

ARTICLE VIII.

A WORLD-UNITY CONFERENCE.

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[In two previous articles in the *BIBLIOTHECA SACRA* on "The World Person," July, 1911, and "A Bureau of National Assistance," October, 1913, Mr. Bridgman had forecast most of the arguments which have been advanced, since the European War began, for a League to Enforce Peace. The reader will find it profitable to consult these.—EDITOR.]

IT seems possible that the Paris military conference will open to the nations a larger opportunity for united action than is generally realized. That opportunity may become necessity. If such necessity is met as the world crisis demands, then the consequences of the action will be nothing short of the organization of all the nations as a political unit, with permanent world peace and with world prosperity such as is impossible under the present relations of the nations.

It is not affirmed that the world peace will never be broken. Our United States of America has had its civil war. But we do not have any one of our states making war in its own name upon any other. So, though the political world unit cannot be definitely insured against war between its own fighting elements, yet the divisive forces must eventually be overcome by the centripetal forces, if the promises of civilization and progress have a solid foundation.

Here is the bearing of the Paris conference, its promise of momentous political consequences for all the world. War emergencies drove the Allied Powers to military unity. But

civil unity must be affirmed back of the military unity, because, in every civilized government, the military power is subject to the civil. Otherwise the government is a military despotism. If it be said that Germany is an exception to the rule, no objection need be made to the affirmation, for it does not disprove the rule. Nor does it alter the world-wide fact that in all stable governments of the modern type the civil authority must be supreme over the military.

This Paris military conference, therefore, implies that there is some sort of unity between the civil governments back of the military authority which aims at military headship somewhere, definite, positive, and visible, for the Allied Powers as their only salvation against the practical unity of the Central Powers under their German head. It is true that this civil unity is vague, formless, and unrecognized. But it is impossible to foresee, at any time, what will be the logical result of the military unity.

Foremost among the facts involved in the Paris conference is this: that nearly all of the civilized world, with the exception of the Central Powers, is either formally with the Entente Allies, or sympathetic with them and against the Central Powers, or will be a beneficiary, directly and largely, by the success of the Entente Allies. Hence it is a fair proposition that practically all of the civilized world, except the Central Powers, are friendly to the Paris situation and to its possibilities.

That is, here is practical coöperation of the nations to an extent sufficient to justify the statement that they represent the civilization of the world and that their relations necessitate civil unity. In other words, here is, in actual development, the germ of the World State.

A material part of the case, in the present juncture, is the

growing expectation, on the part of many of the foremost thinkers and publicists of the time, as well as on the part of the masses of the people, that some sort of solution will be found for the world's war problem by which future world calamities like the present will be forever impossible. Such a sentiment has grown wonderfully since the outbreak of the war, as need not be demonstrated to those who have watched its development. It exists, evidently, as strongly in Great Britain and France as it does in the United States. It is unquestionably a material element in the crude idealism and impractical policies of inexperienced democratic Russia which have temporarily put it out of the fighting. It is a proof that the world is ready for the remedy of war and is in a frame of mind friendly to reasonable plans for permanent relief.

That is, there has grown up since the war, and is rapidly spreading now, a world sentiment for some sort of World Union. But the only perfect World Union is the World State. This implies a World Government, with a complete equipment of organs, namely, the legislative, the judiciary, and the executive. It also implies a sufficient military force to maintain itself against all disruptive forces. Government, whether national or world, is forced, in a world of physical force, to have sufficient physical backing to overcome its enemies.

Here, again, the Paris military conference may prove a momentous historical precedent. Back of the military unity accomplished at Paris is the most resistless and world-embracing military force ever gathered on earth. Land and sea strength are there so mighty that they cannot be conquered. Thus, even before the World State takes formal existence, there is at its command ample military support for its assertion of its authority in any part of the earth.

In the World State resolutions which were adopted by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1915, asking Congress to make a declaration substantially as follows, is found the logical basis for an international conference to promote the formal organization of the World State, as well as a suggestion of the method of procedure. The declaration desired was put in these words:—

“The United States of America affirms the political unity of all mankind.

“It affirms the supremacy of world sovereignty over national sovereignty.

