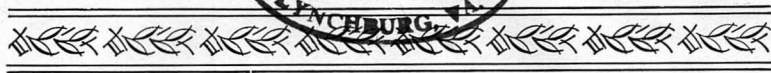


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WORLD PEACE

An Address by A. F. THOMAS



Delivered before the Sphex Club, Lynchburg, Virginia

February 19th, 1943



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EVEN if the war should last a long time, it is not too early to begin consideration of what shall be done to readjust the disrupted social relations when the peacemaking time arrives so that society will function in accord with sound moral, political and economic principles.

The moral law in these readjustments should be supreme. Failure to bring social practices, customs and institutions into accord with its requirements is the basic cause of social misfortunes. The social unit is in a state of constant change as it progresses or regresses. The political and economic powers that govern it should be readjusted as these changes occur if normal conditions are to be maintained. Such readjustments should be timely.

The power to govern—sovereign power—is a divisive power. A part of it belongs to the individual and other parts to collective bodies. The welfare of the whole is largely dependent upon the correct division, proper apportionment and beneficial exercise of this power. In matters relating to the individual's relation to God, sovereign power should vest in the individual. In matters of ethics affecting others, supreme power passes to the collective body. The principle which should apply in the division and apportionment of sovereign power is that *it should be co-extensive with the matters governed*. The locality should be supreme in purely local matters, the state in intra-state affairs, the nation in things of national import and there should be an international organization to exercise sovereign power in the international field.

While Science and technology have invented and applied social instruments that have annihilated time and distance,

making the world a neighborhood, many political and economic leaders have continued thinking in terms of the horse and buggy age. Many things which were of local concern have now assumed international importance and the failure to make proper provisions for the exercise of international sovereignty is clearly the cause of the deplorable condition in which the world finds itself today.

The fatal error, that each government is vested with absolute sovereign powers and that its decisions are final in international affairs and that the only appeal therefrom is to physical force, must be corrected. Every interest affected by the exercise of sovereign power has a right to participate in the consideration and decision of such questions. If democracy is to live, there must be an international government in which all interested parties participate to enact the laws, to establish a court to interpret them and provide an executive to administer them.

The world has not, as yet, reached the international stage. This field is in an anarchic condition. Science has promoted and increased international interests, but statesmen have not as yet provided political and economic machinery to take care of them.

At the end of War I the victors made the fatal mistake of adopting the false theory of absolute national sovereignty and setting up many small states. The larger states which did this, perhaps, were influenced by the idea that such a method would leave in their hands the power to exercise greater control than would be possible under a more democratic and more inclusive arrangement. If instead of vesting these numerous states, large and small, with unlimited sovereign power, the Versailles Convention had vested all sovereign international power in an international government having control of the armies, navies and air forces of the world, Japan would never have invaded China, Italy would not have invaded Ethiopia nor would Germany have invaded Austria and Czechoslovakia, and World War II would have been impossible. Had international power been ceded to a supreme international government, the larger powers would have had less power, but they would have been relieved of the necessity of defending themselves against other states. With proper adjustment, the

concentrated power of the world could have been used to compel refractory elements to conform to a system of law and order.

The lesson of coöperation has been slowly learned and still more slowly has man learned the moral obligations which it imposes. Coöperation should not only affect economies in production, but should provide methods by which its benefits would be distributed according to moral requirements. When the time for the division of benefits arrives, the question presents itself: Shall God or Mammon be served? Shall equal and exact justice to all and special privilege to none be the rule or shall power be exercised to favor the strong at the expense of the weak? This struggle between good and bad, right and wrong, justice and injustice, freedom and slavery, has existed since the beginning and will continue until perfection is reached, but by proper organization, the opportunities to do wrong will be more restricted.

World War I was said to have been fought "to make the world safe for democracy." This was the thought of idealists, but the facts of the case as brought out subsequent to the war lead to a very different conclusion.

Great Britain and France had taken over a large portion of the earth's surface, giving them a preponderant share of natural resources. Germany, ambitious to be among the greatest, if not herself the greatest among the nations, desired her place in the sun and had prepared to establish her claims by physical force. The murder of one man by a discontent in another nation furnished the excuse for precipitating a war that wasted billions of wealth and destroyed millions of lives. All this because of the false theory that a nation has a sovereign right to start a war to settle by force its differences with another nation. The motive behind the whole movement was selfishness—Germany seeking by force to get hold of the ill-gotten gains of Great Britain and France and the latter seeking to keep them for themselves. It was the fight of the pack for possession of the spoils.

