevitable. For, once the issues had been brought from the periphery into the center of the circle of the great powers, there was no way of sidestepping them: there was, as it were, no empty space into which to step in order to evade the issue. Russia had to face the Austro-German determination to settle the Serbian problem on Austria's terms. In consequence, France had to face the invocation of the Franco-Russian Alliance by Russia, Germany had to face the activation of that alliance, and Great Britain had to face the threat to Belgium. There was no sidestepping these issues except at the price of yielding what each nation regarded its vital interests to be.

What came about in July 1914, at least in part by blundering diplomacy, has today become the ineluctable result of structural changes in the balance of power. It was possible in the period preceding the First World War for the great powers to deflect their rivalries from their own mutual frontiers to the

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[5] In the session of the German Reichstag of December 5, 1876.
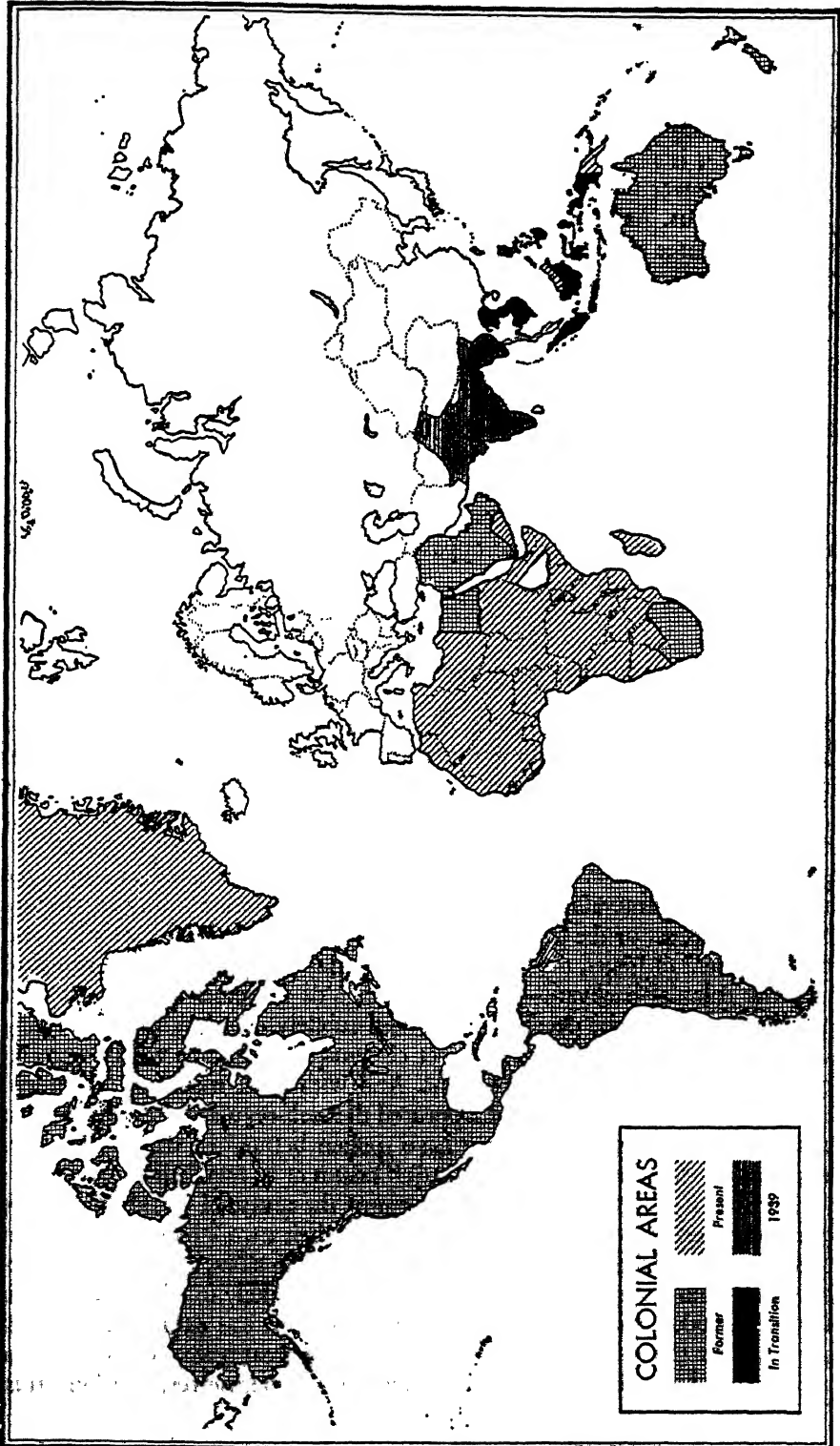
COLONIAL AREAS

Former   Present

In Transition   1939

periphery and into politically empty spaces because, as we have seen, virtually all the active participants in the balance of power were European nations and, furthermore, the main weights of the balance were located in Europe. To say that there were during that period a periphery of politically empty spaces is simply a negative way of saying that during that period the balance of power was quantitatively and qualitatively circumscribed by geographical limits. As the balance of power becomes world-wide with its main weights in three different continents, the American and the Eurasian, the dichotomy between the circle of the great powers and its center, on the one hand, and its periphery and the empty spaces beyond, on the other, must of necessity disappear. The periphery of the balance of power now coincides with the confines of the earth. The formerly empty spaces lie east and west, north and south, on the poles and in the deserts, on land, on water, and in the air, athwart the routes over which the two superpowers must approach each other for friendly or hostile contacts. Into those spaces the two remaining great contenders on the international scene have poured their own power, political, military, and economic, transforming those spaces into the two great blocs which border at each other and oppose each other at the four corners of the earth.

4. POTENTIALITIES OF THE TWO-BLOC SYSTEM

These two blocs face each other like two fighters in a short and narrow lane. They can advance and meet in what is likely to be combat, or they can retreat and allow the other side to advance into what to them is precious ground. Those manifold and variegated maneuvers through which the masters of the balance of power tried either to stave off armed conflicts altogether or at least to make them brief and decisive yet limited in scope, the alliances and counteralliances, the shifting of alliances according to whence the greater threat or the better opportunity might come, the sidestepping and postponement of issues, the deflection of rivalries from the exposed frontyard into the colonial backyard—these are things of the past. With them have gone into oblivion the peculiar finesse and subtlety of mind, the calculating and versatile intelligence and bold yet circumspect decisions which were required from the players in that game. And with those modes of action and intellectual attitudes there has disappeared that self-regulating flexibility, that automatic tendency, of which we have spoken before,* of disturbed power relations either to revert to their old equilibrium or to establish a new one.

For the two giants which today determine the course of world affairs only one policy seems to be left, that is, to increase their own strength and that of their satellites. All the players that count have taken sides, and in the foreseeable future no switch from one side to the other is likely to take place, nor, if it were to take place, would it be likely to reverse the existing balance of power. Since the issues everywhere boil down to retreat from, or advance into, areas which both sides regard as of vital interest to themselves, positions must

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* See above, pp. 125, 126.

be held, and the give and take of compromise becomes a weakness which neither side is able to afford.

While formerly war was regarded, according to the classic definition of Clausewitz, as the continuation of diplomacy by other means, the art of diplomacy is now transformed into a variety of the art of warfare. That is to say, we live in the period of "cold war" where the aims of warfare are being pursued, for the time being, with other than violent means. In such a situation the peculiar qualities of the diplomatic mind are useless, for they have nothing to operate with and are consequently superseded by the military type of thinking. The balance of power, once disturbed, can be restored only, if at all, by an increase in the weaker side's military strength. Yet, since there are no important variables in the picture aside from the inherent strength of the two giants themselves, either side must fear that the temporarily stronger contestant will use its superiority to eliminate the threat from the other side by shattering military and economic pressure or by a war of annihilation.

Thus, as we approach the mid-twentieth century, the international situation is reduced to the primitive spectacle of two giants eyeing each other with watchful suspicion. They bend every effort to increase their military potential to the utmost, since this is all they have to count on. Both prepare to strike the first decisive blow, for if one does not strike it the other might. Thus contain or be contained, conquer or be conquered, destroy or be destroyed, become the watchwords of the new diplomacy.

That such is today the political state of the world does not of necessity result from the mechanics of the new balance of power. The changed structure of the balance of power has made the hostile opposition of two gigantic power blocs possible, but it has not made it inevitable. Quite the contrary, the new balance of power is a mechanism which contains in itself the potentialities for unheard-of good as well as for unprecedented evil. Which of these potentialities will be realized depends not upon the mechanics of the balance of power, but upon moral and material forces which use that mechanism for the realization of their ends.

The French philosopher Fénelon, in his advice to the grandson of Louis XIV, from which we have quoted before,[7] gave an account of the different types of the balance of power. In assessing their respective advantages and weaknesses, he bestowed the highest praise upon the opposition between two equally strong states as the perfect type of the balance of power. He said:

> The fourth system is that of a power which is about equal with another and which holds the latter in equilibrium for the sake of the public security. To be in such a situation and to have no ambition which would make you desirous to give it up, this is indeed the wisest and happiest situation for a state. You are the common arbiter; all your neighbors are your friends, and those that are not make themselves by that very fact suspicious to all the others. You do nothing that does not appear to have been done for your neighbors as well as for your people. You get stronger every day; and if you succeed, as it is almost inevitable in the long run by virtue of wise policies, to have more inner strength and more alliances than the power jealous of you, you ought to adhere more and more to that wise moderation which has limited you to maintaining the equilibrium and

the common security. One ought always to remember the evils with which the state has to pay within and without for its great conquests, the fact that these conquests bear no fruit, the risk which one runs in undertaking them, and, finally, how vain, how useless, how short-lived great empires are and what ravages they cause in falling.

Yet since one cannot hope that a power which is superior to all others will not before long abuse that superiority, a wise and just prince should never wish to leave to his successors, who by all appearances are less moderate than he, the continuous and violent temptation of too pronounced a superiority. For the very good of his successors and his people, he should confine himself to a kind of equality.[8]

The distribution of power which Fénelon envisaged distinctly resembles the distribution of power which exists, as we approach the mid-twentieth century, between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is a potential equilibrium with the preponderance at present on the side of the United States. The beneficial results which the French philosopher contemplated have, however, failed to attend this potential equilibrium between the United States and the Soviet Union, and they do not seem likely to materialize in the foreseeable future. The reason is to be sought in the character of modern war which, under the impact of nationalistic universalism and modern technology, has undergone far-reaching changes. It is here that we find the fifth and last of the fundamental changes which distinguish the world politics of the mid-twentieth century from the international politics of previous ages.

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[8] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 349–50.

CHAPTER XX

Total War

We have already pointed out that war in our time has become total in four different respects: with respect to (1) the fraction of the population completely identified in its emotions and convictions with the wars of its nation, (2) the fraction of the population participating in war, (3) the fraction of the population affected by war, and (4) the objective pursued by war. When Fénelon wrote at the beginning of the eighteenth century, war was limited in all these respects and had been so limited since the beginning of the modern state system.

Let us take as an extreme example of this type of limited warfare the Italian wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These wars were fought primarily by mercenaries who, their interests being in the main financial, were not eager to die in battle or to invite that risk by killing too many of their enemies. Furthermore, the *condottieri,* the leaders of the contending armies, were not interested in sacrificing their soldiers, for the soldiers constituted their working capital. They had invested money in their armies and they wanted them to remain going concerns. Nor did the *condottieri* want to kill many enemy soldiers, for as prisoners they could be sold for ransom or hired as soldiers for their own armies, but they could not be put to financial gain after they had been slain. The *condottieri* were not interested in decisive battles and wars of annihilation, for without a war and without an enemy there was no job. In consequence, these Italian wars consisted in good measure in skilled maneuvers and tactical artifices to compel the enemy to give up his positions and retreat, losing prisoners rather than wounded or dead.[1] Thus Machiavelli can report a number of fifteenth-century

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[1] Cf. the description by Sir Charles Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1924), II, 304: "For the combatants had no national or religious hatred for each other, and generally not even personal hatred, though some *condottieri* were jealous of others, or had old grudges of treachery or insult against them. But the men-at-arms of each host had probably served half a dozen times side by side with their enemies of the moment, since the bands were always passing into the pay of new employers. They might often be old friends of the particular squad against whom they were tilting. And even if this were not the case, all mercenaries were more or less brothers in arms, and despised the tyrant or the *bourgeoisie* which paid them. Moreover, a prisoner was worth to his captor not only the value of his horse and armour, but also a ransom, while a dead man could pay nothing. Hence victories became ridiculous — a tactically beaten corps made no great effort to escape, because surrender meant no more than pecuniary loss. And there was a possibility that the victor might offer them the chance of enlisting in his ranks — in which case the captive would not even lose horse and arms."

battles, some of great historic significance, in which either nobody at all or only one man was killed, and he not by enemy action but by accident.

Machiavelli's account may be exaggerated, and the Italian wars of the fourteenth and fifteen centuries may have been examples of traditional warfare,[2] but there can be no doubt that those wars were the manifestations of a type of limited war which has prevailed, with the sole significant exception of the Wars of Religion and the Napoleonic Wars, throughout modern history up to the First World War. One of the great military leaders of the eighteenth century, the Marshal of Saxe, proclaimed the very same principle of warfare that guided the *condottieri* of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when he said: "I am not at all in favor of battles, especially at the beginning of a war. I am even persuaded that an able general can wage war all his life without being compelled to give battle." And at the turn of that century, Daniel Defoe, author of *Robinson Crusoe*, observed: "Now it is frequent to have armies of fifty thousand men of a side at bay within view of one another, and spend a whole campaign in dodging, or, as it is genteely called, observing one another, and then march off into winter quarters."[3]

On the other hand, when that epoch of limited war had come to a close, Marshal Foch, in lectures given in 1917 at the French War College, summed up the old and the new — total — type of war:

> Truly a new era had begun, that of national wars which were to absorb into the struggle all the resources of the nation, which were to be aimed not at dynastic interests, not at the conquest or possession of a province, but at the defense or spread of philosophic ideas first, of principles of independence, unity, immaterial advantages of various kinds afterwards. They were destined to bring out the interest and faculties of each soldier, to take advantage of sentiments and passions never before recognized as elements of strength. . . . On the one side: intensive use of human masses fired by strong feelings, absorbing every activity of society and conforming to their needs the material parts of the system, such as fortifications, supplies, use of ground, armament, encampments, etc.
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> On the other side, the 18th century side: regular and methodical use of these material parts which become the foundation of various systems, differing of course with time but aiming always to control the use of troops, in order to preserve the army, property of the sovereign, indifferent to the cause for which it fights but not without some professional qualities, especially as regards military spirit and tradition.[4]

It is significant in this context that the phrase Fénelon used in the early eighteenth century to characterize the battles of the religious wars — "Either you are vanquisher or vanquished"[5] — reappears in Foch's characterization of the new total wars of the twentieth century: "A decision by arms, that is, the only judgment that counts because it is the only one that makes a victor or a vanquished; it alone can alter the respective situations of the opponents,

[2] Contemporaries distinguished between "good" and "bad" wars, the former corresponding to the type of war discussed in the text, the latter referring to the ferocity of the Swiss, especially in their encounters with German *landsknechte*, who reciprocated in kind.

