II

THE PROJECT OF A WORLD STATE[B]

[B] Written originally as a lecture to be delivered in America.

In this paper, I want to tell you of the idea that now shapes and dominates my public life--the idea of a world politically united--of a world securely and permanently at peace. And I want to say what I have to say, so far as regards the main argument of it, as accurately and plainly as possible, without any eloquence or flourishes.

When I first planned this paper, I chose as the title The Utopia of a World State. Well, there is something a little too flimsy and unpracticable about that word Utopia. To most people Utopia conveys the idea of a high-toned political and ethical dream--agreeable and edifying, no doubt, but of no practical value whatever. What I have to talk about this evening is not a bit dreamlike, it is about real dangers and urgent necessities. It is a Project and not a Utopia. It may be a vast and impossible project. It may be a hopeless project. But if it fails our civilization fails. And so I have called this paper not the Utopia but The Project of a World State. There are some things that it is almost impossible to tell without seeming to scream and exaggerate, and yet these things may be in reality the soberest matter of fact. I want to say that this civilization in which we are living is tumbling

down, and I think tumbling down very fast; that I think rapid enormous efforts will be needed to save it; and that I see no such efforts being made at the present time. I do not know if these words convey any concrete ideas to the reader's mind. There are statements that can open such unfamiliar vistas as to seem devoid of any real practical meaning at all, and this I think may be one of them.

In the past year I have been going about Europe. I have had glimpses of a new phase of this civilization of ours--a new phase that would have sounded like a fantastic dream if one had told about it ten years ago. I have seen a great city that had over two million inhabitants, dying, and dying with incredible rapidity. In 1914 I was in the city of St. Petersburg and it seemed as safe and orderly a great city as yours. I went thither in comfortable and punctual trains. I stayed in an hotel as well equipped and managed as any American hotel. I went to dine with and visit households of cultivated people. I walked along streets of brilliantly lit and well-furnished shops. It was, in fact, much the same sort of life that you are living here to-day--a part of our (then) world-wide modern civilization.

I revisited these things last summer. I found such a spectacle of decay that it seems almost impossible to describe it to those who have never seen the like. Streets with great holes where the drains had fallen in. Stretches of roadway from which the wood paving had been torn for firewood. Lampposts that had been knocked over lying as they were left, without an attempt to set them up again. Shops and markets deserted and

decayed and ruinous. Not closed shops but abandoned shops, as abandoned-looking as an old boot or an old can by the wayside. The railways falling out of use. A population of half a million where formerly there had been two. A strangely homeless city, a city of discomforts and anxieties, a city of want and ill-health and death. Such was Petersburg in 1920.

I know there are people who have a quick and glib explanation of this vast and awe-inspiring spectacle of a great empire in collapse. They say it is Bolshevism has caused all this destruction. But I hope to show here, among other more important things, that Bolshevism is merely a part of this immense collapse--that the overthrow of a huge civilized organization needs some more comprehensive explanation than that a little man named Lenin was able to get from Geneva to Russia at a particular crisis in Russian history. And particularly is it to be noted that this immense destruction of civilized life has not been confined to Russia or to regions under Bolshevik rule. Austria and Hungary present spectacles hardly less desolating than Russia. There is a conspicuous ebb in civilization in Eastern Germany. And even when you come to France and Italy and Ireland there are cities, townships, whole wide regions, where you can say: This has gone back since 1914 and it is still going back in material prosperity, in health, in social order.

Even in England and Scotland, in Holland and Denmark and Sweden, it is hard to determine whether things are stagnant or moving forward or moving back--they are certainly not going ahead as they were before

1913-14. The feeling in England is rather like the feeling of a man who is not quite sure whether he has caught a slight chill or whether he is in the opening stage of a serious illness.

Now what I want to do here is to theorize about this shadow, this chill and arrest, that seems to have come upon the flourishing and expanding civilization in which all of us were born and reared. I want to put a particular view of what is happening before you, and what it is that we are up against. I want to put before you for your judgment the view that this overstrain and breaking down and stoppage of the great uprush of civilization that has gone on for the past three centuries is due to the same forces and is the logical outcome of the same forces that led to that uprush, to that tremendous expansion of human knowledge and power and life. And that that breaking up is an inevitable thing unless we meet it by a very great effort of a particular kind.