The United States was drawn into the war by Germany's unrestricted U-boat policy which denied the freedom of the seas and under which she proceeded to destroy the lives of American citizens. The motives of the United States in asso-

ciating herself with the Allies were a prepossession in their favor and a purpose to maintain the principle that the seas were free and that any nation that attacked our citizens on these seas would be held responsible. The United States had no ulterior motives and with propriety could say that its efforts were "to make the world safe for democracy."

The main forces engaged in World War I fought it according to the rules established in the jungle—the strong win and the weak succumb. It was a repetition of the selfish wars that had cursed Europe for a thousand years. Even though no new principles were developed in these wars, it must be admitted that owing to a beneficent, over-ruling providence that turns even evil to good account, there has been much social advance in the world.

The fact that the whole world has become involved in the present war shows convincingly that the entire sphere has become a neighborhood and that isolation is no longer possible. The public interest and the general welfare are so widely extended that none can be independent of or indifferent to anything that is related to world welfare. Man has been compelled to become his brother's keeper whatever country he may inhabit or whatever may be his race.

It is increasingly apparent that the fundamental principles involved in the employment of brute force to settle political and economic questions are being brought out more plainly now than in any previous war. The war is resolving itself into a death struggle between the cruel philosophy of Nietzsche and the benevolent, moral gospel of Jesus Christ. The point of difference is whether human affairs shall be adjusted by the unrestricted use of physical force under the rule that Might makes Right or that moral law shall be supreme and that social tribunals shall insure equal and exact justice to both the strong and the weak.

The end of World War I furnished the opportunity to introduce the new system but the victors did not avail themselves of it. The settlement was made according to the established method of the strong dictating to the weak, the dominating motive being selfish purpose to divide the spoils among the victors.

The League of Nations was set up under the control of a few of the stronger nations, but it accepted the principle of



national sovereignty leaving each of them free to refuse to cooperate or even to remain with the League. In other words, it was a loosely organized confederation without the necessary power to enforce its decrees. Practically, it left the world to function under the same uncivilized jungle code that existed before the war. Selfishness and greed still remained the ruling motives. Instead of the broader principle of mutual service for the promotion of world welfare, narrow and blind nationalism became the policy of all. The United States was not an exception. Higher tariffs and other restrictive laws were enacted and even the States engaged in the effort to make exchanges between themselves more difficult. The Allies, including Japan, seized all of the earth's surface they could get and proceeded to exploit it to their advantage totally unmindful of the interests and rights of others. To express it differently, the Allies with the help of the United States proved to be the stronger and succeeded in doing what Germany tried but failed to do. Apparently there was no difference of principle between them.

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The Versailles Treaty was not a peace settlement but only an armistice—a truce that gave time and opportunity to sow dragons' teeth that have now produced a prolific crop of evils which serve to spread World War II over the entire sphere. If the Axis win the war and proceed to apply their philosophy of selfish domination, it can mean but one thing—world slavery and a succeeding war or succession of wars that will not end until selfish purpose in international affairs has been eliminated. If the Allies win and nothing is done to bring the world into conformity with the principles of neighborliness and fraternity but the same old course of sordid selfishness is followed the results will be practically the same and the war will have been fought in vain. If, however, the Allies win and take advantage of the opportunity that the Victory will offer to readjust political and economic relations in accord with the higher plane which science and technology have made possible, wars will cease and an era of peace and well-being such as never before existed will be diffused over the entire earth.

The first step in the process of establishing law and order in the world is to make a correct analysis of social power which should result in recognition of the fact that there should

be a proper division and apportionment of this power so that it may be employed most effectively in the promotion of the public good. *The general principle is that this power, whether exercised by the locality, the State, the Nation, or an international organization, must be co-extensive with the common interest over which it is to be exercised and all subject to moral law.*

An all important part of the readjustment should be the formation of an international organization to formulate, interpret and administer international law. There is now no such organization. Civilization has advanced to the point of having local, State and National Governments but has not reached the higher sphere of international governmental organization. Anarchy still prevails in this field. To be effective, the proposed international government should have the same power in the international field that nations now have within their jurisdictions. It should have Legislative, Judicial and Administrative Departments. Within its constitutional limitations, the International Government should be supreme in all the world. Each nation, large and small, should become a member of this World Union. This central government should have control of the Army, Navy and Air Forces of the world and the members of the World Union should only have such police forces left them as might be necessary to preserve law and order within their bounds. The World Union should guarantee to each member a stable form of government.

