

THE SOCIETY OF FREE STATES

By
DWIGHT W. MORROW



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THE SOCIETY OF FREE STATES

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FOREWORD

THE papers reprinted in this book appeared originally in the New York *Evening Post* of February 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, and March 1, 6, and 7. The writer spent most of the year 1918 in Europe, in the work of the Allied Maritime Transport Council, where he had the opportunity to see the great difficulties in securing effective international co-operation even at a time when the Allied Governments had the strongest self-interest in working together. Chapter VI contains some description of the work of the Allied Maritime Transport Council and other co-operative agencies forced upon the Allies by the pressure of the war. Except for that chapter there is little in this volume that may be called original. The aim of the writer has been to review some of the efforts heretofore made to avert war, to consider some of the forces that have been working to bring the world closer together, to give a short account of the growth of the spirit of nationality, and to indicate the conflict between the national aspirations of the separate

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States and the idea of a League of Nations. The papers were written with reference to the fundamental problems which seem to underlie effective co-operation rather than as a criticism of the draft of Covenant submitted to the Peace Conference on February 14, 1919, by the special Commission on the League of Nations. A review, however, of some of the principal features of that draft of Covenant will be found in Chapter IX.

The papers have been slightly revised since their appearance in the New York *Evening Post*, some foot-notes have been added, and a short bibliography is given at the end of each chapter. The literature on the subject, especially during the last year, is very large, and no effort has been made to give a complete bibliography of the authorities consulted.

The writer is conscious of the shortcomings of this volume. Faults in style will be forgiven in a book written necessarily in haste; faults in substance or in reasoning perhaps will be corrected by others. There is one thing to be said for a book, even with faults, upon the important topic of world organization—it may present a point of view which will lead to a better book.

D. W. M.

March 20, 1919.

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I

FOR WHAT HAS THE WORLD FOUGHT?

FOR four years and a half the greater portion of the world has been engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the Central Powers. On the day the armistice was signed twenty States were at war with Germany. The wreckage cannot yet be appraised. Many millions of men—young men who held the promise of the future—have been killed. Many more have been permanently maimed. So long as the present generation lives men without arms or legs will be a part of our community life. Why have men fought and died? Why have they lived for months and years under almost inconceivable hardships? Surely not because they had any interest in Francis Ferdinand of

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Austria, who was murdered by a Serbian at Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. Probably the majority of the soldiers in the field on November 11, 1918, when the armistice was signed, had never heard of Sarajevo.

From the earliest times men have fought one another individually, and the groups into which they have associated themselves have fought each other. Theoretical writers have pictured a golden age from which we have degenerated. There is no warrant for such a belief. Neither permanent peace nor permanent war can be called the natural state of mankind. Man from the beginning has been, and is now, both peaceful and warlike. If we look upon peace simply as cessation of warfare between separate States there would obviously be peace if the whole world came under the sway of a single State. The world almost attained such a peace under the Roman Empire, but it was peace by force. During the Middle Ages there was a qualified peace under the Church, but it was more apparent than real. With the break-up of the Holy Roman Empire, and the schism in the Church, there began the period of the modern national State. The growth of the national States has been marked by alternate periods of peace and war. States have fought for boundaries, for religion, for property and

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trade, for honor. The temptation is great to seek a simple explanation of war. Some have attributed wars to the pride and greed of autocratic leaders, forgetting the waves of passion that sweep over countries, compelling leaders to bend to that passion or lose their high place. Some attribute wars to the growth of modern capitalism, forgetting that there were bitter wars before modern capitalism existed. Some attribute wars to armament firms and others to unpreparedness. As a matter of fact, there is no short formula. The settlement of disputes within a State by the rule of reason—with all the imperfections of its application—has become more and more established. But the differences between States have continued, and at times have reached such a stage of acuteness that rulers and people have been willing to spend their lives and fortunes in defending their side of the cause.

As the world has grown older the general tendency has been for the different units which we call States to amalgamate, with the result that the number of the units becomes smaller and the size of a single unit larger. This tendency to amalgamation naturally results from increasing contact between two units. If we could conceive to-day of two States entirely separated, with no interchange of travelers, or

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traders, or missionaries, there would be little chance of war between them. As the separate units come in contact with one another, however, differences disclose themselves. These differences must be settled. If they cannot be settled by agreement, they may become so vital that men will feel they can be settled only by force. The settlement of differences at any particular time, whether by agreement or by force, may result in the two units remaining independent, and thereafter having close relationships with each other under some *modus vivendi* which enables them to adjust from time to time differences as they arise. On the other hand, it may result in the two States being amalgamated into a single State. Such a process of amalgamation went on in France five hundred years ago, such a process brought England and Scotland and Wales together, such a process made Texas a part of the United States, such a process made a united Italy. Obviously, amalgamations of this kind can come about in only two ways—by force or by agreement; and it must be admitted that there are many more instances in history of amalgamation by force than by agreement.