[3] Quoted after John U. Nef, "Limited Warfare and the Progress of European Civilization, 1640–1740," *The Review of Politics*, VI (July, 1944), p. 297.

[4] Ferdinand Foch, *The Principles of War* (New York: H. K. Fly, 1918), pp. 31–2.

[5] Fénelon, *id.*

the one becoming master of his actions while the other continues subject to the will of his adversary. . . . If the defeated side only comes to terms when it has no means left of discussion, the aim must be to destroy its means of discussion." [6]

I. WAR OF TOTAL POPULATIONS

That in the new age of warfare the masses of individual citizens identify themselves fully with the wars in which their country is engaged is strikingly illustrated by two factors, one moral, the other empirical.

The moral factor is the revival, in the twentieth century, of the doctrine of just war, that is to say, of the distinction between belligerents whose participation in war is justified in ethics and law, and those who are not considered to have the legal and moral right to take up arms. This doctrine dominated the Middle Ages, but with the ascendancy of the modern state system it was watered down to the vanishing point. As Professor Ballis has pointed out in reference to the development of the doctrine in the sixteenth century: "The notion of the mediaeval schoolmen on a just war — guilt on one side and righteousness on the other — practically vanished. There came in its place the idea that the Sovereign was to make war as an accuser and as a judge." As a result, the new doctrine "widened by casuistry the chances for making virtually any kind of war just." [7]

Throughout the period of limited warfare, the distinction between just and unjust war remained at best ambiguous and was finally abandoned in the nineteenth century when war was considered to be a mere fact, the conduct of which was subject to certain moral and legal rules, but of which all states had a legal and moral right to avail themselves at their discretion. In this view, war was an instrument of national and, more particularly, of dynastic policy to be used alternately or simultaneously with diplomacy, as the government saw fit.

For the masses of a people to identify themselves wholly with such a war was obviously impossible. For such an identification a moral issue was needed for whose defense or attainment war was to be waged. In other words, war had to be just on one's own side and unjust on the side of the enemy in order to evoke moral enthusiasm in support of one's own cause and hostile passion against the enemy. Perhaps soldiers of fortune and professionals would be willing to lay down their lives without this justification, but not citizens-in-arms. Nationalism in the Napoleonic Wars and in the German and Italian wars of national unification in the nineteenth century, and nationalistic universalism in the two world wars of the twentieth have supplied that principle of justice and, with it, that passion and enthusiasm which have restored to masses of fighting men the willingness to conquer and die for an idea.

The vehicle upon which the ideas of nationalism and nationalistic universalism rode to victory was universal military service through conscription.

[6] *Op. cit.*, pp. 47-8, 58.
[7] William Ballis, *The Legal Position of War: Changes in its Practice and Theory from Plato to Vattel* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1937), pp. 102-3.

Neither mercenaries nor the riff-raff pressed into military service nor the good people kidnapped into it, which made up the rank and file of armies in the period of limited warfare, could be expected to be inspired by moral and ideal considerations. Their main interest to avoid battle and stay alive coincided with the desire of their leaders to keep the financial investment and the risks low by trying to win wars through maneuvering rather than fighting. Under Frederick the Great, two-thirds of the Prussian Army were recruited from foreign mercenaries. One-third of the Prussian Army which opposed the armies of the French Revolution in 1792 still consisted of mercenaries, and its inept maneuvering, aimed primarily at the avoidance of battle, corresponded well to the spirit of its soldiers who did not know for or against what they fought. "The French system of conscription," said the Duke of Wellington referring to the French and English armies of that period, "brings together a fine specimen of all classes; our army is composed of the scum of the earth — the mere scum of the earth."

During the period of limited warfare, desertions not only of individuals but of whole units were common. A mercenary or an army of mercenaries would serve one employer in the spring and another·in the fall, according to the benefits to be expected. If his contract was only for one fighting season, this procedure was perfectly regular, yet he would not hesitate to follow it regardless of contractual obligations if he was dissatisfied with the wages and working conditions under his old master.

It was especially effective in labor disputes of this kind for a contingent of mercenaries to look for another employer immediately before a battle or during a siege. Thus in 1521, at the siege of Parma, three thousand Italians deserted the French Army and went over to the other side. In October 1521, the Swiss contingent of the French Army in Italy was within a few weeks reduced through desertion from twenty thousand to six thousand men. The following spring, the new contingent of Swiss went on strike the day before the battle of Bicocca, virtually dictating the French battle plan, with the result that the Swiss attack was beaten back and the battle lost. In the opposing camp during the same battle, the German contingent is reported to have demanded double pay for staging a counterattack, neither of which was forthcoming. A few days before the battle of Pavia in 1525, six thousand Swiss and two thousand Italians left the French Army, although they had received their full pay. Their desertion reduced the strength of the French Army by almost one-third.

During the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whole armies changed sides time and again. In the eighteenth century, the losses which armies suffered from desertion exceeded the losses in battle, and the practice was so widespread that it was inadvisable for armies to camp or maneuver in poorly visible terrain and in other than close formation. To keep enough men in the field, Frederick the Great was forced to pay rewards to deserters who returned to their units within six months.

Military service was widely used as alternative punishment for crimes. The Landgrave of Hesse, for instance, who was opposed to capital punishment, used to send criminals under sentence of death to his regiment, and it was general practice to give insolvent debtors the alternative between serving

their sentence or enlisting in the army. The general contempt in which armies of this kind were held was commensurate with their morale. They were, as a contemporary of Frederick the Great put it, "animated neither by a spirit of patriotism nor by loyalty to their prince." They were kept together only by iron discipline and the prospect of rewards, and in view of their social origin, their social prestige, and the character of the wars fought by them, this could not have been otherwise.[8]

In order to have an army which was capable of identifying itself wholly with the cause of a war, it was necessary to have a cause which could unite a large mass of men behind it and an army which was homogeneous in terms of that cause. When Protestants and Catholics fought each other over the issue of whose religion should prevail, the unifying cause and the mass capable of being unified under that cause had materialized. When, in the period of limited warfare, wars were fought for the succession to a throne, the possession of a province or town, or the glory of the monarch, the two prerequisites were present for that fraction of the nobility which considered military service for the monarch as its hereditary privilege, but for nobody else. With the defense by the French nation-in-arms of the revolutionary freedoms against foreign aggression, a homogeneous army again had a cause to which it could be loyal and for which it was willing to die. The French law of 1793, making military service compulsory for all able-bodied men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, was the first legislative recognition of the new character of war.

While even an army originating in universal military service might fail to identify itself wholly with the cause of the war it is fighting, it can safely be said that as a rule only an army so constituted will be fully capable of that identification. Thus it is not by accident that the period of limited warfare coincides with a morally indifferent conception of war fought by heterogeneous armies whose main cohesive force was compulsion and the love of adventure and money, while, on the other hand, total war is coeval with the nation-in-arms imbued with the conviction of the justice of the war it is fighting.

Thus it was only consistent that, with the termination of the Napoleonic period and the restoration of the Bourbons and their dynastic foreign policies, conscription was abolished in France to be re-established only by the Third Republic. What the law of 1793 was for France, the laws of 1807 and of the following years were for Prussia. They abolished the hiring of mercenaries,

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8 Another variety of a limited war, of which the British were masters, has been well described by an anonymous author in the *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. I, January 1803, p. 357: "Those states, which are the most injured by the operations of war, are also the richest in superfluous stock. They have contrived a species of pecuniary commutation of war, similar to the commutation of military service, which paved the way for the introduction of standing armies: they have managed to turn off the battle from their gates, by paying less wealthy allies for fighting in their cause at a safe distance. The operations of war are in this manner rendered very harmless, and a foundation is laid for their gradual disuse. A few useless millions, and a few still more useless lives are sacrificed; the arts of peace continue to flourish, sometimes with increased prosperity; and the policy of preferring to purchase defeat at a distance, rather than victory at home — of paying allies for being vanquished, rather than gain the most splendid triumphs on their own ground — has been amply rewarded by the safety, increased resources, and real addition of power, which results from an enjoyment of all the substantial blessings of peace, with the only real advantages of necessary warfare."

prohibited the enlistment of foreigners, and culminated in the law of 1814 proclaiming the duty of every citizen to defend his country. Both the France of the revolution and the Prussia of the war of liberation used conscription as an instrument of the national spirit against foreign aggression, the former against the Prussia of the *ancien régime,* the latter against the France of Napoleonic imperialism.

2. WAR BY TOTAL POPULATIONS

When in the twentieth century the character of war again changes and its purpose transforms itself from national liberation and unification into nationalistic universalism, the participation of the population in war is correspondingly enlarged. Now not only able-bodied men are conscripted, but, in totalitarian countries, women and children as well. In the non-totalitarian countries, the auxiliary services of women — Wacs, Waves, and the like — are asked for on a voluntary basis. Everywhere, however, all the productive forces of the nation are harnessed to the purposes of warfare. Whereas, in the period of limited warfare, war was of little concern to the population at large, which was primarily affected by it through increased taxation, the wars of the twentieth century have become everybody's business, not only in the sense of nationalistic identification, but also of military or economic participation.

Two factors are responsible for this development: the increase in the size of armies and the mechanization of warfare. The size of armies has increased enormously in the twentieth century, both absolutely and relative to the total population. In the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, the size of armies, while steadily increasing, was counted in the tens of thousands. In the Napoleonic Wars, some armies reached a number of several hundred thousand men. In the First World War, armies for the first time passed the million mark, and the Second World War saw military establishments in excess of ten million men.

The proportion of the population engaged in military service in the different periods of modern history roughly corresponds to these absolute figures. To mobilize 1 per cent of the population for military services in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was an enormous undertaking which was rarely achieved; on an average no more than one-third of 1 per cent of the population was mobilized during that period. In the First World War, the great European powers called 14 per cent of their populations to arms. In the Second World War, the corresponding figure for the main belligerents was rather low. It exceeded 10 per cent probably only in the case of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Germany. This decrease is accounted for by the enormously increased mechanization of warfare.

Mechanization in weapons, supplies, transportation, and communications, together with the increase in size (which even at 10 per cent of the population is still ten times more than the maximum attained in previous centuries) requires the productive effort of virtually the total working population if the military establishment is to be kept fit for war. It has been estimated that the productive efforts of at least a dozen men are needed for one man actually

engaged in warfare. Since in the Second World War the armed forces of the great military powers, such as Germany, the Soviet Union, and the United States, exceeded ten million, the numbers of the civilian population supplying each of them with weapons, transportation, communications, clothing, and nourishment must have exceeded one hundred million by a considerable margin. Thus modern war has indeed become war by total populations.

3. WAR AGAINST TOTAL POPULATIONS

War has become total not only in the sense of everybody being a prospective participant in war, but also in the sense of everybody being a prospective victim of warfare. The comparative figures of losses in war, unreliable though they are in detail, are eloquent on that point. To take France as the nation which in modern history has been regularly engaged in the great wars of the epoch and to take as example the percentage, computed by decades, of the population of France killed or wounded in war from 1630 to 1919, we find that from 1630 to 1789, the outbreak of the French Revolution, the maximum is 0.58, the minimum 0.01 per cent. In the period from 1790 to 1819, which is roughly the period of the Napoleonic Wars, the figure rises steeply to 1.48, 1.19, 1.54 per cent, respectively, while it sinks in the period from 1820 to 1829, coincident with the revival of dynastic foreign policies, to the all-time low of 0.001. While the figures for the remainder of the nineteenth century fit closely into the general picture presented by the whole period, the figure for the second decade of the twentieth century, the period of the First World War, rises to the all-time high of 5.63 per cent. It is also significant that while the whole period from 1630 to 1829 shows only for one decade, 1720-29, no war losses at all, there are five such decades in the nineteenth century alone, the century of colonial expansion.

The picture is similar when we consider the figures for deaths in military service by centuries. The figures for Great Britain show the typical curve, slumping in the nineteenth century and rising steeply in the twentieth century. Great Britain had fifteen deaths in military service per thousand deaths for the total population in the seventeenth century, fourteen in the eighteenth, six in the nineteenth, and forty-eight in the twentieth up to 1930. The corresponding figures for France show a considerable rise in the eighteenth and no slump in the nineteenth century on account of the interruption of the period of limited warfare by the Napoleonic Wars. The figures are eleven for the seventeenth century, twenty-seven for the eighteenth, thirty for the nineteenth, and sixty-three for the twentieth up to 1930. The destructiveness of modern war, expressed in these figures, is still more strikingly revealed by the fact that in the preceding centuries by far the greater part of military losses was caused by diseases rather than by armed action. In consequence, losses through military action have increased relatively and absolutely to an enormous extent in the twentieth century.

Unprecedented since the end of the religious wars are the losses which the civilian populations have suffered through military action in the wars of the twentieth century. There can be little doubt that the total civilian losses due

to military action in the Second World War surpass the total military losses. The number of civilians killed by the Germans through measures of deliberate extermination alone are estimated at close to twelve million. The French record of 5.63 per cent of the total population killed or wounded in the First World War has not even been approximated by France in the Second World War because of the relatively minor role it played in the military operations. But that record has been left far behind by the Soviet Union which must have lost during the Second World War in killed and wounded close to 10 per cent of the total population, that is, almost double the percentage of the French losses in the First World War.[9] Thus the trend toward an enormous increase in the destructiveness of modern war, to which the figures for the First World War testify, has continued in the Second at an accelerated pace. The invention of new destructive methods of warfare, either not used at all in the preceding world wars, such as bacteriological warfare, or used only on a small scale, such as poison gas, guided missiles, and atomic bombs, seems to insure a continuation and further acceleration of that trend.

4. THE MECHANIZATION OF WARFARE

The enormously increased destructiveness of twentieth-century warfare, for combatants and civilians alike, is the result of the mechanization of warfare. Its effects in this respect are twofold: the ability to eliminate an unprecedented number of enemies through one single operation or the accelerated multiple operation of a weapon, and the ability to do so over long distances. Both developments started in the fourteenth century with the invention of gunpowder and its use for artillery. But it was only in the late nineteenth century that these developments were speeded up to a considerable extent, and only our time has witnessed such an enormous acceleration of these trends as to amount to a revolution in the technology of war.