While the World Union itself should be organized under democratic principles, it would not be absolutely essential that the member governments should be so. It would perhaps be advisable that each of the members upon entering the World Union should retain the same form of government that it already had except for the sovereign power it had ceded to the World Union. The World Union should establish a world banking and currency system primarily for international trade. If it were properly organized and safely conducted, the chances are that it would eventually supersede all the currency systems now in existence. Neither the World Union nor any of the members should be permitted to impose any tariff thus insuring free trade in all the world.

All territories and mandated lands should be territories of the World Union to be administered to promote the interest of said territories and that of the world at large. These territories should be admitted as members of the World Union as they become qualified. Under such a system, the natural wealth of the world would be open to all upon equal terms which of itself would remove the cause of most wars. This done, there would no longer be a selfish reason for the acquisition of territory. The World Union Constitution and laws in accordance therewith should be supreme in international affairs and the members should be left free to control all matters of national concern only. The World Union should be organized as a representative democracy and the number of the representatives of the members should be limited so as to promote governmental efficiency. It might be advisable to have a Senate composed of one Senator representing each member and a House composed of a proportionate number of delegates based on the population of the member of the World Union which they represent. Each member should have at least one representative but to keep the number of representatives properly restricted so as to insure efficiency in operation, there should be provided a unit of population for each delegate. In the event that there should be a member that did not have a population equal to the unit, its delegate should cast a fractional vote based upon the fraction that the population of his member bore to the unit of population required for one delegate. The sovereign powers apportioned to the World Union so far as they go should be absolute, and within its constitutional limitations, the World Union should be supreme. It should be a strong government within its sphere. A weak and inefficient government in the international field would be a misfortune. It might be highly advisable that this new government should not attempt too much in its initial stages but what it did undertake should be carried to completion so as to inspire world confidence in its ability to perform.

As time advances and world civilization progresses, the need for international action will increase and its functions enlarge and multiply. Under the plan here proposed, the World Union would be organized as a representative democracy, leaving the members to conduct their national affairs under the forms of government with which they are familiar

but with such limitations as the Constitution of the World Union imposed. There is little doubt that such an arrangement would greatly facilitate the readjustment and hasten the evolution in its course to a world democracy.

The power to tax should be vested in the legislative bodies but it might be advisable for them to call upon the members for contributions in the proportion that the annual income of each bore to the total income of all. Only a general outline of the political side of the World Union is here suggested.

The most difficult among the many problems that will follow the peace settlement will be the economic readjustments that will be necessary to bring world relations into accord with the just and equitable principles that democracy alone can offer. If, as the Preamble of the United States Constitution declares, that society organized "in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity" it must be recognized that the two most important powers to be controlled and properly exercised are political power and economic power. If this is not done, the objectives stated cannot be realized. These powers must remain in the hands of society and be so organized that they will be exercised under public initiative to promote the general welfare. In this way alone can they be brought into accord with the democratic principle of "equal rights to all and special privilege to none." Any use of these powers under private initiative constitutes a privilege. When the United States Government was organized only the political side was dealt with. The economic side was then in such a low state of development that its importance, apparently, was not recognized.

The political government was founded on democratic principles and its evolutionary history has been in accord with them with the result that political power, much restricted in the beginning, has been constantly diffused so that now a large proportion of the population participates in government.

Due to the low state of economic development at the time of the formation of the American Republic, there was no pressing need for the formulation of economic principles and hence this side was left to develop in a haphazard way. It was left to individual initiative under the *laissez-faire* method. In

this anarchistic state, private initiative motivated by selfish purpose took control. Alexander Hamilton, who was opposed to democracy on principle, was the father of the doctrine of protection which subsidized manufacture by means of discriminating tariff laws, thus introducing into our public policy the practice of favoritism which was diametrically opposed to a democratic government based upon the principle of equal rights to all and special privilege to none. He planted the seed of social cancer that even until now is eating into the vitals of democratic government. The vicious principle he engrafted in the body politic is bringing a bountiful crop of evils which must be eliminated if the benefits of democracy are to be realized. The results of this policy of special privilege is directly responsible for the introduction of class government under which business, labor and agriculture are pounding at the doors of the Government for special favors.