“It promises loyal obedience to that sovereignty.

“It believes that the time has come for the organization of the World government, with legislative, judicial and executive departments.

“It invites all nations to join with it in the establishment of that government.”

Guiding principles for action to this end are plain, brief, and not difficult to apply. Our rule of action must be the same as that of the scientist who deals with the forces of nature. He must be guided decisively by the facts and by the laws which control them. Theories are folly unless he accepts this guidance. Here, then, are some primary guiding conditions for this new era:—

All nations are already one body because they were so made.

To-day's problem is to organize this unorganized body.

It is the duty of those who have the might to make this organization. This does not mean that might makes right. But might is under moral obligation to do right; and when might meets its moral obligation, the world will have a just and stable peace, supported loyally by all who desire justice and peace.

Public order is imperative for the modern world. Those

who can enforce it serve all the world by using their might to maintain the public order. Only as order is maintained can there be progress in securing larger justice and in the benefits and creations of civilization.

If the United States is the best fitted of all the nations to lead them to world peace through world organization, and it so seems, then the obligation is on the United States to take the lead, to call the world conference and to set in motion the course of events whose result will be the permanent peace of the world with inconceivable prosperity for all who obey the imperative of loyal support of the World State.

Affirming the above-mentioned guiding principles, it would be fitting for the United States to send out word that accordingly it invites the nations to send plenipotentiaries to a world conference to be held in Washington, at a date named, for the purpose of taking formal action for the organization of the World State under competent and permanent World Government.

Such an invitation would seem to be justified in saying that acceptance would be understood to mean that each accepting nation recognized the supremacy of world sovereignty over national sovereignty, holding it to be the only absolute sovereignty and limiting all national sovereignty by the organized political unity of all mankind.

Acceptance would also mean that every accepting nation pledged loyal support to world sovereignty;

That every accepting nation is ready to take its place as a subordinate part of the sovereign whole, whose sovereignty it shares and helps to administer, in making the welfare of the whole supreme over the welfare of any part;

That every accepting nation recognizes the necessity of

material support and will be ready to give its share of men for a world army and navy and to contribute its share toward the expenses of the world administration ;

That every nation recognizes the fundamental principle of democracy upon which the World State must be based, and that no nation can be permitted to share the world administration whose people do not substantially control their national administration and who will not tolerate the supremacy of autocracy and militarism ;

That the plenipotentiaries come empowered and prepared to proceed to the organization of the legislative, judicial, and executive departments of the World Government and to take steps to put that government into actual operation.

For a practical beginning, in order that the conference may not be too small for suitable representation nor too large for effective debate and action, the invitation might be extended on the basis of one plenipotentiary for every nation now claiming absolute sovereignty, plus one additional for a certain number of population, say one for every ten million or majority fraction thereof. Nations disqualified because of not being democracies would not come within the invitation. It might be advisable, looking forward to future national membership in the World State, to invite plenipotentiaries from Canada, South Africa, and Australia on the same basis as present nations claiming absolute national sovereignty. In order to avoid the real danger from domination of the conference by plenipotentiaries from peoples who are not sufficiently experienced in democracy, it might be well to limit the representation to a certain proportion of that from the experienced democracies, say, one fifth as numerous according to population. It might be perilous to have a full numerical proportion from China or some other countries.

It would be fitting, surely, for the United States, in extending its invitation to a world-unity conference, to affirm its purpose never to use its strength or its influence unjustly for itself or for any nation or group of nations against any other nation or group of nations; never to annex any territory by conquest; always to offer its friendly offices for aid to weak nations and for coöperation with the strong, pledging its honor and its resources to unselfish promotion of the welfare of the body politic of united mankind.

A minute's attention here to the United States as a wonderful precedent for the proposed action is well worth while. Ever since the beginning of our national government there has been strife between the camps of state sovereignty and of national sovereignty. Even to-day many of our people do not realize that state sovereignty, as absolute in any respect whatever, does not have a leg to stand on. It is a common statement that our national government has only the powers which are granted to it expressly by the Constitution, and that all other powers have been reserved to themselves by the states.