The extreme slowness of these developments in the first six centuries of their history and the extreme rapidity in the seventh is illustrated by the history of artillery. The guns with which the Turks besieged Constantinople in 1453 could fire bullets weighing eight hundred pounds at a range of a mile, their rate of fire being seven rounds per day and one per night. In 1650 a cannon carrying a nine-pound shot had a point blank range of 175 yards, while two hundred years later the same range of an English nine-pounder smooth-bore was 300 yards. At the end of the eighteenth century, artillery was still regarded in most countries, with the one notable exception of France, as a subordinate and somewhat unbecoming weapon with which a gentleman would rather have nothing to do. Even Frederick the Great asked contemptuously what was valuable about artillery, and what art there was in shooting well. Yet, only a few decades later, Napoleon could say: "It is with

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[9] As to the contradictory figures of the Russian losses, see Dudley Kirk, *Europe's Population in the Interwar Years* (Series of League of Nations Publications. II. Economic and Financial. 1946. II. A. 8), p. 69, note 24, p. 70, note 28; *The World Almanac* (1946), p. 44; (1947), p. 521; (1948), p. 552. The estimate in the text is derived from the preponderant estimates in these sources.

the artillery that war is made," and it has been estimated that in the century following this remark the efficiency of artillery increased ten times.

The low esteem of the most potent and, together with the musket, lone representative of the mechanization of warfare remained traditional in the Prussian Army. In the eighteenth century, this contempt may not have been altogether without justification in view of the extreme slowness of loading, the inaccuracy of the aim, and the limited range (a maximum of 2,000 yards). But the nineteenth century witnessed a progress in the rapidity of fire and the range of firearms which foreshadowed the revolution of the twentieth. While, for instance, in 1850 the number of bullets fired by a smooth-bore muzzle loader by a thousand men in one minute was 500 and their range about the same as it had been for the musket of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, that is, less than 300 yards, the corresponding figures for the needle gun are 1,000 rounds and 2,200 yards; for the model 1866, 2,000 rounds and 2,700 yards; for the model 1886, 6,000 rounds and 3,800 yards; and for the repeating rifle with charger in 1913, 10,000 rounds and 4,400 yards. Between 1850 and 1913, the rapidity of fire had increased twentyfold and the range expanded sixteen times. Yet today we have machine guns which fire 1,000 rounds a minute, making 1,000,000 for a thousand men where there were only 10,000 in 1913, and even semiautomatic shoulder rifles, such as the Garand, are able to fire 100 aimed rounds per minute, that is, ten times more than the fastest small arms in 1913.

How great the progress made in this respect was between 1850 and 1913, and how overwhelming between 1913 and 1938, becomes apparent from a comparison with the slow progress made between 1550 and 1850. In the mid-sixteenth century, the range of the hand cannon was about one hundred yards, and one round in two minutes was about the best rate of fire attainable. While in the First World War the maximum range of heavy artillery — with great inaccuracy in aim and excessive wear on the gun which was worn out after a maximum of thirty rounds — did not exceed 76 miles (attained only by the German forty-two centimeter guns), at the moment of this writing guided missiles, that is, containers of explosives traveling under their own power, with a range of 250 miles are available. The range of a fully loaded bomber capable of returning to its base after the execution of its mission was in the neighborhood of 1,500 miles at the end of the Second World War and has since been increased to exceed 2,000 miles. Thus, while at the turn of the century the maximum distance within which a nation could attack a point in enemy territory was a few miles, it had increased in the First World War to 76 miles for artillery and a few hundred miles for — ineffective and lightly loaded — aircraft, and in the Second World War to about 1,500 miles and stands now at somewhat more than 2,000.

Yet if one considers the range of aircraft not in terms of their ability to return to their point of departure, but in absolute terms, the range of aircraft as a weapon has already for all practical purposes become limitless. For the maximum range of an airplane at the moment of writing being 10,000 miles, there is obviously no place on earth which cannot be reached by air from any other place, provided the airplane is not expected to return to its base. More particularly, the distance between New York and Moscow over the Great

Circle Route is only 4,800 miles and the distance between any major city either in the United States and the Soviet Union and the other country's territory hardly exceeds 6,000 miles. Consequently, an American or Russian airplane, even operating under less than optimum conditions and carrying a substantial load of bombs, is able to drop its load over any major city of the other country or, for that matter, of any country. Warfare in the mid-twentieth century, then, has become total in that virtually the whole earth is apt to be made the theater of operations by any country fully equipped with the technological instruments of the age.

The extension of the range of instruments of war to the whole earth can mean much or little for the character of modern war and its bearing upon contemporary world politics according to whether or not the increase in the destructiveness of war has kept pace with the increase in the range of its weapons. Through the enormous increase in destructiveness which has actually occurred during this century and, more particularly, in its fifth decade, modern war has transformed the potentialities of the total range of its weapons into the actuality of total war.

Until the invention of artillery and aside from naval warfare, one military operation by one single man was as a matter of principle capable of eliminating no more than one single enemy. One strike with a sword, one thrust with a spear or a pike, one shot from a musket would at best yield one disabled enemy. The first step toward mechanization taken at the end of the Middle Ages when gunpowder was used in warfare did not at first increase the ratio of one to one between military operation and eliminated enemy. Rather the reverse was the case. The loading and firing of an early musket, for instance, required as many as sixty different motions, executed generally by more than one man, and then the aim was so poor that only a small percentage of the shots fired would hit the target, eliminating one man. As for cannon, a considerable number of men were needed to bring it into position and load it and the poorness of the aim vitiated much of that collective effort. When a shot hit the target, however, the victims of one shot were at best counted by hardly more than the score.

The situation changed rapidly only with the invention of the improved machine gun in the later part of the nineteenth century. With this weapon one man in one operation could fire hundreds of rounds with the optimum effect of eliminating in one operation nearly as many enemies as there were shots fired. The radical improvement of artillery, starting in about the same period, and succeeding developments in the fields of air and gas warfare brought about a considerable increase in the number of enemies capable of elimination in one operation by one or very few men. The number was certainly still to be counted by the hundreds in the First World War, whose staggering losses are in the main accounted for by the machine gun mowing down charging infantry. Even during virtually the whole of the Second World War the number of victims of one direct hit by a block-buster could hardly have exceeded the thousand mark.

Atomic warfare and, as a potentiality, bacteriological warfare have wrought in this respect a revolution similar to, yet far exceeding in magnitude, the

one which the machine gun had brought about a few decades earlier. A few men dropping one atomic bomb at the end of the Second World War disabled well over a hundred thousand of the enemy. With atomic bombs increasing in potency and the defense remaining as powerless as it is now, the number of the prospective victims of one atomic bomb, dropped over a densely populated region, will be counted in the millions. The potentialities for mass destruction inherent in bacteriological warfare exceed even those of an improved atomic bomb in that one or a few strategically placed units of bacteriological material can easily create epidemics affecting an unlimited number of people.

However, weapons capable of destroying millions of people anywhere on earth can do no more than that and are to that extent a mere negative element in the scheme of things military and political. They may be able to break the will of the enemy to resist for the time being; but by themselves they cannot conquer and keep what has been conquered. To reap the fruits of total war and transform them into permanent political gains requires the mechanization of transport and communications.

Nowhere, indeed, has mechanical progress in the last decades been more staggering than with regard to the ease and speed of transport and communications. It can safely be said that the progress achieved in this respect during the first half of the twentieth century is greater than the progress in all of previous history. It has been remarked that the thirteen days which it took Sir Robert Peel in 1834 to hurry from Rome to London in order to be present at a cabinet meeting were exactly identical with the travel time allowed to a Roman official for the same journey seventeen centuries earlier. The best travel speed on land and sea throughout recorded history to close to the middle of the nineteenth century was ten miles an hour, a speed rarely attained on land. In the early twentieth century, railroads had increased the speed of travel by land to sixty-five miles an hour on the fastest train, six and a half times what it had been throughout history. Steamships had speeded up travel by sea to thirty-six miles an hour, three and a half times the maximum. Today the maximum speed of the airplane, at which travel might be possible under optimum conditions, is close to six hundred miles per hour, that is, ten and twenty times, respectively, more than the best travel speed about four decades ago, and sixty times more than it was a little more than a century ago.

In 1790, it took four days in the best season to go from Boston to New York, a distance somewhat exceeding two hundred miles. Today the same time is sufficient for circling the globe, regardless of season. In terms of travel speed, Moscow is today as close to New York as Philadelphia was a century and a half ago, and the whole earth is considerably smaller than was the combined territories of the Thirteen States which founded the United States of America. How rapid this development has been especially in the last few years, leaving far behind the expectations even of expert observers, is strikingly illustrated by the question which Professor Staley asked in 1939 while discussing the problems with which we are here concerned: "Is three hundred miles an hour an impossible passenger transport speed within twenty-

five years?" [10] Only nine years later the cruising speed of the fastest passenger plane exceeds four hundred miles an hour.

The significance of mechanical progress for travel, that is, transportation of persons, is virtually identical with its significance for transportation of goods, the mechanical means in both cases being virtually identical. The only difference might be found in the even greater rapidity of the mechanical development of the land-transport of goods because of its lower starting point. While today goods can be as speedily transported as persons, with the exception of the heaviest goods at maximum speeds, before the invention of the railroad the limitations of space and of power imposed greater limitations upon the speed of the land-transport of goods than of persons. Thus the introduction of railroads in Germany before the middle of the nineteenth century increased the speed of the transportation of goods eight times, while the corresponding increase for persons was hardly more than fivefold.

The corresponding development is, however, incomparably more rapid in the field of oral and written communications. Here mechanical progress has far outstripped the one in transportation of persons and goods. Before the invention in the nineteenth century of the telegraph, the telephone, and the undersea cable, the speed of the transmission of oral or written communications was identical with the speed of travel. That is to say, the only way to transmit such communications, aside from visible signals, was by the usual means of transportation. These inventions reduced the speed needed for the transmission of such communications from what had been formerly days and weeks to hours. Radio and television have made the transmission instantaneous with the utterance.

5 · WAR FOR TOTAL STAKES

These mechanical developments make the conquest of the world technically possible, and they make it technically possible to keep the world in that conquered state. It is true that there have been great empires before. The Macedonian Empire stretched from the Adriatic to the Indus, the Roman Empire from the British Isles to the Caucasus, and Napoleon's conquests from the borders of Gibraltar to Moscow. Yet these great empires either did not last or they lasted only because of an overwhelming differential in civilization, technical and otherwise, in favor of the ruling power as over against the subject peoples. The expansion of the Roman Empire illustrates this point. Many of its moves resemble colonial expansion into politically empty spaces rather than the overpowering of first-rank competitors. The other empires, however, could not last and fell far short of conquering all of the known political world because they were lacking in those technological resources necessary for the subjugation and permanent control of great masses of people dispersed over wide expanses of territory.

The technological prerequisites for a stable world-wide empire are essentially three in number: (1) enforced social integration through central-

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ized control over the minds of the subjects of the empire, (2) superior organ- ized force at any point of possible disintegration within the empire, and (3) permanency and ubiquity of these means of control and enforcement throughout the empire. None of these three military and political prerequi- sites has been achieved in the past, yet they are within the reach of our time.

Then the means of communication were nonmechanical or, where me- chanical, they were strictly individualized and, hence, decentralized. News and ideas could be transmitted only by word of mouth, by letters, or through the printing press which one individual could operate in his home. In this field, then, the would-be conqueror of the world had to compete on an ap- proximately equal footing with an unlimited number of rivals. He could put his rivals into prison or condemn them to death if he was able to identify and apprehend them. But he could not smother their voices through a monopoly or near-monopoly of the collection and dissemination of news, of press, radio, and moving picture. Nineteen centuries ago, St. Paul could go from city to city and write letters to the Corinthians and Romans, spreading the gospel, which was about all that the representatives of the religion of the Roman Empire could do, and when he was executed he left thousands of disciples doing what he had done in ever more effective and widespread competition with the representatives of the state. What could St. Paul do in the world empire of tomorrow without a newspaper or magazine to print his messages, without a radio network to carry his sermons, without newsreel and tele- vision to keep his likeness before the public, probably without a post office to transmit his letters, and certainly without a permit to cross state lines?

The means of violence, as we have already pointed out, were in former times largely nonmechanical and always individualized and decentralized. Here, too, the would-be founder of a world empire met his future subjects, barring superior organization and training, on a footing of approximate equal- ity. Either side had virtually the same weapons with which to cut, to thrust, and to shoot. The conqueror, in order to maintain his empire, would have had to achieve the impossible by establishing everywhere actual superiority of organized force against all possible opponents. Thus the inhabitants of Madrid could on May 3, 1808, raise against the French conqueror the same arms which the latter had at his disposal and drive him from the city. Today the govern- ment of a world empire, appraised of a similar situation by radio, would send within a few hours a squadron of bombers and a score of transports loaded with parachutists, mortars, and tanks, weapons of which it has a monopoly or near-monopoly, to the revolting city and squelch the revolt with ease. The very threat of the intervention of such overwhelming force, ready to strike at any place at a moment's notice, would discourage the mere thought of revolt.

Finally, the mechanization of communications has relieved the would-be founder of a world empire from that dependency upon favorable climate and geographical location which proved the undoing of Napoleon and prevented less dynamic and less tempted leaders from even conceiving the idea of world conquest. The one great impediment to world conquest in this respect was the necessity, lasting well into the nineteenth century, to stop fighting during the late fall, winter, and early spring; for it was impossible to protect the

army in the field against the weather and supply it with the necessities of life and the implements of war. Thus the enemy, if he was not overpowered beyond the hope of recovery in one campaign, was given a chance to prepare himself for a new campaign in the next fighting season. War, then, resembled a boxing match in which the intermissions after each round were long enough virtually to assure the comeback of the weaker opponent provided he was not knocked unconscious. Under such circumstances, to think of world conquest would have been sheer folly, for the work of conquest done in one fighting season had to be largely redone in the next. Since victory was less the result of conquest and annihilation than of the comparatively greater exhaustion of the vanquished, even the victor would have been far from possessing the resources necessary to take on new enemies every spring until he had conquered the world.

Yet, even if he had been brazen enough to start on the road to world conquest, he could not have gone far. Incapable of maintaining actual superiority of armed strength throughout the conquered territories, he would have been constantly faced with the likelihood of revolts prepared and executed without his being able to meet them in time. The slowness of communications and the technical difficulties of transportation would have made it impossible for the would-be conqueror of the world to consolidate whatever permanent conquests he might have been able to make. The further he extended the limits of his empire the greater would be the probability of his downfall. When Napoleon's empire had reached the zenith of its power in 1812, it was also closer than ever before to its disintegration. For while Napoleon was fighting at the fringes of his domain, pushing them ever farther away from the French sources of his power, the victims of his conquest could prepare behind his back for liberation. When they struck, aided by the largely uncommitted and unconquered resources of Great Britain and Russia, the main bulk of Napoleon's forces was far away and had to be brought back to the scene of revolt in defiance of the winter season and with tremendous losses, to be beaten at the spot which not the conqueror, but the conquered, had chosen.