Political power under public initiative and economic power under private initiative are inveterate enemies. Harmonious coöperation between them is impossible. Each, of necessity, must strive to overcome the other. The highest degree of efficiency can only be reached when these two forces are brought under the same control and directed to the accomplishment of the same purpose—the promotion of the general welfare.

It is admitted that the fostering of certain classes by the Government has greatly hastened the economic evolution which proceeds by the process of elimination of the unnecessary. The units increase in size and diminish in numbers and in the final stage under private initiative reach private monopoly. Even though the development under democratic methods would have been slower it would have accomplished the purpose and would have avoided the evils which necessarily followed the violation of democratic principles.

In fairness, it may be pointed out that economic action under private initiative has resulted in greatly improved efficiency in production, but it fails to give that continuity of operation and steady, constant distribution of benefits upon which the uniform progress of society depends, hence we have booms in which waste and extravagance prevail followed by depressions that cause enforced idleness, deprivation and suffering among the masses. Under these conditions millions of

the population in times of stress are compelled either to appeal as objects of charity to the public treasury for support or starve. Under such a system, much of the gain from improved economic operation is lost in these periods of stagnation.

How long will it be before the masses who in such periods have learned the way to the public treasury to relieve their dire poverty and distress will destroy the principles upon which our political government rests? If the present class government is continued how long will it be before the private monopolies of organized business, labor and agriculture will control the government and destroy absolutely our democracy? No one can correctly predict the time but this much can be said: either private monopoly or democracy must go as they both cannot survive in the same country. What, then, is the remedy? If democracy is to live, economic life must be democratized. The world will not be willing to go backward. Scientific achievement and inventive accomplishment have made such a course impossible. If retroaction were attempted, society would soon learn that it meant the loss of many things that have now become necessities. The only alternative consistent with social and scientific progress is the substitution of public initiative for private initiative. To accomplish this purpose, the Government must increase its functions of public service and thus make both economic and political powers servants of the people instead of their masters. This principle can be applied by an international, a national, a state or a local government as the services required are confined to these respective jurisdictions. These changes like most others of fundamental character will come under the stress of necessity since man's inertia is disposed to delay the acceptance of even heaven's blessing until the torments of hell have become unbearable. Before democracy can come into its own, special privilege and spoliation must be eliminated and until this is done, democratic freedom may be hoped for but cannot be realized. Once the improvement of social organization has been made, the world will enjoy a higher state of civilization than ever existed before.

The adjustment of the economic problem of the world to bring this power into accord with democratic principles is even more difficult than finding a satisfactory political solution. The fact that there is such a wide disparity in the degrees

of economic development in the states that would become members of the World Union leaves little reason to believe that much can be done at first by the World Union under general laws applicable to all members. It seems probable that it would be more expedient to leave much of this change to be worked out in an evolutionary way by the members themselves. Under this method the more progressive members would be able to give the more backward members helpful examples that would incite action in their parts. The methods employed should be evolutionary since hasty or harsh revolutionary processes would involve enormous losses of lives and wealth. The question may be asked: Why go forward in face of the many great difficulties that must be met and overcome before the desired objective can be reached? The answer is: The dangers behind are greater than those before. The right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness hang in the balance and man must strive to save for himself and those who come after him, the things which free men value more highly than even life itself.

The final verdict must be reached on the spiritual plane. The first consideration must be how these facilities can be used to confer the greatest good upon the greatest number and not how they can most effectively be employed to oppress and exploit the largest number of those who cannot protect themselves. The world must seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, relying upon the promise that other things will be added unto it. This may be considered as idealism run wild but to get a more correct view, the other side of the picture must be seen. From the days of primitive man, the controlling motive underlying human action has been selfish greed. The social organization and machinery have been improved, making possible greater benefits from human effort. The placing of these blessings under the control of selfish incentive and making the amount of success of spoliation the standard by which individual and collective worth were to be measured prevented the introduction of better methods of equitable distribution. The effort to get an undue share of production has led to conflict between the contending forces in which millions of lives and billions of property have been destroyed. These destructive processes will continue so long as political and economic organization is based upon

selfish principles. The substitution of moral methods of mutual service for mutual benefit in the place of unrestrained physical force is all that stands between man and self-destruction.

