

THE UNITY OF EUROPE.

TOTAL war has clearly shown the interdependence of all European countries. It has taught us that a European country cannot save itself by geography, valour, or neutrality. If a few isolated European countries have been able during the war to maintain their existence by declaring themselves neutral it is solely due to the fact that Nazism and Fascism have lost the war before they had succeeded in accomplishing their final aims.

Great Britain, with her Empire and possessions scattered throughout the world, is closely bound up with the interests and aims of the non-European continents. But this does not alter the fact that this country and the Empire can no longer dissociate themselves from the fate of Europe and that an isolation policy—such as was advocated before the war by certain responsible political circles—has now become an inner impossibility. If any extra proof is needed it can be seen in the invasion of the Continent by the allied nations and in the use of the newly-invented technical weapons. These have proved how vital it is for Great Britain to prevent any potentially hostile power from using the ports of the Lower countries and France for an attack on her. Beyond that, we must reckon with the perfection of these weapons in future. Nobody can predict whether one day it will not be possible to send flying bombs from Central or even East Europe.

It may be argued that, at bottom, already before the war Europe formed a unity in many respects (militarily, economically and technically), but that the European state system as a whole did not adapt itself to this new development. Thus seen, the present conflict is a day of judgment upon the European nations. Then the war appears as the expression of a tension between this unity of Europe on the one hand and of the political nationalist plurality of the states on the other. As was once said in this country: 'Because we failed to unite Europe by reason, Hitler is uniting it by force and fraud.'

But this attempt to unite Europe by means of mere power and force has failed to-day as it did in Napoleon's day. It is true that a big army of tens of thousands of non-German soldiers, including Russians, Poles, Croats, Spaniards, Frenchmen, Czechs, have rallied to the National Socialist flag both in the West and in the East. On the other hand, the liberation of the Western countries has clearly shown that the overwhelming majority of the population was politically enslaved and that only a fragment was ready to accept the

European 'New Order' under the Swastika. The lesson thus given to the world is that—to-day as in the past—power and force alone, divorced from higher vision, are not sufficient to bring about a real European unity. If this unity is to be based on a solid foundation the natural rights of the nations and the free will of peoples must be respected. In this respect the war has been waged, not only ideologically but, in point of fact, for the freedom of all nations.

From this one important result follows: If the political New Order of Europe cannot be founded against the will of the European nations on the evil power-instincts in society, neither can it be firmly established by a system of Alliance. For an Alliance is 'a league between independent states, defined by treaty, for the purpose of combined action, defensive or offensive, or both.' If a state is unable to attain its aim by itself it pools its power with that of others by concluding a treaty of Alliance. Such an Alliance, therefore, embodies power—not isolated, but concerted power.

To-day an alliance of the Great Powers may be necessary in order to restore to the world the freedom from fear, to establish security and to prevent future aggression. But such an alliance cannot have a creative political effect—especially when the members of the alliance are predominantly non-European powers and not united by some common ideology as was still the case with the Holy Alliance with its insistence on European unity and solidarity. The Security Council as now proposed at Dumbarton Oaks is an Alliance concluded between the four or five Big Powers which are to have the right to control the other nations of the world. Such a grouping of powers which by its nature holds only so long as the unity between the Great Powers can be maintained must tend towards a hegemony and, sooner or later, provoke, as history has shown again and again, a counter grouping in which the states threatened by the alliance try to constitute a new nucleus of political power.

Therefore, the European task which the Great Powers have to master after the collapse of Nazism consists in founding—outside the planned system of alliance—a New Order which unifies Europe based not on power, but on the free consent and voluntary co-operation of the nations. If it is not possible to accomplish this task and if a pluralistic nationalism is again allowed to drrench Europe and the world in blood the final disintegration of Europe would be inevitable.

But how is such a European New Order possible? What are its presuppositions? Or in other words: What stands in its way? In what form can such a New Order best be realised?

The chief defect detrimental to the political unification of Europe

is the sovereignty claimed for itself by every state, big or small, in every part of the world. In the dogma of sovereignty the rise of the national state and the revolt against the medieval unity of Europe and the unifying traditions of Christian culture have found their most distinct expression.