Today the prospective conqueror of the world has technical means at his disposal for stabilizing beyond recall gains once made; for within the conquered territory the superiority of organized force, of which we have spoken above, is at his disposal everywhere and at all times, regardless of season and distance. An incipient revolt occurring a thousand miles from the next concentration of his air forces takes place in a distance of about twenty miles in terms of the Napoleonic technology of transportation and happens just around the corner in terms of the Napoleonic technology of communications. In other words, the conqueror is in a position to put all the modern techniques of mass propaganda into operation almost instantaneously in order to dissuade the disaffected from their undertaking. Within the span of a few hours, he can bring his superiority in organized force to bear upon the revolutionaries.[11]

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[11] The failure of the plot against Hitler in 1944 well illustrates this enormous superiority of the government in the face of an attempted revolt, even if staged by part of the armed forces. It shows, in particular, the decisive importance of modern mass communications controlled by the government; for it was for all practical purposes the voice of Hitler, speaking over the radio

Thus a conquest once made is made for good, from the point of view of the technological possibilities and barring, of course, blunders by the government, outside help from a superior force, or political and military contingencies from within the empire. With these qualifications, a people once conquered will stay conquered, for it has no longer the means to revolt, and the chances are that the conqueror, through his monopolistic control of the means of communications, will have deprived it of the will to revolt as well. For as Edmund Burke has said: "Let us only suffer any person to tell us his story, morning and evening, but for one twelve-month, and he will become our master." [12]

Today no technological obstacle stands in the way of a world-wide empire provided the ruling nation is able to keep its superiority in the technological means of domination. A nation which has a monopoly of atomic energy and of the principal means of transport and communications can conquer the world and keep it conquered, provided it is capable of keeping that monopoly and control. First of all, it will be able to mold the minds of the citizens of its world empire into a uniformity of submissiveness, of which the totalitarian societies of the recent past and present have given us fair samples. Under the assumption of a reasonably effective government, the will to revolt will at best be scattered and in any case it will lack political and military significance. Second, any attempt at revolt will meet with the speedy reaction of superior power and is thus doomed to failure from the outset. Finally, modern technology makes it possible to extend the control of mind and action to every corner of the globe regardless of geography and season.

6. TOTAL MECHANIZATION, TOTAL WAR, AND TOTAL DOMINION

This analysis of the mechanization of modern war and of its military and political implications would not be complete if it did not consider the over-all mechanization of Western culture, of which the mechanization of warfare is but a particular manifestation. For without that over-all mechanization the modern nations would never have been able to put mass armies into the field and keep them supplied with provisions and arms. Total war presupposes total mechanization, and war can be total only to the degree to which the mechanization of nations waging it is total.

From the beginning of history to the American Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, all military movements were executed by muscular power. Men would carry themselves and the implements of war either with their own muscles or with those of animals. All military movements as well as the size and quality of arms and armies were limited by the natural quan-

to the people and to some of the leaders of the revolt, which decided the issue in favor of the government. Cf. the excellent account in Allen W. Dulles, *Germany's Underground* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947).

12 "Thoughts on French Affairs," *Works* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1889), IV, 328.

tity and quality of the available muscular power of men and beasts. It was
the German Army which in 1870 for the first time used railroads systemati-
cally, after they had been used during the Civil War sporadically, as a means
of transportation. The Germans thus gained a considerable strategic and tac-
tical advantage over the French. Yet, as late as 1899, during the Boer War, as
many as thirty-two oxen were used for drawing one five-inch gun. The slow-
ness of the movement, the natural limitations of numbers which no human
effort could overcome, and the requirements for the procurement and the
transport of fodder made a war thus waged slow and cumbersome. It was the
energy supplied not by muscle, but by coal, water, and oil, in the form of
the steam engine, the turbine, the electric motor, and the internal combustion
engine, which multiplied by many times the productivity of men in peace and
war. Professor James Fairgrieve, speaking primarily of Great Britain, vividly
describes the contribution of coal to this development:

> Then into this world of agriculture and pasture and little market towns
> with a few ports and governmental cities there came, a little more than a century
> and a half ago, the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution. Coal, which up till
> then had been used here and there merely for domestic purposes, came to be
> used to drive machines which would do far more work than the individual man
> or animal, or even a number of men or animals could do. Man harnessed energy
> outside himself to do the things which before then he had to do himself with
> his own hands. Here was a tremendous new store of energy, not food energy at
> all, by which things could be done which could not be done before. Man has
> been able to use energy on a far vaster scale. . . . A man's clothing is prepared
> for him to the last stitch, so that there is very little clothes-making in the home.
> His food is to a very great extent made ready for his table, with the result that
> even in his home there is far less preparation of it, and in great cities food
> preparation on a large scale is such an industry that he may at almost any hour
> of the day or night obtain such a meal as suits his pocket or his palate. . . .
> It has been calculated that the coal used in our factories alone, all other uses
> whatsoever being excluded, gives the equivalent of the energy of 175,000,000
> hard-working men, and in such a useful form as men could never supply. The
> power of Greece, whereby she achieved such great things in all directions of
> human progress, was largely based in the first instance on the work done by the
> servile class. On the average each Greek freeman, each Greek family, had five
> helots whom we think of not at all when we speak of the Greeks, and yet these
> were the men who supplied a great part of Greek energy. In Britain, we
> may say, every family has more than twenty helots to supply energy, requiring
> no food and feeling nothing of the wear and tear and hopelessness of a servile
> life. With a population of 45 million men, women and children, Britain's fac-
> tories are worked by 175 million man-power more. In comparison with the
> energy supplied to machines in which things are made to move by purely
> mechanical means, the physical energy supplied by the fewer than 20 million
> men and women scarcely counts. We have become a nation of engineers, press-
> ing buttons and pulling levers, oiling and packing, so that the great social ma-
> chine will work smoothly and as easily as possible. The inanimate helots grind
> our corn, make our clothes, fetch our food from the ends of the earth, carry us
> hither and thither to work and play, print our news and our books of wisdom,
> and perform numberless services of which the Greeks never dreamed. . . .

There are fifty inanimate slaves of the furnace for every man, woman and child in the United States. . . .[13]

The savings in labor by virtue of this mechanization are enormous. To quote Professor Fairgrieve again, "Between 1855 and 1894 the time of human labour required to produce one bushel of Indian corn on an average was reduced from four and a half hours to under three-quarters of an hour. Between 1830 and 1896 the time of human labour required to produce a bushel of wheat was reduced from three hours to ten minutes." [14] American farm production in 1944 was the largest in history, while in the same year the number of people employed in agriculture was the lowest for seventy years. While in technologically backward countries up to 90 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture, the percentage of the total population working in agriculture in the United States declined from 50 per cent in 1870 to less than 20 per cent in 1940. While in 1910 more than 30 per cent of the population of the United States was engaged in farming, producing 20 per cent of the national income, the corresponding figures were 20 per cent of the population and somewhat more than 7 per cent of the national income in 1940, 15 per cent of the population and 10 per cent of the national income in 1946.

Professor Hornell Hart reports the following examples illustrating the same trend in industry:

> Until 1730 spinning, for example, was all done by hand: the spinner slowly and laboriously drew out one strand at a time. During the past 200 years machinery has so revolutionized the process that one operative takes care of 125 spindles, all turning at a speed of 10,000 revolutions per minute. In the Philippines, where industry is still in the ancient man-power stage, a cargo of copra is loaded by 200 to 300 coolies; in San Francisco, with its Machine-Age economy, 16 men unload the ship in one quarter of the time required to load it. The efficiency of the men working with power-machinery is fifty times that of the man-power loaders. One steam shovel does the work of 200 unskilled men; a glass blowing machine takes the place of 600 skilled workers; one automatic electric bulb machine produces as much as 2000 workers could formerly.[15]

A number of industrial processes have virtually eliminated human labor altogether. This is true particularly in the production of hydroelectric power which takes place without the presence of a single worker and is controlled by automatic electric signals. The production of pulp paper is entirely automatic from the feeding of the fluid pulp into the machinery to the emergence of the rolled paper. The same is true of the printing of newspapers from the feeding of the empty pulp into the machine to the emergence of the folded end-product. The manufacture of rayon and silk, of steel and automobiles, the production and canning of food, especially the processing of flour, have been mechanized with similar effects upon the increase in productivity and the displacement of muscular labor. While, owing to the small degree of mechaniza-

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[13] *Geography and World Power* (8th ed.; London: University of London Press, Ltd., 1941), pp. 314–17, 326. (Reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 323–4.

[15] *The Technique of Social Progress* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1931), p. 134. (Reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

tion in many productive processes, the over-all results of mechanization are considerably less impressive than these most spectacular examples would indicate, the trend is so general and so radical in some of the most important fields of production as to amount to a revolution — the greatest in recorded history — of the productive processes of mankind.

It is this revolution in the productive processes of the modern age which has made total war and world-wide dominion possible. Before its advent war was bound to be limited in its technological aspects. The productivity of a nation was not sufficient to feed, clothe, and house its members and to keep large armies supplied with the implements of war for any length of time. More particularly, national economies operated on so narrow a margin above the mere subsistence level that it was impossible to increase to any appreciable extent the share of the armed forces in the national product without endangering the very existence of the nation. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was not at all unusual for a government to spend as much as, or more than, two-thirds of the national budget for military purposes. A few times during that period military expenses consumed more than 90 per cent of the total outlay of the government. Military expenditures had, of course, precedence over all others, and the national product was too small to be taxed extensively for other purposes. Thus it was not by accident that before the nineteenth century all attempts at universal military service failed, for in the interest of keeping national production going, the productive classes of the population had to be exempt from military service. Only the scum which was unable to engage in productive enterprises and the nobility which was unwilling to engage in them could safely be conscripted.

The Industrial Revolution and, more particularly, the mechanization of agricultural and industrial processes in the twentieth century have had a triple effect upon the character of war and of international politics. They have increased the total productivity of the great industrial nations enormously. They have, furthermore, reduced drastically the relative share of human labor in the productive processes. They have, finally, together with the new techniques in medicine and hygiene, brought about an unprecedented increase in the populations of all nations. The increase in productivity thus achieved exceeds by far the increased demands upon the national product caused by the higher standard of living and the greater number of consumers. Excess in productivity is now available for new purposes and it can be guided into the channels of total war. The new energy created by the machine and much of the human energy which a century and a half ago was still absorbed in the business of keeping alive can now be employed for military purposes, either directly by way of military service or indirectly through industrial production.

The human energy now available for war is not muscular energy only. The machine age has lightened immensely the intellectual and moral burden of keeping one's self and one's dependents fed, clothed, and protected from the elements and from disease, which a century and a half ago still absorbed most of the vital energies of most men. Moreover, it has provided most men with an amount of leisure which only few men have ever had before. Yet, paradoxically enough, by doing so it has freed tremendous intellectual and moral energies which have gone into the building of a better world, but which have

also gone into the preparation and the waging of total war. This concatenation of human and material forces, freed and created by the age of the machine, has given war its total character.[16]

It has also given total war that terrifying, world-embracing impetus which seems to be satisfied with nothing short of world dominion. With his intellectual and moral energies no longer primarily concerned about this life nor any more able to be deflected toward concern with the life thereafter, modern man looks for conquests, conquest of nature and conquest of other men. The age of the machine, which has sprung from man's self-sufficient mind, has instilled in modern man the confidence that he can save himself by his own unaided efforts here and now. Thus the traditional religions with their negation of that confidence and their reliance upon divine intervention have become bloodless images of themselves. The intellectual and moral lifeblood of modern man streams into the political religions which promise salvation through science, revolution, or the holy war of nationalism. The machine age begets its own triumphs, each forward step calling forth two more on the road of technological progress. It also begets its own victories, military and political; for with the ability to conquer the world and keep it conquered, it creates the will to conquer it.

Yet it may also beget its own destruction. Total war waged by total populations for total stakes under the conditions of the contemporary balance of power may end in world dominion or in world destruction or in both. For either one of the two contenders for world dominion may conquer with relatively small losses to itself; or they may destroy each other, neither being able to conquer; or the least weakened may conquer, presiding over universal devastation. Such are the prospects which overshadow world politics as we approach the half-way mark of the twentieth century.

Thus we have gone full circle. We recognized the driving element of contemporary world politics in the new moral force of nationalistic universalism. We found a simplified balance of power, operating between two inflexible blocs, to be the harbinger of great good or great evil. We discovered the menace of evil in the potentialities of total war. Yet the element which makes total war possible — the mechanization of modern life — makes possible also the moral force which, through the instrumentality of total war, aims at total dominion.

[16] In the words of Professor Nef: "Once the nations found issues which they were prepared to quarrel over, which it was possible to persuade the ordinary man to die for, there was no longer anything inherent in material conditions, to hold them back, or to chain the passions of their leaders." "Limited Warfare and the Progress of European Civilization, 1640–1740," *The Review of Politics*, VI (July, 1944), 314.

International Government

The remedies for international anarchy and war discussed thus far are all specific remedies. They attack a particular problem in which the lack of international order and the tendency toward war are manifest and they endeavor to solve the general problem of international order and peace through a solution of the particular problem. International government owes its existence to the recognition that peace and order are the products not of a specific device meeting a particular problem, but of the common bond which unites an integrated society under a common authority and a common conception of justice. How to found such an authority in a society of sovereign states and to create such a conception of justice is, then, the task which any attempt at international government must try to solve.

Each of the three world wars of the last century and a half was followed by an attempt to establish an international government. The total failure to keep international order and peace called forth an over-all effort to make international order and peace secure. The Holy Alliance followed the Napoleonic Wars; the League of Nations, the First World War; the United Nations, the Second World War. With regard to each of these attempts at international government three questions must be asked: (1) Where is the authority to govern vested, or who is to govern? (2) By what principle of justice is the government to be guided, or what is the conception of the common good to be realized by the government? (3) To what extent has the government been able to maintain order and peace?

I. THE HOLY ALLIANCE

a) History

The international government commonly called the Holy Alliance was based upon three treaties: the Treaty of Chaumont of March 9, 1814, the Quadruple Alliance signed at Paris on November 20, 1815, and the Treaty of the Holy Alliance of September 26, 1815. In the Treaty of Chaumont, Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia concluded an alliance for twenty years for the purpose of preventing the Napoleonic dynasty from returning to France and of guaranteeing the territorial settlement to be made at the end of the

war against Napoleon. The Quadruple Alliance reaffirmed the provisions of the Treaty of Chaumont and in its Article VI laid down the principles of what is known as "congressional government" or "diplomacy by conference." [1]

In contrast with the Quadruple Alliance which presented, as it were, the constitutional law of the international government of the Holy Alliance, the Treaty of the Holy Alliance itself, from which the international government received its name, contained no principles of government at all. It proclaimed the adherence of all rulers to the principles of Christianity with God as the actual sovereign of the world. It is replete with phrases such as "reciprocal service," "unalterable good will," "mutual affection," "Christian charity," "indissoluble fraternity." Originally signed by the rulers of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, the Holy Alliance was adhered to by all European governments, with the exception of the Pope and the Sultan.[2] Obviously inspired by Czar Alexander I of Russia, it reaffirmed the moral unity of Europe and, as already pointed out, in that reaffirmation of a moral consensus among the nations lies one of the actual functions which the Treaty of the Holy Alliance fulfilled.