There is one unfailing source of hope and comfort which is the faith that there is an all-powerful, universal, spiritual God through whose benevolent providence even evil ultimately contributes to the success of the good. Ignorant selfishness may delay the coming of God's kingdom on earth, but the will of God in the end will prevail. The end of this war will offer the world the greatest opportunity that ever was presented since the advent of man to make straight the way to the kingdom of God on earth. Will it avail itself of it or will it continue to follow the wide and well-beaten track that leads to the ills, sufferings and destruction which its errors and sins make inevitable?

To the impartial observer, it is plain that the old order is passing and that the new order comes apace. Empire world control, under selfish incentive, is rapidly approaching its end. Stern necessity demands that mutual service shall supersede selfishness, that the benefits of scientific progress shall inure to the advantage of the entire human family, that political and economic forces must be exercised to consummate this supreme purpose. Man should devote his best efforts to reach this objective but should he fail, evolution or revolution will make up for his dereliction but at his expense.

It is improbable not to say impossible that the Axis powers will win the world contest, but it is timely to remind the Allied Nations that victory over the Axis is only the preliminary step that makes ready the foundation upon which they are to build a new order that will insure democracy, justice and peace for all the world. The end to be reached is not only to overcome the Axis powers and to destroy among them the philosophy upon which their movement rests, but to readjust within the Allied powers themselves their social and political forces so that they, too, may be brought into accord with the fundamental principles of worldwide democracy based upon equal right and fraternal obligation. To accomplish this purpose, political power and economic power must be brought under public initiative and exercised for the promotion of the public welfare. Less than this leaves special privilege under individual initiative and selfish control to

continue the disrupting struggle that inevitably leads to private monopoly with its destructive processes of wars, waste and untold suffering. At the mention of this subject, Russia stands out like a sore thumb—a taboo not to be mentioned in polite society. World conditions today are in a broad way analogous to those existing at the time of the American and French revolutions. It was then a world movement to establish political equality, justice and fraternity for the individual. The Russian revolution is now a world movement to establish economic equality, justice and fraternity for the masses of all countries. There has been no change in principles. It is the same struggle between Right and Might. All great fundamental social changes have their origin among the underprivileged. When once started, they permeate the entire social body. When Jesus came to bring the good news—the Gospel—these were the elements to which he appealed. When the American and French revolutions with their bloody horrors burst, they started a world movement that has permeated every part of the sphere. Looking back all can now see that mankind has received inestimable benefits from them. Edmund Burke denounced the French revolution in terms more bitter, if possible, than any applied to the Russian revolution. After 150 years, the world appreciates the fundamental benefits of the French revolution and Burke's attack also survives to discredit him. The time for defamation, prejudice, ignorance and selfish consideration of the Russian revolution, if it ever existed, has now passed. An earnest, honest search for the truths of the case and an impartial and correct analysis of them are now in order. The Russian peasants with the rest of the world against them staged a revolution and went through indescribable experiences but in spite of them, they overcame the Czaristic government, establishing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. They were seeking Utopia and found it and what was unbelievable up to that time, they made it work. Considering the conditions that existed when this movement started, history records no parallel to the progress they have made in 25 years in governmental organization, agriculture, industrialization and education. Even when Germany made its wanton attack upon them, the world consensus was that the Soviet Army would be utterly crushed in a few weeks. The idea that the army of these Utopian peasants would be able

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to withstand the highly organized and mechanized forces of Germany was preposterous! Yet today the German army, suffering unprecedented losses, is falling back before the victorious Red Army and a gaping world, including Germany herself, stands amazed!

The German invasion of Russia, instead of being a misfortune for the Soviets, now promises to be a blessing in disguise. It has dramatized the new System, thrown it upon the world screen where all may dissect, analyze and synthesize it. The Soviet movement coming up from the depths was despised and berated. Its representatives were not even permitted to be present when Great Britain and France, at Munich, were throwing Czecho-Slovakia, as a sop to the German Cerberus!

Today how different: The Russian revolution is *un fait accompli*. The Soviet Government has established its system, political and economic, fought its way into the sun and stands a great nation by the other great nations of the world. What can or should be done about it? Common sense and a proper regard for the verities of the case make it plain that the Allies should meet each other in a spirit of accommodation and good will with the supreme purpose of making such readjustments as may be necessary to promote the general welfare of all the world, the Axis included. Any other course and the Allies, though they win the war, will have lost the peace.

The old order is passing, a new era comes apace. It is a world movement, the kingdom of God on earth approaches and the reactionary forces of man will not be able to prevail against it.

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