But what have we to understand by the doctrine of the sovereignty of the state? Sovereignty means that the state has universal and supreme power over a special national unit. The point is that this power includes the right of the state to maintain its mere political existence even against justice and law. Sovereignty assures the supremacy of the political, over justice and law in the international sphere. This explains why in the age of the national state every international question of political weight has become overlaid by considerations of force and power; it explains why the whole modern system of international order has become inadequate and unsatisfactory. One may even ask whether the existence of such a right as that of sovereignty is compatible with the existence of any system of international law worthy of the name. Does it not destroy its very foundations? True the sovereign states have entertained international relations with each other. They have concluded treaties of various kinds. But the making and implementing of a treaty does not involve a sacrifice of sovereignty. Such an act is always subjected to certain tacit reservations in the obedience to international law. So long as a state in accordance with international law may, for the sake of its political existence, its honour or its vital national interests, declare war on another state and thereby unilaterally annul the existing international law between the belligerent states (in so far as the international rules do not refer to the war itself), it is hardly possible to speak of a genuine international order. Sovereignty legitimizes licence and arbitrariness. It perpetuates chaos in international relationships. Sovereignty being irresponsible, uncontrolled and unlimited power by its very nature makes an effective institutional world-organisation impossible. It embodies the evil spirit of selfishness which knows no restraints and no standards of judgment other than its own. No wonder that such an 'order' does not work and pacify the world.

This is why the League of Nations, which did not demand a surrender of sovereignty from its members, proved a failure. This state of affairs must inevitably lead to war as the only means for settling disputes between sovereign states and thus to self-destruction and anarchy. This conception of sovereignty provides the basis for a world policy which recognizes a security only from an individualist and nationalist angle and which favours a policy of alliances and a

division of Europe into territorial and political-social spheres or zones of influence.

In order to avert these disastrous consequences the obvious conclusion would be to give up the idea of unlimited freedom of State and nation and to limit sovereignty. Only if this happens would the states be no longer judges in their own case. Indeed thoughtful people have come to this conclusion. Mr. H. Morrison, for instance, said on September 3rd, 1944: 'Some abandonment of the traditional idea of separate unqualified sovereignties is a necessary condition of the successful maintenance of permanent peace.' In a recent debate on the international organisation for the maintenance of world security in the House of Lords (October 11th, 1944) Lord Winster took the same attitude and the Earl of Huntingdon stated: 'If the nations really wish to prevent war they must pay the price and the price they must pay is the surrender of their national sovereignty.'

But the political realist will say at once that a limitation of sovereignty is in practice utterly impossible. It will be argued that the national consciousness which every people has developed in the last few centuries is much stronger to-day than ever before and that no European State would be found willing—any more than after the first world war when men sought to create a universal equality of all states—to relinquish a jot of its sovereignty and to merge it in a common government.

The change in the character of the present war has contributed to this development. The more the war loses its ideological basis and takes on a nationalist tone (a rather disastrous development as the ideological issues are by no means dead), the more evident becomes the lack of willingness of the states to accept any limitation of their sovereignty. One need only consider the utterances of the leading statesmen—and not only those of the Great Powers—in recent times to see that the national states are not prepared voluntarily to abandon sovereignty. The statement made by Mr. Cordell Hull on March 21st, 1944, is typical of this attitude: 'The principle of sovereign equality of all peace-loving states, irrespective of size and strength as partners in a future system of general security, will be the foundation-stone upon which the future international organisation will be constructed.' This attitude found expression in the Moscow Declaration of the Great Powers in October, 1943, in which every word was carefully weighed. Here is explicit mention of 'the sovereign equality of all peace-loving states' who are to have the possibility of joining 'the general international organisation for the maintenance of peace.' Accordingly we read in the proposals from Dumbarton Oaks that the future organisation of the United Nations 'is based

on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving nations¹ Times have fundamentally changed since 1940 when, to a collapsing France, Mr. Churchill made his famous proposal which practically amounted to a political union of Great Britain and France. To-day no one would be willing to repeat this suggestion.

The chief difficulty of the problem then lies in that on the one hand Europe must necessarily form a unity if she is to live on, but on the other the European nations and states are not willing to limit their sovereignty. It would, however, be wrong for this reason to dismiss the actuality and urgency of the problem and to say that it is utopian and of no use to deal with the question of the unification of Europe. For—strange as it may sound—in spite of the disruptive forces which have split Europe to-day, the unity of Europe is already something real. It is in a military, economic and technical sense just as much as a reality, as the refusal of the European nations to take it into account politically. One can even argue that the powerful forces that press for a unification of Europe represent the stronger historical reality and will sooner or later compel the nations to abandon the idea of being self-contained sovereign entities with exclusive political rights of its own.