The Treaty of the Holy Alliance was of no significance for the actual operations of the international government which bore its name. Its principles were invoked from time to time by the Czar, affirmed in words and rejected in action by the other powers. Castlereagh, British Foreign Minister at the time of its conclusion, called it "a piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense," and the Austrian Chancellor Metternich made vulgar jokes at its expense. Yet it served as moral justification for the principles of justice which the three original signatories of the Treaty propounded and for the policies by which they endeavored to realize these principles. Thus the Treaty of the Holy Alliance also fulfilled an ideological function and became the symbol of this whole era of international relations.

In 1818, the four signatories of the Quadruple Alliance admitted France as a fifth member to take part in all further meetings which were to be held by virtue of Article VI of that treaty. In a circular signed in 1820 at the Congress of Troppau, Austria, Prussia, and Russia pledged themselves never to recognize the right of any people to circumscribe the power of their kings. This compact is known as the Neo-Holy Alliance. Castlereagh, in two dispatches of the same year, refused to have any part in policies whose purpose was to interfere by force in the internal affairs of other countries. His successor, Canning, maintained this principle at the Congress of Verona in 1822, the last of the congresses which Great Britain attended.

When the news of the failure of the Congress of Verona reached him, Canning, in a letter to Bagot of January 3, 1823, hailed the end of interna-

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[1] Article VI reads as follows: "To assure and facilitate the execution of the present Treaty, and to consolidate the intimate relations which to-day unite the 4 Sovereigns for the good of the world, the High Contracting Parties have agreed to renew, at fixed periods, whether under the immediate auspices of the Sovereigns, or by their respective Ministers, reunions devoted to the great common interests and to the examination of the measures which, at any of these periods, shall be judged most salutary for the repose and prosperity of the peoples, and for the maintenance of the peace of the State."

[2] The British monarch, for constitutional reasons, could not formally adhere.

tional government by congresses and the beginning of a new era, as far as Great Britain was concerned, by invoking the religious principle of the Holy Alliance with a vengeance: "Every nation for itself, and God for us all!" International government by conference as a going concern did not survive the British defection. After two more abortive attempts, one with reference to the Spanish colonies, the other concerning Greece and Turkey, it came to an end in 1825.

The system of an over-all international government instituted by Article VI of the Quadruple Alliance of November 20, 1815, did not last even a decade. The lifetime of the system of ambassadorial conferences for the set·tlement of special problems was even shorter. It, too, was established by the Treaties of 1815 and consisted of three agencies: the ambassador to France of Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia dealing mainly with the problems growing out of the peace treaties with France, yet acting in a general way as the paramount executive organ of the Quadruple Alliance; the ambassadors of the great powers meeting in London to organize the abolition of the slave trade; and the ambassadorial conference at Frankfurt for the discussion of German problems. All these agencies had disappeared by 1818.

b) Government by the Great Powers

The international government of the Holy Alliance was government by the great powers. The distinction between great and small powers as a political fact pointing to the extreme differences in power among nations is of course one of the elemental experiences of international politics. As an institution of international politics and organization it sprang from the brains of Castlereagh and became the very foundation of the scheme adopted in 1815. It is true that the protocol of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle of November 15, 1818, providing for future meetings of the five great powers also stipulated "that in the case of these meetings having for their object affairs specially connected with the interests of the other States of Europe, they shall only take place in pursuance of a formal invitation on the part of such of those States as the said affairs may concern, and under the express reservation of their right of direct participation therein, either directly or by their Plenipotentiaries." Yet this stipulation remained without appreciable influence upon the policies of the Holy and, more particularly, of the Neo-Holy Alliance.

c) Dual Meaning of the Status Quo

To the question as to what principle of justice guided the Holy Alliance, the answer seems to be clear: the maintenance of peace on the basis of the status quo. This principle was never more clearly stated than in the declaration of the five great powers signed at Aix-la-Chapelle on November 15, 1818: "The object of this Union is as simple as it is great and salutary. It does not tend to any new political combination — to any change in the Relations sanctioned by existing Treaties. Calm and consistent in its proceedings, it has no other object than the maintenance of Peace, and the guarantee of those transactions on which the Peace was founded and consolidated."

This answer, however, becomes highly ambiguous if one raises the further question as to what was meant by the status quo. What Great Britain meant from the very beginning was not at all what Russia meant, and the conception of the status quo which guided the policies of the Neo-Holy Alliance was diametrically opposed to the policies pursued by Castlereagh and Canning. The status quo which Great Britain tried to preserve through the instrumentality of the Holy Alliance was strictly limited to the political situation which existed at the end of the Napoleonic Wars with regard to France. To the British statesmen, the mortal peril into which Napoleon had put the British Isles was identical with the threat to the European balance of power which had emanated from the Napoleonic Empire. Great Britain was willing to support an international government whose purpose was to forestall the rise of a new conqueror from French soil and to that end to enforce the peace settlement of 1815 against France. The British conception of the status quo was limited to the territorial settlement of 1815 and the exclusion of a member of the Napoleonic family from the French throne. In this respect there was no difference between the foreign policies of Castlereagh and Canning.

The conception of the status quo which determined the policies of Russia from the beginning, and those of Austria, Prussia, and France from the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century, was unlimited territorially and as to subject matter. According to that conception, formulated in more uncompromising terms than the actual political conditions permitted to realize, it was the purpose of the international government of the Holy Alliance to maintain everywhere in the world the territorial status quo of 1815 and the constitutional status quo of the absolute monarchy. The instrument of the realization of the latter purpose was bound to be intervention into the internal affairs of all countries where the institution of the absolute monarchy seemed to be in danger.

The inevitable by-product of such intervention was an increase in the power of the intervening states. The more widespread national and liberal movements became, the greater was the chance for the intervening state or group of states to increase their strength and to expand and thus to disturb the balance of power again. The main beneficiary of such an eventuality was bound to be Russia. At this point Great Britain and Russia parted company.

Great Britain had not fought for almost a quarter of a century the Napoleonic Empire, nourished by the dynamism of the French Revolution, to exchange it for a Russian Empire, inspired by the religious mysticism of universal brotherhood and of legitimate government. In the measure in which the spread of national and liberal movements gave the Neo-Holy Alliance an opportunity to test its principles of general intervention, Great Britain held aloof from it and opposed its policies. When in 1818 Russia proposed to send an allied army to aid Spain in the war against its American colonies, Great Britain prevented the execution of the plan. Yet, when in 1820 revolutions broke out in Naples, Piedmont, and Portugal, Austria, in the name of the Neo-Holy Alliance, restored the absolute monarchies of Naples and Piedmont to their thrones by force of arms. In 1820, a revolution broke out in Spain. Against the constitutional regime installed by it, France intervened

by force of arms in 1823, acting on its own behalf, but with the moral support of Austria, Prussia, and Russia.

d) Peace, Order, and the National Interest

These actions of the Holy Alliance reveal two facts. One is the absence of a serious threat of war in any of these situations. The disparity of power between the intervening state and the object of intervention — the revolutionary group which had to contend not only with its own antirevolutionary compatriots, but also with a foreign army — was such as to give the intervention the character of a punitive expedition rather than of a war.

The other fact is the determination of the policies of all nations by their national interests, however much the language of diplomacy of the period made concessions to the mystical predilections of the Russian Czar. This is most obvious in the actions of Great Britain. Neither Castlereagh nor Canning — who was particularly frank and eloquent in this respect — took pains to hide the fact that they were guided by the traditional interests of Great Britain limited only by the general interest in peace and security. Both the Austrian intervention in Italy and the French intervention in Spain were dictated by traditional national interests. This connection is demonstrated by the very fact that the policy of interventions on the part of Austria and France in the affairs of their neighbors to the South survived the Holy Alliance by almost half a century.

More important still in view of our discussion is the victory which the particular national interests gained over the general principles of the Holy Alliance whenever both came into conflict. This happened twice, in 1820 and in 1822. In both cases Russia proposed a collective intervention on the part of all the members of the Alliance and to that end offered to send a large Russian army into Central and Western Europe. That Great Britain would have opposed such a proposal is obvious from what has already been said of the British return to its traditional balance-of-power policy. That Great Britain should have been joined in this opposition by Austria, the other pillar of the Neo-Holy Alliance, shows the ideological character of the principles of the Holy Alliance. These principles were invoked when they seemed to be able to give moral justification to policies dictated by the national interest. They were discarded when nothing was to be gained for the national interest by invoking them.

The attitude of the powers, when in 1821 the Greeks revolted against the Turks, is instructive in this respect. This is also the only situation arising during the era of the Holy Alliance which contained the germs of a general war and which in the century following it led time and again to the actual outbreak of war. The principles of the Neo-Holy Alliance left its members no choice in the attitude to be taken with respect to a national revolt against a legitimate government: the legitimate government ought to be given active support. Yet this was not the answer which the national interest of the most affected power demanded.

Russia had been the traditional protector of the subjects of the Ottoman Empire who were of the Orthodox Christian faith. The possession of Con-

stantinople was a centuries-old dream of the rulers of Moscow. Thus, when the Greek revolt broke out, the Russian Czar was inclined, in complete disregard of the principles of the Neo-Holy Alliance, to declare war against Turkey. Austria and Great Britain, on the other hand, could only see then, as they had done before and as they would for almost a century, with misgivings the extension of Russian power in the Balkans and Russia's advance toward the Mediterranean. Thus Castlereagh, the opponent of the Neo-Holy Alliance, and the Austrian Chancellor Metternich, its ardent supporter, joined hands in order to dissuade Russia from taking active steps in support of the Greek insurgents. That they made for that purpose successful use of the principles of the Neo-Holy Alliance against their author is an ironic comment on the difficulties facing a foreign policy which is based upon abstract principles rather than upon a clear recognition of the national interest. As Castlereagh wisely put it: It is difficult enough in international affairs to hold the balance "between conflicting nations," it is still more difficult to hold the balance "between conflicting principles."

When, finally, in 1826 the danger of war between Russia and Turkey became acute, it was not the defunct Holy Alliance which averted it, but Canning's audacious move of entering into an agreement with Russia for the purpose of forcing Turkey to make concessions to the Greeks without Russia's gaining immediate advantages from such internal reforms. After Canning's death the event occurred which Canning had been successful in preventing, and in 1828 Russia alone declared war on Turkey, thus having the latter at its mercy. The outbreak of this war may have had something to do with the decline of British statesmanship after Canning's death. It certainly had nothing whatsoever to do with the absence of the international government of the Holy Alliance.

The Holy Alliance, then, was a short-lived experiment which contributed nothing to the maintenance of international peace. As an international government imposing its rule upon its sphere of domination it was successful for hardly more than half a decade. Two congenital infirmities made its early demise inevitable. One was the diametrical opposition between the two main members of the Alliance as to what the defense of the status quo — upon which they had all agreed as the guiding principle of justice in the abstract — meant in concrete political terms. That meaning was determined by the national interests of the individual members. If those interests happened to coincide, the Alliance could act in unison as one collective body. If those interests diverged, as they were bound to do from time to time and as they did permanently in the case of Great Britain and Russia, the Alliance ceased to operate.

The other infirmity from which the Holy Alliance suffered was the contrast between the principle of justice upon which Russia, Prussia, and Austria agreed as a guide to concrete political action, and the conception of justice adhered to by the majority of the individuals governed by the principles of the Holy Alliance. The conflict between the principles of legitimate government and the principles of liberalism and nationalism made the operation of an international government, inspired by the former, dependent upon the

continuous use of armed force in order to protect and restore absolute mon-
archies and their possessions throughout the world.

It is a matter for conjecture how long an international government could
have performed such a task had all its members shared the convictions and
the zeal of Alexander I of Russia. The Holy Alliance could not prevail
against the opposition of some of its members and of the peoples subject to
its rule. In the era of Castlereagh, that dual opposition moved on parallel
lines, Castlereagh limiting himself to abstaining from active co-operation
with the policies of the Neo-Holy Alliance. It was Canning's great inno-
vation, favored by the increasing strength of the national and liberal move-
ments and later perfected by his successor Palmerston, to use those move-
ments as allies for the purposes of British foreign policies, that is, as weights
in the scales of the balance of power. With that innovation Canning ushered
in the British policy toward the continent of Europe which was to remain
dominant throughout the nineteenth century.

The international government of the Holy Alliance lacked any kind of
permanent organization and consisted, aside from the ephemeral ambassa-
dorial committees mentioned above, of nothing but a number of interna-
tional congresses for the purpose of settling current international affairs. Nev-
ertheless, the Holy Alliance was an international government in the true
sense of the term. A partial list of the issues which were on the agenda of the
Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle will illustrate the range of its governmental ac-
tivities: the claims of the German mediatized princes against the abuses of
their new sovereigns, the petition of the Elector of Hesse to exchange his title
for that of king, the request by Napoleon's mother for the release of her son,
the grievances of the people of Monaco against their prince, the claims of
Bavaria and the House of Hochberg to the succession in Baden, a dispute be-
tween the Duke of Oldenburg and Count Bentinck about the lordship of
Knupenhaussen, the situation of the Jews in Prussia and Austria, the rank of
diplomatic representatives, the suppression of the slave trade and of the Bar-
bary pirates, the question of the Spanish colonies.

e) The Concert of Europe

In comparison with these widespread governmental activities of the Holy
Alliance the subsequent century was retrogressive. The spectacle of a govern-
ment of great powers sitting in judgment over the affairs of the world did
not reappear until in 1919 the Council of the League of Nations re-enacted
the role which the Holy Alliance had played. Yet the era between the Holy
Alliance and the League of Nations was not devoid of *ad hoc* attempts at set-
tling international problems through the concerted action of the great pow-
ers. After the demise of the Holy Alliance the great powers continued to as-
sume responsibility for the settlement of political issues which without such
settlement might have led to war. That responsibility expressed itself in a
number of conferences, dealing with problems endangering the peace, such
as the Belgian question at the beginning of the 1830's, the Eastern question
at the beginning of the 1850's and again in 1878, the problems of Africa at

the beginning of the twentieth century. It was to that responsibility of the great powers for the peace of the world, operating through *ad hoc* conferences and generally known as the Concert of Europe, that Sir Edward Grey appealed in vain on the eve of the First World War.

The Concert of Europe differed from a genuine international government in two respects. On the one hand, it was not institutionalized. There was no agreement among the great powers to meet regularly or to meet at all. The great powers met whenever the international situation seemed to demand concerted action. On the other hand, the Concert of Europe was no longer animated, as has already been noted,[3] by a strong moral consensus, which could have neutralized conflicts and supplied standards for common judgments and actions. The cleavage between nationalism and legitimacy which the French Revolution had opened remained open throughout the nineteenth century. It might at times narrow or widen, but it did not close. Only at the end of the First World War did the national principle triumph and virtually all legitimate governments disappear.

Yet, despite the lack of a strong moral consensus, of an institutionalized government by conferences, let alone of an organized one, the Concert of Europe was most successful in preserving general peace during the ninety years of its existence. The only major international war which the world experienced during that period, the Crimean War of 1854–56, was due to a series of accidents. Had any one of these accidents failed to materialize the war might well have been avoided, for the Concert of Europe had already agreed upon the formula for peace when a delay of twenty-four hours in the transmission of the formula changed the whole picture.

