

CHAPTER XXI

GUARANTEES OF PEACE

With the Mediterranean free, the policing of peace became a comparatively easy matter. For the Mediterranean is the strategic centre of the world. It connects Europe with Asia and the east coast of Africa. It commands access to Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Greece, and the Balkan states. It controls the connections of the British Empire. It unites the Orient with the Occident. It controls the raw materials on which the economic life of the modern state depends.

No industrial nation could develop with the Mediterranean closed against it. It could scarcely make successful war against any other state.

The Mediterranean commission would be in a position to control the economic life of Europe. It could compel adherence to its decrees by placing an embargo on any nation which refused to abide by its decision. It would

control the waterways and the land routes, and, what is more important, it would command the raw materials of the east coast of Africa, of the Congo, of Persia, as well as of Egypt, India, Australia, and China. It could close mills and factories. For the whole world is so dependent upon the Mediterranean that any obstruction to the connections of any one of the greater Powers would derange its industrial life. If enforced long enough it might bring bankruptcy as well.

That is why Gibraltar, the Dardanelles, the Bagdad Railway, and the Suez Canal are so important. These places are nearly impregnable. They are difficult of approach. They are so well supported from the rear that they cannot be passed.

With these strategic points in international hands, a great war would be almost impossible. Disarmament would then be an easier matter. The odds against a nation that laid down the gage of battle would be too great. Quite as important, war would no longer be always imminent. There would be an end of fear; of competition for armaments; of struggles for alliances and counter-alliances.

The world would breathe freely with the burden of policing taken from the hands of the individual nations and placed in the hands of the world, where it belongs. Then the irritations and controversies that have kept Europe in a state of nervous tension for the past fifty years would tend to be allayed. War would pass from men's minds as a means of settling disputes, when the fear which precedes wars is taken away.

But the real guardian of such an empire would be its justice. The gains from freedom are so obvious, while the sanctity of international territory is so solemn, that nations would guard its decrees from self-interest. Public opinion and economic interest would be the great protectors of a free Mediterranean.

Obviously, some new kind of a world organization must be provided with adequate forces at its command for the adjustment of disputes and the enforcement of neutrality within this territory. Some military force must be provided that will occupy the strategic points on the land and sea. There must be means for guaranteeing the freedom of the Balkan states, of Asia Minor, of Mesopotamia, and

of the states on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean territory must be guarded by the whole world to which it belongs. And an international parliament, an international judiciary, and an international force can provide such protection.

The idea of such a tribunal and such a force has been widely approved. It has been discussed in great detail by many writers.¹ And it involves no difficulties that cannot be overcome provided a sincere desire exists for its creation.

The main thing, as Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson says, is a desire to set up such an international agency. He says:

“Every difficulty would be insuperable so long as the present exaggerated sense of national importance and inadequacy of international obligation continued to characterize all the great nations. The purely political problems would become capable of solution in proportion as the preliminary moral and intellectual conversion took place.”²

No great military and naval force is required for the enforcement of neutralization if it were

¹ See *The Choice Before Us*, by G. Lowes Dickinson.

² *The Choice Before Us*, p. 101.

accompanied by disarmament. This is especially true of the Mediterranean and other waterways and land routes of the earth. Gibraltar, Constantinople, Port Said, Panama, and the Kiel Canal are easy of defense. They are so situated that an offensive against them would be a difficult matter. A substantial navy within the Mediterranean, supported by land forces at strategic points, would be almost impregnable. And an unwarranted attack upon an international force whose inviolability has been guaranteed by the world would be like the violation of a sanctuary. It would shock the moral sense of the world far more than would an attack upon a single nation.

There are many analogies to such a plan. France was accorded the right to police Morocco by all of the Powers. The treaty of Algeciras provides for the application of the "principle of economic liberty without inequality." The United States has assumed the right to police Cuba and Central America, and to maintain the Monroe Doctrine over the Western Hemisphere. Japan claims somewhat analogous rights of hegemony over China. There are many examples of such extraterri-

toriality. And they have made for peace in the main.

The tribunal which decides all questions covered by the treaty should be representative not only of the greater Powers but of the smaller countries as well. It should be in constant session. It should have large powers of investigation into the archives of all countries. It should be the repository of all treaties. It should have representatives in every capital, with a position similar to that of an ambassador. It should have agents within the neutralized territories ready to report on any violation of the treaty of neutrality, and authority not only to intervene on behalf of the treaty but to give immediate publicity to any violations of it.

Such a tribunal would have complete military jurisdiction over the strategic places and the territory intrusted to it. Its powers should be absolute. In case of violation of the treaty it should act with military decision, just as though it were defending the territory of its own country. And the tribunal should have sufficient military and naval forces at its command to uphold the peace intrusted to it.

The smaller countries bordering upon the Mediterranean should give up their navies or agree to confine their operations in accordance with the treaties of neutralization; while the navies of the great Powers—England, France, Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary—should be admitted to the neutralized zones only for transit through the waterways. The three-mile zone on the seas is recognized by the whole world. Naval battles are not permitted within it. Any ship which enters a neutral port during time of war must depart within a limited period; otherwise it is interned. These rules are observed. Rarely is there a suggestion that they have been violated. And navies or battleships of the Powers while in neutral waters could be convoyed by ships of the League, their marines could be carried on other vessels, the machinery could be partially dismantled, or temporary control could be delegated to a neutral commander until the fleet was outside of the neutral zone.

Such an arrangement would enable every nation to use the neutralized waterways and land routes for peaceful errands. The privilege would be open to all nations. It would not

be under the control of a single Power. And naval and military forces should not be employed within the international territory.

This whole territory, from the Atlantic Ocean to India, and from Austria-Hungary to the Persian Gulf, would become international soil. It would be democracy's temple to peace and a monument to the freedom of the world.