With the growth of civilization, with the increase of connecting links between the great civilized States, we had generally come to be-

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lieve that the time-honored practice of incorporating one State into another by the method of force had gone by, and that future consolidations of States would come only by agreement. We were mistaken. Prussia, by its conduct in 1864, in 1866, in 1870, had given the world every reason to believe that it still adhered to the method of force. America declined to believe it until Prussia struck in 1914. For four years and a half the world has been fighting as a protest against this ancient method of force. It has been fighting to demonstrate that such a method is impossible of success. It has been fighting to reduce the likelihood of that method ever being used again. The world has been fighting in the hope that some means may be found to substitute agreement for force. As Mr. Asquith put it, we have been fighting for the "enthronement of the idea of public right." Germany made many protests that other States had used the method of force in times gone by. Let that be admitted. All the more reason was there for joining together to denounce the precedents which seemed to warrant such a tragedy. President Wilson stated the issue in his Mount Vernon speech:

The past and the present are in deadly grapple
and the peoples of the world are being done to

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death between them. There can be but one issue. The settlement must be final. There can be no compromise. No half-way decision would be tolerable. No half-way decision is conceivable.

There has been no compromise. Germany has been beaten. Her defeat has been more crushing than most people expected. We have proved to ourselves, and to the rulers and people of Germany, that for her this war has not paid. We have shown that even an unprepared world has been able to arise in its wrath to stop—though at fearful cost—the pretensions of autocratic power to impose its will by force upon its neighbors. The world at least has gained that much from the war. But is that enough?

The leading statesmen of all the countries have pronounced that it is not enough. They have promised the people a new world order. Very early in the war Mr. Asquith expressed the hope that the ending of the war would bring a "real European partnership," and he went on to say: "A year ago that would have sounded like a Utopian idea. It is probably one that may not, or will not, be realized either to-day or to-morrow. If and when this war is decided in favor of the Allies it will at once come within the range, and before long within the grasp, of European statesmanship." As the intensity and destructiveness of the war in-

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creased, the leaders of the warring States became more and more convinced that something must be done to prevent the repetition of such a tragedy. President Wilson in the speech which sets forth his fourteen points refers to this war as the "culminating and final war for human liberty." Mr. Lloyd George stated in his address on September 12, 1918, that "this must be the last war"; and on November 11, 1918, when he announced the terms of the armistice, he said: "I hope we may say that thus, this fateful morning, came an end to all wars." Mr. Taft was reported in the London *Times* of December 10, 1918, as having said: "I say to you that unless a league of nations emerges from the conference in Paris the whole war is a failure." And it is not only in the words of statesmen that this desire for some new international order is heard. Millions of people are expecting some concrete realization of the promises of the statesmen. In the statement of the Inter-Allied Labor War Aims it is expressed thus: "Whoever triumphs, the people will have lost unless an international system is established which will prevent war." And Mr. Samuel Gompers, in presenting the war aims of the American Federation of Labor to the Inter-Allied Labor and Socialist Conference held in London on September 18, 1918, stated that the first

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fundamental principle which must underlie the Peace Treaty should be "a League of the free peoples of the world in a common Covenant for genuine and practical co-operation to secure justice, and therefore peace, in relations between nations."

It will not suffice to tell the people that a solution is impracticable. You cannot permanently combat an ideal with a negation; you can combat it only with another ideal. The people of Russia are seeking international peace by a new pathway. Will it be of any avail to tell them that their pathway does not lead to the goal they seek? The statesmen must offer the world a remedy, a remedy that promises a hope of avoiding, or reducing the frequency of, future armed conflicts. And the statesmen must not be afraid to try new methods. In the words of President Wilson:

If hopeful and generous enterprise is to be renewed, if the healing and helpful arts of life are to be revived when peace comes again, a new atmosphere of justice and friendship must be generated by means the world has never tried before.

There are two implications in the expression just quoted. The first is that the vital thing is to generate "a new atmosphere of justice and friendship"; the second is that in trying to

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generate and maintain this justice and friendship men must have the courage to try methods that have never been tried before. However widely men may differ as to methods, no rational man can dissent from the desire of the President as thus expressed. It is surely idle to expect leagues, or partnerships, or societies, or high courts of justice, to be effective unless the great body of mankind wants justice and friendship more than it has wanted them before. Moreover, the leaders of the present generation would be falling far short of their duty and their opportunity if, in seeking this justice and friendship, they did not improve upon former methods. This does not mean, however, that we can ignore the means which the world has tried before. If for no other reason than to avoid discredited or unwise methods, it is important that we should know what methods have been tried and why they have partially or wholly failed.

For purposes of convenience we may consider former efforts to secure international co-operation under five headings:

- (1) Plans for perpetual peace;
- (2) Attempts to create a confederation of Europe after the Napoleonic Wars;
- (3) Efforts of jurists, statesmen and diplomatists

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to substitute agreement for force in the settlement of international disputes;

(4) The international co-operation forced on the world by science and commerce;

(5) The international machinery adopted by the Allied nations by reason of the pressure of the war with Germany.

It is not pretended that the foregoing classification is a strictly scientific one, or even that it is the best one. It will permit, however, a brief review of the failures and successes of those who have gone before us. We may be able to see a little farther ahead if we are willing to stand on the shoulders of our fathers.

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