What accounted for the success of the Concert of Europe in preventing general wars? Three factors must be mentioned. In that period of history the moral consensus of the European community lived on as a feeble echo, strengthened, however, by the humanitarian moral climate of the times. The political constellation, as we have seen,[4] favored expansion into politically empty spaces with accommodation of conflicting interests. Finally and most importantly, however, that period of history saw a succession of brilliant diplomatists and statesmen who knew how to make peace, how to preserve peace, and how to keep wars short and limited in scope. The portentous lesson which their work conveys to our age will be pondered later in this book.

2. THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

With the end of the First World War a new epoch began in the history of international government. The League of Nations showed in its functions a great deal of similarity with the Holy Alliance. In its organization, however, it constituted a radical departure from the experiment which had preceded it a century before.

[3] See above, pp. 187 ff.
[4] See above, pp. 278 ff.

a) Organization

The League of Nations, in contrast to the Holy Alliance, was a real organization with a legal personality, agents, and agencies of its own. Its political agencies were the Assembly, the Council, and the Permanent Secretariat. The Assembly was composed of representatives of all the member states. In the Assembly as well as in the Council each state had one vote and unanimity of all members present was required for all political decisions, including those which concerned the prevention of war.[5] The main exceptions were Article 15, paragraph 10,[6] and the rule that in decisions concerning the settlement of international disputes the votes of the parties to the dispute were not to be counted.

The Council consisted of two types of members: permanent and nonpermanent. All great powers, belonging at a particular time to the League, were permanent members, e.g., originally France, Great Britain, Italy, and Japan, to which were later added Germany and the Soviet Union. The nonpermanent members numbered originally four. Their numbers were increased successively until in 1936 the Council comprised eleven nonpermanent members. Thus originally permanent and nonpermanent members were equal in numbers. From 1922 on, the nonpermanent members had an ever increasing majority over the permanent ones. In 1939, after Germany, Italy, and Japan had resigned and the Soviet Union had been expelled, the Council comprised two permanent (France and Great Britain) and eleven nonpermanent members.

Yet what is important in view of the distribution of power between great and small nations is not their numerical relationship, but the permanent membership of the great powers in the Council. By virtue of this permanent membership, in conjunction with the rule of unanimity, the great powers could be sure that the Council could make no decisions without the consent of all of them. Furthermore, the distribution of voting strength in an international agency never tells the whole story. No great power will ever be alone in voting in favor of or against a certain measure if it does not want to be alone, nor will any group of great powers ever risk to be outvoted if it is anxious not to be in the minority on a particular question. Most small and medium powers depend economically, militarily, and politically upon the support of a great power. Such a nation will hardly cast its vote against a great power which has intimated that the smaller nation is expected to heed

[5] Cf. the emphasis which the Permanent Court of International Justice placed upon the principle of unanimity in the Advisory Opinion concerning Article 3, paragraph 2, of the Treaty of Lausanne (Frontier between Turkey and Iraq): "In a body . . . whose mission is to deal with any matter 'within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world,' observance of the rule of unanimity is naturally and even necessarily indicated. Only if the decisions of the Council have the support of the unanimous consent of the Powers composing it, will they possess the degree of authority which they must have: the very prestige of the League might be imperilled if it were admitted, in the absence of an express provision to that effect, that decisions on important questions could be taken by a majority. Moreover, it is hardly conceivable that resolutions on questions affecting the peace of the world could be adopted against the will of those amongst the Members of the Council who, although in a minority, would, by reason of their political position, have to bear the larger share of the responsibilities and consequences ensuing therefrom." (P. C. I. J. Series B, No. 12, p. 29).

[6] For the text see below, note 7.

the advice of the big brother. Thus every great power controlled a number of votes of the small and medium members of the League. On any important issue France could be certain of the votes of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Rumania, and — for more than a decade — Poland. Great Britain could count upon the votes of most of the dominions, of the Scandinavian countries, and of Portugal.

This controlling influence of the great powers, regardless of the legal structure of the organization, operated in the League of Nations side by side with the brilliant intellectual leadership of the representatives of a number of small and medium nations. Benes of Czechoslovakia, Politis of Greece, Nansen, Lange, and Hambro of Norway, Branting and Undén of Sweden, Titulescu of Rumania, and Motta and Rappard of Switzerland exerted an influence upon the work of the League of Nations out of all proportion to, and irrespective of, the power of their particular countries. The scene of that leadership was primarily the Assembly. The Assembly of the League of Nations, in contrast to the General Assembly of the United Nations, had the authority to render binding decisions not only with regard to routine matters or questions of secondary importance, but also concerning political problems, such as peace-preserving measures.[7] To that extent the Assembly of the League of Nations played the role of a real parliament where leadership fell many times to the best qualified representative, regardless of the power and sometimes even of the interests of his country.

However, that leadership stopped at the line where the vital interests of the great powers began. In the great crises of the League the leadership of the great powers asserted itself. When in a conflict of first-rate political importance, such as the Italo-Ethiopian War or the Spanish Civil War, the attitude of some of the small and great powers diverged, the policies of the great powers were bound to win. For the preponderance of the great powers on the international scene is a fact, as the preponderance of great economic organizations is a fact in domestic society. No legal arrangement nor organizational device, short of destroying that preponderance of power itself, can undo the political consequences of that disparity of power. Thus in the League the small nations enjoyed a greater opportunity for influence and independent action than they ever did before or since in modern times. Yet the international government of the League of Nations, at least in the sphere of high politics, was a government of the great powers.

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[7] See Article 3, paragraph 3, of the Covenant: "The Assembly may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world." See also Article 15, paragraphs 9, 10: "The Council may in any case under this Article refer the dispute to the Assembly. The dispute shall be so referred at the request of either party to the dispute provided that such request be made within fourteen days after the submission of the dispute to the Council.

"In any case referred to the Assembly, all the provisions of this Article and of Article 12 relating to the action and powers of the Council shall apply to the action and powers of the Assembly, provided that a report made by the Assembly, if concurred in by the Representatives of those members of the League represented on the Council and of a majority of the other members of the League, . . . shall have the same force as a report by the Council concurred in by all the Members thereof. . . ."

b) Dual Meaning of the Status Quo: France vs. Great Britain

What were the principles of justice which the international government of the League of Nations was to realize? That question has found a symbolic answer in the fact that the twenty-six articles of the Covenant of the League of Nations are identical with the first twenty-six articles of the peace treaties which settled the issues of the First World War. The intimate connection between the League of Nations and the status quo of 1919 was thus made obvious from the very outset. The provisions of the Covenant put that connection in explicit legal terms. The Preamble refers to "international law as the actual rule of conduct among governments" and to "a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations." Article 10 makes the League of Nations the defender of the territorial status quo of 1919 by establishing the legal obligation of the members "to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing independence of all members of the League." All provisions of the subsequent articles concerning the settlement of disputes and its enforcement must be read in the light of this provision of Article 10. This provision lays down the standard by which the agencies of the League were to be guided in evaluating the claims and actions of nations and in devising methods to meet a threat to the peace.

It is true that the framers of the Covenant tried to relieve the League from the stigma of being completely identified with the status quo of 1919. To that end they provided in Article 19 for peaceful change. We have already pointed to the intrinsic weakness of that provision which remained a dead letter from the beginning. But aside from its intrinsic defects, Article 19 pales into insignificance if seen in its orphan-like isolation within the structure of the Covenant and if compared with the organic connection in which Article 10 stands to the peace treaties of 1919, on the one hand, and to the peace-preserving and law-enforcing provisions of Articles 11–16 of the Covenant, on the other. Article 19, then, was little more than a verbal concession to the undeniable fact of change. Its fundamental law no less than its origin, identical with the peace treaties of 1919, made it inevitable that the League as a working organization of international government should judge and act as the defender of the status quo.

Two principles were at the foundation of the status quo of 1919: the permanent inability of Germany to wage war and the principle of national self-determination. Yet, from the very outset, the two nations mainly responsible for the policies of the League, Great Britain and France, interpreted these two principles in distinctly different ways and tried to shape the policies of the League according to these different interpretations. For France, Germany's permanent inability to wage war was synonymous with the permanent preponderance of France on the continent of Europe. For Great Britain, Germany's permanent inability to wage war was not incompatible with the comeback of Germany as a great power within controlled limits so that at least the semblance of a balance of power would again exist on the continent of Europe.

France looked to the League of Nations primarily as a kind of collective

sheriff which would add its strength to the military might of France for the defense of the status quo of 1919. Great Britain considered the League of Nations primarily a kind of clearing-house where the statesmen of the world would meet to discuss their common problems and seek agreement by way of compromise. Finally, France used the principle of national self-determination as a political weapon with which to strengthen its allies in Eastern Europe against Germany. Great Britain saw in it a principle capable of universal application, at least on the European continent, which one might well use to strengthen Germany at the expense of the allies of France.

At the bottom of these divergent interpretations of standards of justice and of political principles we find again the basic pattern of international politics. France subordinated all its policies as one of the leading members of the international government of the League of Nations to its overriding desire to maintain the status quo of 1919. This status quo was identical with France's hegemony on the European continent. Great Britain thought it could regain the controlling influence which it had exerted over the affairs of Europe during the nineteenth century. To that end it tried to restore the power constellation which had existed during that period: a balance of power on the European continent with Great Britain as its holder. Thus its policies as the other leading member of the international government of the League were all directed toward undermining the status quo of 1919 within limits which Great Britain thought it could determine at will. This goal of British foreign policy could only be attained by weakening France.

This conflict between the British and French conceptions and policies did not, however, wreck the League of Nations, as the conflict between Great Britain and Russia had brought about the dissolution of the Holy Alliance. It rather led to a creeping paralysis in the political activities of the League and to its inability to take determined action against threats to international order and peace. It culminated in the triumph of the British over the French conception. The distribution of power between Great Britain and France was in the main responsible for this development.

The margin of French superiority started to shrink in the mid-twenties in proportion to the growth of German strength, first slowly and imperceptibly and following Hitler's ascent to power with ever increasing speed. In 1919, France asked for the separation of the left bank of the Rhine from Germany and for treaties of alliance with Great Britain and the United States. France received neither. It was able to make only two additions to its own military strength which barely concealed its intrinsic weakness in comparison with the potentialities of German power. One addition was the alliances with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania, and the treaty of friendship with Yugoslavia. These allies, however, were at best medium states. Some, if not all of them, were militarily overrated and could not be relied upon to act always in unison. The other addition was the Locarno Treaties of 1925 putting the Franco-German frontier under the joint guarantee of Great Britain and Italy. Yet France was unable to obtain a similar guarantee for the German-Polish frontier, nor was it able to gain British support for an automatic system of collective security which would have

closed certain loopholes left open by the Covenant of the League of Nations.[8]

Under such conditions of hegemonial power in the short run and incurable weakness in the long run, France started in the mid-twenties to follow in its policies within the League of Nations the British lead, at first hesitatingly, and in the thirties without alternative.[9] For by then France's own indecision and now apparent weakness incapacitated it to seek on its own account the implementation of those provisions of the Covenant which could have enabled the League to play the role of an international government for the maintenance of international order and the prevention of war. France by itself had not the power to make the League play that role. Great Britain had no interest in making the League play it. For the performance of that role would have meant the perpetuation of unchallenged French supremacy on the European continent, which Great Britain was resolved to bring to an end. Thus the British conceptions and policies put their imprint upon the governmental activities of the League of Nations.

c) Three Weaknesses of the League of Nations

This is not to say that the League of Nations did not exercise important governmental functions. The League of Nations governed two territories: the Saar Basin and the City of Danzig. It governed indirectly — according to the text of Article 22 of the Covenant rather than in actuality — the mandated territories.[10] Yet, when it came to the maintenance of international order and the preservation or restoration of peace, it governed only in the rare instances when either the interests of the great powers among its members were not affected or the common interests of the most influential among them seemed to require it.

The League of Nations did not act as an international government when

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[8] See below, pp. 376, 377.

[9] This trend was interrupted only for a short while in 1934 when the French Foreign Minister Barthou prepared the ground for a military alliance with the Soviet Union, which, however, none of his successors dared to implement. The foreign policy of Laval in that period, while strongly anti-British in intent, was identical with the British in undermining the status quo of 1919.

[10] Cf. the following provisions of Article 22: "To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

"The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who, by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position, can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League. . . .

"In every case of mandate, the Mandatory shall render to the Council an annual report in reference to the territory committed to its charge.

"The degree of authority, control or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory shall, if not previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, be explicitly defined in each case by the Council.

"A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates."

in 1920 Poland seized Vilna, the old Lithuanian capital; for that violation of international law was committed by the strongest ally of France. The League of Nations refused to act when in 1923 Italy occupied the Greek island of Corfu. It did nothing even approaching the nature of enforcement action after Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, and after it invaded China proper in 1937. The League did nothing to prevent or stop the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay in 1932–5, except to recommend an arms embargo at first against both belligerents and later against Paraguay alone. From 1935 on, the League did nothing effective to maintain its authority within the territory of the City of Danzig, and it did nothing in the face of the continuous violations of the Treaty of Versailles by Germany. What the League did in 1935–36 with respect to Italy's attack upon Ethiopia could not, as we have seen,[11] have been different had it been calculated to be ineffective. The League of Nations did nothing to control the international effects of the Spanish Civil War from 1936 on. In December 1939, however, the League expelled the Soviet Union because of its attack against Finland. It was the last and — aside from the sanctions against Italy — the most radical of the League's political actions.

The League of Nations prevented no major war, and it was ineffective in maintaining international order. The reasons for this failure, aside from the prevalence of the British conception over the French, are threefold: constitutional, structural, and political.

CONSTITUTIONAL WEAKNESS. Under the Covenant of the League of Nations, war as such was not outlawed. The members of the League were not allowed to go to war under certain conditions. By the same token they were allowed to go to war in the absence of those conditions. Thus the Preamble to the Covenant stipulated "the acceptance of obligations [12] not to resort to war." Article 12 provided that the members should not "resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators. . . ." By virtue of Article 13, paragraph 4, the members agreed "that they will not resort to war against a member of the League which complies" with the judicial decision of a dispute. Finally, according to Article 15, paragraph 6, "If a report by the Council is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League agree that they will not go to war with any party to the dispute which complies with the recommendations of the report."

Only the two latter provisions contain an outright prohibition to go to war. As Mr. Jean Ray put it: "We are convinced that this timidity of the authors of the Covenant has serious consequences and puts in jeopardy the new system which they tried to erect. As a matter of fact, since the contrary opinion was not clearly expressed, it remained tacitly admitted that war is a solution, the normal solution, of international conflicts. These obligations, as a matter of law, are presented only as exceptions; the implicit rule is the recourse to war." [13] Even if the members had lived up to the provisions of

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[11] See above, pp. 236, 336, 337.

[12] In contradistinction to "the obligation." The French text: (*"certaines obligations"*) is more emphatic on that score.