The unification of Europe, which must come if the richest, most populated and most highly civilized continent in the world is not to go under, does not, of course, imply a rude levelling up of Europe, by abolishing the given distinctions, above all, between West and East Europe. True there will have to be some uniformity in certain spheres in which the vital interests of all nations are at stake such as matters concerning military and security affairs, raw materials, food supplies and means of communication. But a glance at the map and history of Europe shows that the Europe of to-morrow cannot take on the form of *one* united Super-State. The differences between the various European nations conditioned by race, language, culture, history, territory, tradition carry too great a weight for such a development even if it were desirable. We need only think of the existing tensions between various nationalities in such states as Jugo-Slavia, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. How can Europe be welded into a firm, political unity if already the Balkans are unable to merge their different nationalities into one higher political unity?

It is this diversity among the European nations which also excludes an organisation on the lines of the British Empire. The Em-

¹ This does not mean that this principle has been actually respected by the Conference. The power of the new Assembly is restricted by discussion and voting of recommendations. The real power lies with the Security Council.

pire is indeed a loose federation and its constituent parts are independent. But in spite of this it is a social and political unity. It has grown organically and has emerged from the ground of common race, language, culture, and historical tradition. In the European system of states there is no evidence of these essential characteristics of the British Empire. The Continent is not bound together in the same degree by a common race, common tongue, common experiences. She has grown up from a historically different ground. Its history is poisoned by old rivalries and animosities. To put it briefly Europe is not homogeneous enough to be able to copy the organically developed Commonwealth of the British Empire.

The form in which Europe must ultimately find its unity is that of a federation expressing itself in constitutional forms such as are traditionally known on the Continent and in the United States. Such a federation is the most suitable form for the unification of Europe because on the one hand it secures some real unity in technical organisation, and on the other leaves enough room for the individual characteristics and cultural differences of the European nations, obviating any bureaucratic centralisation and uniformity. The United States are a living example of the possibility of such a unification. For what are the United States but an amalgamation of immigrants of all the various European nations? As we have seen such a federation must not be the product of a scheme imposed upon the nations by a dictator. It must come into existence voluntarily. But this does not exclude the necessity for the statesmen of the European nations to exercise their wisdom and insight in enlightening the peoples on the political trend of the time and in teaching them that the fate of Europe and of the individual European states depends upon the growth of a common sentiment and spirit and on the subordination of the interests of individual nations to the common interest of the European whole.

An organised European federation will not be easily or quickly formed after the present conflict with all its disintegrating factors. But what seems to be politically possible in the near future is the formation of small federations or unions between such nations as are closely related to each other. We can imagine such organised federations or unions especially between the lesser states of Europe, for example, between Holland and Belgium, or Norway, Sweden and perhaps Finland, or the Spanish Peninsula, or the Balkans. Such federations might well prepare the way for a more comprehensive European federation.

Such an idea to constitute Europe as a federation of federations is not new in European political thought. Proudhon, the French

Socialist, advocated it. It was alive in France between the two world wars. Mazzini had envisaged a Europe in which most of the small nations were federated with other nations and Europe itself would be composed of a number of large federations. In this country this idea has been revived by Mr. Christopher Dawson² who has conceived of the future European union as a society of free peoples and a free democratic federation. Commander King-Hall, too, has pleaded for a united and federated Europe in the House of Commons on September 28th, and the Earl of Huntingdon has done the same in the House of Lords on October 11th, 1944.

Another question is: What concrete form can such a federation take? History has taught us in the constitutional development of Germany, Switzerland and the United States that the single states are at first only ready to enter into a confederation or confederacy, and that only by force of political circumstances can the states be induced in course of time to transform this loose federation of states into a firmer organisation, a federal state. The difference between these two political forms consists in that the members of a confederation need not abandon their sovereignty, whereas in a federal state the union itself is the only subject of sovereignty. Here the single federal states give up their sovereignty and delegate their powers to the union, although they still remain at liberty to maintain their traditions and carry on their own cultural life. It may be that this development will repeat itself in Europe. In any case if the final aim, the federal organisation of European unity, is not to be lost sight of, all the various confederations must eventually take on the character of federal states or unions. More rigid constitutional forms may develop within these federal organisations and there may then also be room for the creation of a Council of Europe as has been envisaged by Mr. Churchill in his broadcast of March 21st, 1943, and has been advocated by some American groups.