Never was there, in all our disputes, a worse or more fundamental mistake. The Constitution says that these uncatalogued rights are reserved "to" the states, not "by" them. It is an immense difference. The truth is that the people of the United States, as a single whole (note how the preamble begins: "We, the people of the United States"), have reserved to the states the powers not conferred upon the national government. In other words, the common sense of the founders of the Constitution, indorsed by the people of the nation at the time, drove straight to the vital truth of the situation, ignored positively and totally all ideas of state sovereignty and affirmed national sovereignty. They saw the

controlling fact of unity and built upon it, flouting theories.

Here is the application of this decisive precedent to the case for the organization of the World State. Corresponding to the truth that the American people were really one prior to the affirmation of the Constitution is the truth that the people of all the world are really one, though there has been no official affirmation of that truth. Hence the only reasonable course in this crisis, as the only reasonable course was followed in our national crisis, is to build upon this fundamental truth.

Not only does our history give us justification for formal leadership in the organization of the World State, but the parallelism between our state sovereignty under national sovereignty and national sovereignty under world sovereignty, added to our practical experience of well over a century in our present relations, makes the United States the best qualified and the most natural leader, presumably, in the movement.

Let another point be noticed regarding the formation of our Constitution. It was morally right for the founders and the people as a whole to affirm national unity. Those who had the might joined right to might, thereby giving the nation stable government, with justice, to the satisfaction and the protection of all the people.

In like manner it is the moral right of the nations which have the might to represent practically all the civilized world, who sincerely propose to exercise their might only according to right, to take the step of organizing and setting in operation a world government which shall do for the unorganized nations what our constitution-makers did for our unorganized colonies. World order, the preservation of the world peace, promotion of world prosperity, establishment of jus-

tice in all parts of the world between stronger and weaker nations and between the stronger and weaker individuals, and other necessities of civilized peoples, demand the formal establishment of the World State as truly as the welfare of the thirteen colonies demanded formal establishment of their actual unity, a unity which existed in the nature of the case, before it was formally achieved, just as world unity exists to-day though it has not been formally achieved and promulgated.

World sovereignty would be affirmed in the creation of the World State. That is, the organized peoples of the world claim the right to control the affairs of the world. They claim it by inherent right, just as our United States government, resting its case on our Constitution, which is a bald assertion of alleged truth (which our people concede is real truth), claims the right to rule the people of the United States.

That is, in other words, the World Government will be morally right in affirming its supremacy over all peoples in the world.

Here is one practical corollary of that proposition: If the war is fought to its military conclusion without action by the peoples of the Central Powers to remove their present disqualification for a share in the World Government because they are not democracies, it would be competent for the World Government, with its resistless military and naval backing, to say to the peoples of Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, and Turkey: "I depose your nominal sovereigns and appoint a temporary governor or chief executive to be head of your administration until such time as your nation shall become an organized democracy, fit for self-government. As far as your courts and existing institutions protect popular rights,

I will continue their functions. Otherwise, I will introduce reforms. I abolish all class distinctions. Such things as dukes, earls, marquises, counts, knights, and the like, can have no standing in the World democracy."

Another corollary of world sovereignty embodied in the World Government is that the undeveloped territory of the earth is the property of all the people of the earth. It would have the status of the territories of the United States prior to their attainment of statehood. It would be open to immigration from all other lands, subject to the regulations of the World Government. It would be subject to administration with the probable destiny that, sometime, its people would be admitted, as an organized nation, to a share in the World Government.

Such a status would make it seem that Great Britain, for instance, regarding the African territory which it has conquered from Germany, should not, could not, and probably would not claim it as a permanent part of the British Empire, but would recognize its status as under the administration of the World Government.

No end of great problems can be seen in view of the present crisis which makes the World State seem to be an imperative necessity for the solution of the world's war problem, as well as the shortest and best way out of the present world calamity. Just now the question is whether the world statesmen, like our national statesmen of the Revolutionary era, will see the dominant truth of world unity, as they saw national unity, build strongly upon it, and put all the nations upon the solid foundation of the World State under the World Government, exercising world sovereignty, supported loyally by the people of all the world.