[13] *Commentaire du Pacte de la Société des Nations* (Paris: Sirey, 1930), pp. 73–4.

the Covenant, they would have found in the fundamental law of the League an instrument for the prevention of some wars and for the legalization of others.

STRUCTURAL WEAKNESS. This constitutional weakness, however, did not affect the actual operations of the League; for the League did not live up to its constitution. On the other hand, the structural weakness of the League had a direct bearing upon its failure to prevent the wars which occurred under its jurisdiction. That weakness consisted in the contrast between the distribution of power within it and the distribution of power in the world at large.

The structure of the League was predominantly European in a period when the main factors of international politics were no longer predominantly European. Both great powers which in turn dominated it, France and Great Britain, were European powers. The only non-European great power which was a member of the League was Japan. Of the two nations which were already in the twenties and thirties potentially the two most powerful nations on earth, the United States was never a member, the Soviet Union only during the League's declining years from 1934-39.

It is, of course, true that of the thirty-one original members only ten were European and only seven of the thirteen states which joined it later. But here again numbers do not tell the story. An international organization whose main purpose is the maintenance of international order and the preservation of international peace does not need to be universal in the sense that all nations of the world belong to it. It must, however, be universal in the sense that all powerful nations, which are most likely to disturb the peace of the world, are under its jurisdiction.

Article 17 of the Covenant, therefore, attempted to make the jurisdiction of the League universal regardless of membership. It gave the League authority in case of a dispute between two states, one or both of which were not members of the League, to invite the nonmembers "to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such disputes, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. . . . If a state so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership and shall resort to war against a member of the League," the sanctions of Article 16 shall be applicable against such a state. "If both parties to the dispute . . . refuse to accept the obligations of membership . . . the Council may take such measures, and make recommendations as will prevent hostilities and will result in the settlement of the dispute."

This last paragraph of Article 17 endeavored to make the League of Nations a world government for the purpose of preserving peace. The feasibility of such a government must again depend upon the distribution of power between the members of the League acting in unison and those states over which the governmental functions are to be exercised. The League would have had no difficulty in making its will prevail over two small or medium states. Let us suppose, however, that a dispute had broken out between a member of the League, on the one hand, and the United States or the Soviet Union or both, on the other, or between the two latter powers any time between 1919 and 1934, when neither country was a member of the

League. Under such circumstances, the attempt to impose the League's will upon the United States or the Soviet Union or both would have amounted to a world war between the members of the League and either one or two of the potentially most powerful nations on earth, with a number of non-member states either joining the latter or remaining neutral. The attempt to preserve peace on a universal scale would have led to war on a universal scale.[14] Thus the membership of some great powers and the nonmembership of other great powers rendered the League powerless to preserve peace on a world-wide scale.

This lack of universality in the membership of the great powers also indicates the fundamental reason for the failure of British and French policies in the period between the two world wars. The policies of both countries were anachronistic. The policies of France might perhaps have succeeded in the age of Louis XIV. Then the main weights of the balance of power were located in Central and Western Europe, and such a preponderance as France gained in 1919 would have given it a real chance to establish its permanent hegemony over the continent. Yet after Russia had become one of the main factors in the balance of power, Napoleon had to learn that a hegemony over the European continent meant little with the resources of Eastern Europe and of the better part of Asia either uncommitted or hostile. This lesson was heeded by the brilliant French diplomatists who in the two decades preceding the First World War founded French foreign policy upon close ties with Russia. Their successors in the period between the two world wars based their hopes upon a system of alliances with the balkanized countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, a poor substitute for the "grand alliance" with Russia. Obsessed with the fear of revolution, very much like the French aristocrats in the years after 1789, they were ready to commit national suicide rather than to yield to the logic of a new international constellation.

British foreign policy in that period was as anachronistic as the French. Great Britain was intrinsically as weak with regard to the continent of Europe as France was with regard to Germany. The role which Russia played in relation to France, the United States and, to a much lesser degree, Japan played in relation to Great Britain. A policy which was still successful in the age of Disraeli was doomed to failure in the age of Stanley Baldwin. Throughout the nineteenth century, Great Britain's backyard, as it were, had been secure; the British Navy controlled the seas without challenge. In the thirties, other great naval powers had arisen, one of them potentially the most powerful nation on earth. Furthermore, the airplane brought the British Isles closer to the continent than they had ever been before. Under such conditions, British foreign policy had two alternatives. It could place its weight permanently in that scale of the European balance of power where British interests in the long run seemed to be most secure. Or it could make itself the spearhead of American policy in Europe.[15] What British policy

[14] The reader will remember that this situation is identical with the one which we found to exist when collective security is applied in actuality; cf. above, pp. 332 ff.
[15] It is worthy of note that Great Britain is now pursuing these two foreign policies simultaneously.

could not do was to continue the policy of "splendid isolation." And this is what it did.

It will remain forever a moot question whether or not France and Great Britain had any real choice in the face of the policies actually pursued by the Soviet Union and the United States. It is, however, beyond doubt that an international government never had a chance whose leading members, either by choice or by necessity, followed policies so completely at odds with the actual distribution of power in the world.

POLITICAL WEAKNESS. This would have been true even on the assumption that the League of Nations had been able to act as a unit in the face of a threatening war of major proportions. Actually this assumption was never realized. Divergent national interests pursued by the great powers prevailed over the principles of justice defined by the League of Nations in terms of the status quo. In 1921, immediately after the First World War, the four permanent members of the Council of the League were still able to act in unison with respect to relatively important political issues, such as the fortification of the Aaland Islands involving Finland and Sweden and the partition of Upper Silesia which was a bone of contention between Germany and Poland. After these promising beginnings, it was not only the conflict between France and Great Britain which incapacitated the League for collective action on matters of major importance, but the separate and generally antagonistic policies of the great powers.

When Germany joined the League in 1925, it pursued a policy of undermining the status quo of Versailles, mainly using the principle of national self-determination as the dynamite with which to crack the foundations of the territorial status quo. This policy was at odds with the policies of France and its Eastern allies and was aimed, first surreptitiously and later openly, at the termination of their preponderance on the continent of Europe. In addition to the principle of national self-determination, Germany used the dual fear of Bolshevist revolution and Russian imperialism, which obsessed the Western powers, as a weapon with which to strengthen its own position. While alternately offering itself as a bulwark against Bolshevism and threatening to ally itself with the Soviet Union, Germany was able to wring concessions from the Western powers, to isolate Poland from France, and to paralyze the League.

Italy, on its part, pursued in the twenties a policy which was somewhat similar to the one pursued by Great Britain. Italy welcomed the comeback of Germany within certain limits as a means to weaken France and its Eastern allies, especially Yugoslavia. When in the thirties the impotence of the League had become obvious, Italy used Germany as Germany was using the Soviet Union: alternately as common menace and as a silent partner, and made an open bid against Great Britain and France for domination of the Mediterranean.

The Soviet Union was as isolated within the League as it had been without. Its potential strength as a nation and its sponsorship of world revolution made it a dual menace to the Western powers. It proved to be impossible for France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union to unite for common action in

any of the great crises from 1934–39, with the exception of the sanctions against Italy. In all those crises the Western powers and the Soviet Union found themselves in opposite camps. The Spanish Civil War is the outstanding example of this chronic antagonism. Even when in 1939 Germany threatened both the Soviet Union and the Western powers with war, they were unable to agree upon common preventive action. Instead, each side tried to deflect the threatening stroke of lightning against the other side. It was only the accident of Hitler's folly to wage war against both at the same time that made them allies despite themselves.

Finally, Japan, smarting under the inferiority which the treaties of 1922 had imposed upon it, prepared for the moment when it could establish its own hegemony in the Far East. Japan could do so only by dislodging Great Britain and the United States from their positions in the Far East and by "closing the door" to China which, as a matter of traditional policy, Great Britain and the United States had insisted upon keeping open for all nations. Thus, when Japan took the first step toward establishing its Far Eastern empire by invading Manchuria in 1931, it could not help but come into conflict with France and Great Britain, the leading members of the League of Nations. It is not without ironic significance that Japan, in establishing its dominion, made use of the same principle of national self-determination which had carried France and Great Britain to dominance in the League of Nations. Now it was employed to rally the colored races of the Far East against the colonialism of the leaders of the League. Yet neither while Japan remained a member of the League nor after its resignation in 1932 did Great Britain feel strong enough to lead the League in effective collective action in order to stop Japan's attack against China.

The ability of the League of Nations to prevent war was predicated upon the unity of its members and especially of the great powers. By virtue of the principle of unanimity, any member of the League, except parties to a dispute, could veto a decision by voting against a motion to take action. Given the antagonistic policies pursued by the leading members of the League, the very likelihood of a veto impeded even attempts at decisive collective action. Only an overriding principle of justice could have made such action possible. As we have seen, such principles of justice did exist in the abstract as collective defense of the status quo against the nations vanquished in the First World War and as national self-determination.

Confronted with a political situation demanding concrete action, these abstract principles transformed themselves into ideological justifications for the separate policies pursued by the individual nations. Thus these abstract principles of justice, far from providing common standards of judgment and guides for common action, actually strengthened international anarchy by strengthening the antagonistic policies of individual nations. The inability of the League of Nations to maintain international order and peace, then, was the inevitable result of the ascendancy which the ethics and policies of sovereign nations were able to maintain over the moral and political objectives of the international government of the League of Nations.

3 · THE UNITED NATIONS

a) Government by Superpowers

In its organization the United Nations resembles the League of Nations. It, too, has three political agencies: the General Assembly composed of all members of the United Nations, the Security Council as the political executive of the organization, and the Secretariat. The distribution of functions between the General Assembly and the Security Council, however, differs distinctly from that between the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations. The tendency toward government by the great powers, which was already unmistakable in the League of Nations, completely dominates the distribution of functions in the United Nations. This tendency manifests itself in three constitutional devices of the Charter: the inability of the General Assembly to make decisions in political matters; the limitation of the requirement of unanimity to the permanent members of the Security Council; the right of parties to disputes to veto enforcement measures against themselves.

The Assembly of the League of Nations was, as we have seen, a real international parliament, which could take action in political matters alone or in competition with the Council of the League. The General Assembly of the United Nations, according to Articles 10–14 of the Charter, has only the power to make recommendations in political matters either to the parties concerned or to the Security Council. With regard to the maintenance of international peace and security it can debate, investigate, and recommend, but it cannot act. Even those modest functions are qualified by Article 12 of the Charter which precludes the General Assembly from making even recommendations on matters which are on the agenda of the Security Council. Thus the concurrent jurisdiction of a deciding Council and a deciding Assembly, which was a distinguishing feature of the League of Nations, is replaced by the alternate jurisdiction of a deciding Security Council and a recommending General Assembly. When the Security Council concerns itself with a matter, the General Assembly may still debate, but it can no longer even recommend.

This device enables the Security Council to control indirectly the functions of the General Assembly in matters of political importance. By simply putting a matter on its agenda, the Security Council can transform the General Assembly into a debating society which has not even the right to express its collective opinion on such a matter. It has been said that these provisions designate the General Assembly as "the open conscience of the world." [16] Even if this were so, it is a strange conscience indeed which can never decide but always talk, which can recommend only at somebody else's pleasure, and which has no control whatsoever over the actions of the personality to which it belongs.

As a matter of fact, this reduction of the functions of the General As-

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[16] Leland M. Goodrich and Edvard Hambro, *Charter of the United Nations* (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1946), p. 95.

,sembly has had two unfortunate results which have already become obvious. On the one hand, it has prevented the rise of talented statesmen who, regardless of nationality and of the national power they represent, could make useful contributions to the solution of international problems. Where there is no opportunity for constructive action, talent cannot prove itself and responsibility declines.

On the other hand, the United Nations has been endowed with a split personality. The General Assembly may with two-thirds majority recommend to the Security Council a solution of an international problem which the Security Council may disregard at its discretion. This discretion of the Security Council would be no serious matter if the General Assembly were an advisory body of limited membership and not the representative body of virtually all the nations of the world. As it is, the distribution of functions between the Security Council and the General Assembly is a constitutional monstrosity. The United Nations may speak with respect to the same issue with two voices: one the General Assembly's, the other the Security Council's, and between these two voices there is no organic connection. Two-thirds or more of the total membership of the United Nations may recommend one thing, and seven of the eleven members of the Security Council may disregard the recommendation and decide something else.

The vice of this constitutional arrangement does not lie in the predominance of the great powers, which we found to exist in the Holy Alliance and the League of Nations as well. It rather lies in the grotesque and unnecessary opportunity which it gives to the General Assembly to demonstrate its impotence to all the world. The Holy Alliance was frankly an international government of the great powers. The League of Nations was an international government of the great powers with the advice and consent of all member nations, each of which, by virtue of the principle of unanimity and save for Article 15, paragraph 10, of the Covenant,[17] could stop the international government from acting. The United Nations is an international government of the great powers which resembles in its actuality the Holy Alliance and in its pretenses the League of Nations. It is the contrast between pretense and actuality, between the democratic expectations roused by the words of the Charter and the autocratic performance assured by the actual distribution of functions, which has harmed the authority of the United Nations and impaired its ability to maintain international order and peace.

The international government of the United Nations, then, is identical with the international government of the Security Council. The Security Council seems to be, as it were, the Holy Alliance of our time. Yet in actuality it is the five permanent members which are supposed to perform the governmental functions. We have seen that the principle of unanimity has been abrogated with respect to all decisions of the Security Council and has been replaced with regard to substantive decisions by the requirement of seven affirmative votes in which the votes of the five permanent members must be included. Given the preponderant influence of the five permanent members (China, France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United

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[17] For the text see above, pp. 233, 234.

States), their unanimous decision will have no difficulty in attracting at least two more votes of other members of the Security Council.

The United Nations, then, is predicated upon the continuing unity of the permanent members of the Security Council. In the scheme of the Charter these five members are, as it were, the nucleus of a world federation, a Holy Alliance within a Holy Alliance. By limiting the principle of unanimity to them, the Charter makes them the international government of the United Nations. It follows that with but one permanent member dissenting there can be no international government of the United Nations.

This great power monopoly of governmental action is still further enhanced by Article 27, paragraph 3, according to which a party to a dispute is prevented from voting only with regard to the pacific settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter. In other words, the great power veto applies to the enforcement measures under Chapter VII. When a great power is a party to a dispute, the Security Council can render a decision by virtue of Article 27, paragraph 3, regardless of the attitude of that great power. If the Security Council should try to enforce that decision, the dissent of any of the great powers, although a party to the dispute, would erect a legal barrier to enforcement action. In such a contingency the decision of the Security Council would remain a dead letter.

Actually, however, the international government of the United Nations is government of the great powers to a still greater degree than the foregoing analysis would indicate. Of the five permanent members of the Security Council only two, the United States and the Soviet Union, are really great powers. Great Britain and France are medium powers, and China is only potentially a great or even medium power. Under the present conditions of world politics, most nations are in the orbit of either the United States or the Soviet Union and can be prevailed upon, if need be, to support the position taken by one or the other of the superpowers. This will always be true of most members of the Security Council, the permanent members included. The international government of the United Nations, stripped of its legal trimmings, then, is really the international government of the United States and the Soviet Union acting in unison. At best — if they are united — they can govern the rest of the world for the purpose of maintaining order and of preventing war. At worst — if they are disunited — there will be no international government at all.