One day Britain will have to make up her mind what kind of relationship she wishes to establish between herself and the European Commonwealth. She forms a part of a world-wide Empire and of the Anglo-Saxon world which in its tradition is dissimilar from that of Europe in many respects. Above all, the Empire will hardly be found ready to bind itself as a whole closely to the fate of Europe. On the other hand, as we have seen the question is no longer to-day whether Britain should co-operate with Europe or should become isolationist. The problem is *how* she should co-operate. There is no escape from the hard fact that among the European nations, in spite

² *The Judgment of the Nations*, 1943.

of their bloodstained history, there is an underlying European consciousness and resentment against the liberators of to-day which can easily be strengthened in future if European affairs are mis-handled politically or economically. This always latent possibility of the continent being organised into a unity over against the non-European powers (including Great Britain) can only be obviated by placing Britain inside and not outside the European federation. A sponsorship of the European commonwealth together with the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. as advocated by Sir Walter Layton in his Sidney Ball lecture, *The British Commonwealth and World Order*, would hardly be enough—even if it could possibly be attained—to exclude future friction between the sponsor states and the European Commonwealth. It may also be that Great Britain as an integral part of both the Empire and the whole Anglo-Saxon world—by connecting her fate with that of Europe—will play the historic role of fostering the development of a larger grouping of nations and of extending the European federation to a new federal World Order.

Russia, although also a European power, is not so closely bound up with the fate of Europe as is Great Britain. She is not an integral part of Europe in the same measure as Great Britain. Russia has her own empire and her own civilisation. She already forms a unity which comprises a society of peoples and nations in East Europe and in Asia, and in that respect she is far in advance of Europe. No wonder, therefore, that one important Russian historical school considers the Russian Empire as Asiatic with Moscow its focus. Indeed it can hardly be maintained that Wladiwostok and the Turanian and other Asiatic peoples of the Soviet Union form an integral part of Europe. In so far as Russia is vitally concerned with Continental affairs it is primarily not because she has any specific European interests but because she feels her security threatened and wants to have definite boundaries in the West.

Professor Catlin has recently developed the idea of a Western integration which mainly covers the Latin states with which the 'Anglo-Saxon countries as an integrated unit are to enter into the most friendly and intimate supporting relations.' No doubt there is a special need for closer relations and collaboration among the democracies. This has caused General Smuts in his *Thoughts on the New World*, to advocate the entrance of the nations of Western Europe into the British Empire. Recent statements made by Mr. Eden in the House of Commons on September 29th, 1944, and by the Belgian Government, with its reference to 'the bonds which unite us to the friendly Powers nearest to our own frontiers and exposed to the same dangers,' point in the same direction. But

Europe is more than the Latin world and includes more than the Western democracies. The new trend in British policy can easily produce new rivalries with a division of Europe into two camps, the East led by Russia, and the West led by Britain. This, however, would destroy the European unity. For this unity is neither political nor economic. At bottom, it is spiritual and based on the realities of culture and civilisation. All countries, therefore, which have accepted the Christian heritage and civilisation belong to Europe. Not only the Latin peoples or Western democracies, but also the Teutonic peoples form an integral part of Europe. The same applies to the Eastern countries, to Finland, the Baltic States, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Balkans. The rift between Eastern and Western Christendom does not go so deep as to exclude all orthodox Christian countries from their European partnership. The leaven of Christian faith is stronger than the estrangement between the Churches of East and West. The deeper issue, for instance, underlying the Polish dilemma of to-day is whether after the war she is to form a part of Europe or of the East. The same alternative will have to be faced sooner or later by all the Eastern countries, the Baltic States, Czechoslovakia and the Balkans, possibly also by Central Europe and the Western countries. If all these states are so weakened by the war that they are no longer in a position to maintain the Christian heritage, European culture and civilisation which have formed the concept of Europe will be a thing of the past.

If the analysis we have tried to make is essentially correct one must come to the conclusion that the plan, often advocated to-day, to break up the unity of the Reich and to dissolve it again into its component parts and new petty national states needs careful reconsideration. For all such plans must ultimately result in putting back the wheel of history which demands the unification of Europe and not the division and dismemberment of firmly established national states into a number of new sovereign states. As already Wordsworth said with special regard to Germany: 'The smaller states must disappear and merge in the larger nations.' Versailles has failed to observe the pointer of history towards a unification of Europe. It would be a tragedy if a future peace were to repeat this error and fail to make use of the post-war situation in a more constructive sense and so fail to lay the foundation-stone of a European federation.

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