Ideally the United Nations is an instrument for governing the world through the combined power of the United States and the Soviet Union. Under no conceivable conditions, however, can the United Nations operate as an international government for the purpose of establishing or maintaining order in the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union or of preventing war between them. The Charter of the United Nations is not devised for the purpose of subjecting the United States and the Soviet Union to an international government against their will. The instrumentalities of the United Nations may be used by one or the other of the superpowers for such a purpose. The United Nations would, then, transform itself from an international government for the preservation of peace into a grand alliance for the waging of war.

b) Undefined Principles of Justice

Like the conflict between Great Britain and Russia within the Holy Alliance, like the conflict between Great Britain and France within the League of Nations, so the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union within the United Nations resolves itself into diametrically opposed interpretations of the standards of judgment and action which the international organization is supposed to realize. It must, however, be noted that the Charter of the United Nations invites such divergent interpretations. The standards of justice which shall guide the judgment and actions of the agencies of the United Nations are found in three places: in the Preamble, in Chapter 1 dealing with Purposes and Principles, and interspersed through the Charter. Yet, in contrast to the basic principles of the Holy Alliance and of the League of Nations, the principles of justice upon which the United Nations is founded are beset by two kinds of inner contradictions: one concerning the mode of actions to be performed by the United Nations, the other concerning the purposes for which the actions are to be performed.

The Preamble reaffirms "faith . . . in the equal rights . . . of nations large and small," and Article 2, paragraph 1, declares that "the Organization is based on the principle of sovereign equality of all its Members." That principle is strengthened by Article 2, paragraph 7, which exempts "matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state" from the jurisdiction of the United Nations, except in so far as enforcement measures under Chapter VII are concerned.[18] Yet the whole structure of the United Nations, as laid out in the main body of the Charter, is based upon what one might call paradoxically the "sovereign inequality" of its members. We have already pointed to the fact that if the United Nations were to operate as provided for in its Charter, all its members who are not members of the Security Council would lose their sovereignty and would remain sovereign in name and form only.[19] Thus the principle of sovereign equality proclaimed by the Charter in its initial provisions is contradicted by the actual distribution of functions which the Charter itself provides.

The Preamble and Chapter 1 formulate five political purposes of action: (1) maintenance of international peace and security, (2) collective security, (3) prohibition of the use of force "against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state" and reservation of its use for "the common interest as defined in the Charter, (4) maintenance of "justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law," and (5) national self-determination.

Of these five purposes the first two are general and of an instrumental nature. They tell us that whatever the United Nations does it should do peacefully and according to the principle of collective security. The other three principles are specific and concrete. They tell us what the United Nations should or should not do in concrete situations. It should use force under certain conditions and not use it under others; it should act justly and in

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[18] Cf. what has been said about the destructive effect which the reservation of domestic jurisdiction has upon international obligations, p. 223.

[19] See above, pp. 255, 256.

harmony with the rules of international law and with the principle of national self-determination.

It is significant that the Charter is most explicit in elaborating and implementing the first two purposes (cf. particularly Chapters VI and VII) and that it is virtually silent with regard to the remaining three. Article 11, paragraph 1, and Article 24, paragraph 2, refer the General Assembly and the Security Council in general terms to the Purposes and Principles as guides for their deliberations and actions. But the concrete meaning of concepts, such as justice, respect for international law, and national self-determination, is not self-evident nor is it the same everywhere and at all times. In the abstract, most men may be able to agree upon a definition of those terms. It is the concrete political situation which gives these abstract terms a concrete meaning and enables them to guide the judgment and actions of men. Nowhere in the main body of the Charter is there a definition of, or reference to, a substantive principle of justice. Nor are there any other sources which would give unequivocal content to these abstractions. Here is the core of the disease which from the very beginning has prevented the international government of the United Nations from coming to life.

c) The Undefined Status Quo: the Soviet Union vs. the United States

When the Holy Alliance and the League of Nations were established, there already existed a status quo, a certain distribution of power agreed upon by all the major members of the international government. That pre-existing political order was the foundation upon which the international government was built and which gave concrete meaning to its principles of justice. Dissensions arose as to the interpretation of that status quo and to its further development. The status quo itself, won in a common victory over a common enemy and defined in treaties of peace, was the common starting point for all concerned. After the Second World War, the would-be peacemakers reversed the sequence. They first created an international government for the purpose of maintaining the status quo and after that proposed to agree upon the status quo. To this day no such agreement has been reached.

It has been said that this reversal of the traditional sequence was a master stroke of statesmanship; for it spared the Charter of the United Nations the fate which the Covenant of the League of Nations received at the hands of the United States Senate. Being an integral part of the Treaty of Versailles, the Covenant fell with that treaty. The Charter, standing alone, was not affected by whatever criticism might be leveled against the settlement of the Second World War.

Be that as it may, the erection of a structure of international government upon what proved to be no political foundation at all has been a failure which threatens to come crashing down and bury the peace of the world beneath its ruins. The United Nations is like a building designed by two architects who have agreed upon the plans for the second floor, but not upon those for the first. Each of them builds his wing of the first floor as he sees fit, each doing his best to obstruct the efforts of the other. In consequence, not only

does the second floor become an unlivable abode, but the whole structure threatens to disintegrate.

PROVISIONAL CHARACTER OF THE STATUS QUO. The new territorial status quo which has existed since the end of the Second World War is in the main a military one. In the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union it consists of the lines of demarcation upon which Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States agreed at Yalta in 1945. Both sides have recognized these lines of demarcation as provisional. The internal organization of Germany remains likewise provisional; the very future of a unified German state is in doubt. The same holds true for Austria. There is no agreement as to the Western frontiers of Germany. With regard to the Eastern frontiers, there is outspoken disagreement between the Soviet Union and Poland claiming that these frontiers were definitely determined by the Potsdam Agreement of 1945, and the Western powers which regard these frontiers as provisional and subject to final determination by a peace conference. Not only is the territorial status quo in Europe provisional, but the reason for its being provisional is the seemingly unbridgeable disagreement between the Soviet Union and the Western powers as to what a definite status quo should be like. In their defeat, Germany and Austria have become a bone of contention between the East and the West. The Soviet Union wants to keep control of the sections of these countries which it occupies at present and to dislodge the Western powers from the zones which they control, and vice versa.

This tension between the East and the West is all-pervading and paralyzes the international government of the United Nations not only in its over-all functions, but also in what are in themselves only technical matters of secondary importance. To what extent this is true can be gathered from the hopeless impasse which has made it impossible for the East and the West to agree upon the selection of a governor for the Free Territory of Trieste.

Trieste is the main Mediterranean outlet for trade from Central and Eastern Europe and the main port of the Adriatic. As such, Trieste has been coveted by Yugoslavia since the dissolution of the Austrian Empire in 1919 when the city was given to Italy. In the peace treaty with Italy the Allies were able to agree upon a compromise which made Trieste a Free Territory. Not unlike the way in which Danzig was governed from 1919 to 1939, Trieste was to be governed by the United Nations through a governor to be appointed by the Security Council.[20] The Soviet Union did not want to strengthen the West by leaving the city under Italian rule. The Western powers did not want to strengthen the East by allowing Yugoslavia to extend its domain over the city. The result of this unresolved antagonism was what might be called the neutralization of the city. This solution left in suspense the distribution of power between Yugoslavia and Italy and, hence, between the East and the West. In Italy's loss, the West lost a port — whose hinterland, however, is almost wholly controlled by the East — without the East gaining it. This compromise was a diplomatic achievement of sorts.

Yet the all-pervading tension between East and West made the implementation of this compromise impossible. For the "neutralization" of Tri-

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[20] Article 11 of Annex VI of the Treaty of Peace with Italy (*New York Times*, January 18, 1947), pp. 25 ff.

este to be effective, a neutral administration by a neutral governor under the supervision of a neutral Security Council was needed. The Security Council of the United Nations was unable to accomplish what with regard to Danzig the Council of the League of Nations succeeded in doing at least in a certain measure. The Security Council could not find a neutral governor because there were no neutrals left in the world. Candidates who were agreeable to the East had for that very reason to be rejected by the West, and vice versa.

The deadlock over the governorship of Trieste thus offers a striking example of how the objective conditions of world politics make international government impossible even where in a special case a new status quo and the organization and functions of the international government have been agreed upon. Despite such agreement concerning the city of Trieste, the provisional status quo continued as it was established at the end of hostilities with a tripartite military administration (American, British, Yugoslav) performing the functions of government.

INSTABILITY OF THE STATUS QUO. Disagreement as to the future status quo between the East and the West and, more specifically, between the United States and the Soviet Union is, however, not limited to regions, such as Central Europe, where the status quo is provisional. Such disagreement extends even to regions where the Second World War did not even raise the question of the status quo or where in the closing stages of the war agreement had already been reached as to the future status quo. The outstanding example of the former alternative is Turkey; of the latter, Greece, Iran, and China.

For centuries the Dardanelles have been a goal of Russian aspirations, and for more than a century Russia has tried to use Turkish weakness for the purpose of gaining direct or indirect possession of what Bismarck called "the key to Russia's house." Yet the door to which the Dardanelles are the key does not only allow the outside world to enter Russia; it also gives Russia an exit into the outside world. The Dardanelles are not only the opening through which a hostile power can penetrate the Black Sea, attack the oil resources and one of the main industrial and agricultural centers of Russia, and by turning north make the Russian position in Eastern Europe untenable. The Dardanelles control also the access from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and the route which leads from the Balkans to Asia. Thus, whenever Russia was about to use its superior army to take possession of that coveted prize, the superior navy of Great Britain would block the way, either alone or in conjunction with the Austrian army. Only once did Russia seem virtually to have reached the goal of its ambition when, during the First World War, Great Britain promised Russia the Dardanelles as one of the prizes of victory. Yet the separate peace which the Bolshevist regime concluded with the Central Powers annulled the promise.

The traditional role of Great Britain is now being performed by the United States. Otherwise the basic constellation has not changed. What the Soviet Union wants, the United States refuses to concede. The United States wants to maintain the status quo with respect to the Dardanelles; the Soviet Union wants to change it.

For more than a century the problem of Greece has been intimately con-

nected with the problem of the Dardanelles. Greece flanks Turkey to the West, and the Dodecanese Islands lie athwart the Mediterranean approaches to the Dardanelles. Great Britain has traditionally considered Greece an indispensable factor for the defense of the Dardanelles and, hence, as lying within the British sphere of influence. In an informal understanding in 1944, Great Britain and the Soviet Union divided the Balkans on traditional lines, leaving Greece within the British sphere of influence. This understanding meant the ratification of the status quo which for a century had existed in the Balkans.

The United States has become the successor of Great Britain as the protector of Greece from Russian influence. Yet the Greek civil war has reopened the question of the status quo seemingly settled by the Russo-British agreement of 1944. For the revolt against the Greek government is more than a domestic upheaval. The revolutionaries are supported by Albania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, three Russian satellites which would not give such aid without Russian approval. Since the Communists are the dominant group among the revolutionaries, their victory would of necessity mean the extension of Russian influence to the Aegean. Thus the issue of the Greek civil war is explicitly the status quo in the Balkans between the Soviet Union and the United States and implicitly the control of the Dardanelles.

We have already mentioned the traditional role which Iran has played in the relations between Great Britain and Russia.[21] British and Russian influence has fluctuated back and forth on the territory of Iran. Uneasy compromises have from time to time attempted to limit Russian influence to the north and British influence to the south, both countries most of the time trying to expel the other side from its sphere and to extend its own over the whole of Iran. During the Second World War, Russian troops occupied the north and British troops the south of Iran. In an agreement concluded in 1942, both countries pledged themselves to evacuate their troops within six months after the conclusion of hostilities and thus to restore the status quo *ante bellum*. Russian troops stayed on after the expiration of the time limit, and it needed pressure exerted in the Security Council to bring about the withdrawal of Russian troops in 1946. In exchange, Iran granted the Soviet Union oil concessions in the northern part of the country. Yet in 1947 the Iranian parliament, yielding to American pressure, refused to ratify the treaty. Thus the question of the status quo has been reopened by both sides and remains unsettled.

Finally, the Yalta Agreement of 1945 between Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States, and the subsequent agreements between China and the Soviet Union provided for the internationalization of the Chinese port of Dairen, the lease of Port Arthur to the Soviet Union as a naval base, and the joint Russo-Chinese operation of the Chinese Eastern and South Manchuria railways. These arrangements amounted to the restoration of the status quo between China and the Soviet Union which had existed before the Russo-Japanese War of 1904.

But the Chinese civil war has raised the question of the status quo again.

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[21] See above, pp. 39, 40.

The Chinese civil war is, on the one hand, a domestic problem of China. Because of the ideological affinity between the Chinese Communists and the Russian regime, the civil war poses the same problem which the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 and the Japanese invasions of 1931 and 1937 had posed: the problem of the Open Door. Yet it is a new version of the old problem.

The traditional policy of the Open Door meant to keep the Chinese door open for everybody, with everybody having equal opportunity and with nobody receiving special privileges. The new policy of the Open Door aims at keeping the door of China wide open for one country and keeping it tightly shut for others. If the government wins the civil war, it is supposed that the door will be shut for the Soviet Union and kept open for the Western powers. If the Communists win, it is anticipated that the Chinese door will be open for the Soviet Union and closed for the Western powers. Thus the stakes of the Soviet Union and of the United States in the Chinese civil war are the exercise of exclusive influence over the natural and population resources of China. The status quo with regard to China is, then, completely in flux. The outcome of the civil war is supposed to decide whose influence will prevail in China: that of the United States or that of the Soviet Union.[22]

From Stettin to Mukden the status quo is unsettled, the United States and the Soviet Union promoting settlements which are mutually exclusive. Yet these are the two nations upon whose agreement as to what the status quo shall be and how it shall be enforced the international government of the United Nations is predicated. The United Nations cannot bring this agreement about. It presupposes it. Since such agreement has never existed during the short life of the United Nations, the international government of the United Nations, envisaged by the Charter, has not become a reality.

Experience has shown that the attempt to use the United Nations for the purpose of forcing upon either of the superpowers such agreement only aggravates the disagreement and increases the danger of war. We have already seen that the Charter enables the United Nations, that is, the United States and the Soviet Union acting in unison, to prevent wars among the other nations. Built upon the foundation of the United States and the Soviet Union acting as one, the United Nations is constitutionally unable to prevent a war between those two countries. Yet it is such a war which today threatens the United States, the Soviet Union, and all mankind. For its prevention we must look elsewhere than to the United Nations.

[22] The 450 million Chinese might, however, decide — regardless of who should win the civil war — that it should be neither and that Chinese influence should prevail in China.