Now the gist of my case is this: That the civilization of the past three centuries has produced a great store of scientific knowledge, and that this scientific knowledge has altered the material scale of human affairs and enormously enlarged the physical range of human activities, but that there has been no adequate adjustment of men's political ideas to the new conditions.

This adjustment is a subtle and a difficult task. It is also a greatly neglected task. And upon the possibility of our making this adjustment depends the issue whether the ebb of civilizing energy, the actual

smashing and breaking down of modern civilization, which has already gone very far indeed in Russia and which is going on in most of Eastern and Central Europe, extends to the whole civilized world.

Let me make a very rough and small scale analysis of what is happening to the world to-day. And let us disregard many very important issues and concentrate upon the chief, most typical issue, the revolution in the facilities of locomotion and communication that has occurred to the world and the consequences of that revolution. For the international problem to-day is essentially dependent upon the question of transport and communication--all others are subordinate to that. I shall particularly call your attention to certain wide differences between the American case and the old-world case in this matter.

It is not understood clearly enough at the present time how different is the American international problem from the European international problem, and how inevitable it is that America and Europe should approach international problems from a different angle and in a different spirit. Both lines of thought and experience do, I believe, lead at last to the world state, but they get there by a different route and in a different manner.

The idea that the government of the United States can take its place side by side with the governments of the old world on terms of equality with those governments in order to organize the peace of the world, is, I believe, a mistaken and unworkable idea. I shall argue that the

government of the United States and the community of the United States are things different politically and mentally from those of the states of the old world, and that the rôle they are destined to play in the development of a world state of mankind is essentially a distinctive one. And I shall try to show cause for regarding the very noble and splendid project of a world-wide League of Nations that has held the attention of the world for the past three years, as one that is, at once, a little too much for complete American participation, and not sufficient for the urgent needs of Europe. It is not really so practicable and reasonable a proposition as it seemed at first.

The idea of a world state, though it looks a far greater and more difficult project, is, in the long run, a sounder and more hopeful proposition.

Now let me make myself as clear as I can be about the central idea upon which the whole of the arguments in this lecture rests. It is this: forgive me for a repetition--that there has been a complete alteration in the range and power of human activities in the last hundred years. Men can react upon men with a rapidity and at a distance inconceivable a hundred years ago. This is particularly the case with locomotion and methods of communication generally. I will not remind you in any detail of facts with which you are familiar; how that in the time of Napoleon the most rapid travel possible of the great conqueror himself did not average all over as much as four and a half miles an hour. A hundred and seven miles a day for thirteen days--the pace of his rush from Vilna to

Paris after the Moscow disaster--was regarded as a triumph of speed. In those days, too, it was a marvel that by means of semaphores it was possible to transmit a short message from London to Portsmouth in the course of an hour or so.

Since then we have seen a development of telegraphy that has at last made news almost simultaneous about the world, and a steady increase in the rate of travel until, as we worked it out in the Civil Air Transport Committee in London, it is possible, if not at present practicable, to fly from London to Australia, half way round the earth, in about eight days. I say possible, but not practicable, because at present properly surveyed routes, landing grounds and adequate supplies of petrol and spare parts do not exist. Given those things, that journey could be done now in the time I have stated. This tremendous change in the range of human activities involves changes in the conditions of our political life that we are only beginning to work out to their proper consequences to-day.

It is a curious thing that America, which owes most to this acceleration in locomotion, has felt it least. The United States have taken the railway, the river steamboat, the telegraph and so forth as though they were a natural part of their growth. They were not. These things happened to come along just in time to save American unity. The United States of to-day were made first by the river steamboat, and then by the railway. Without these things, the present United States, this vast continental nation, would have been altogether impossible. The westward

flow of population would have been far more sluggish. It might never have crossed the great central plains. It took, you will remember, nearly two hundred years for effective settlement to reach from the coast to the Missouri, much less than half-way across the continent. The first state established beyond the river was the steamboat state of Missouri in 1821. But the rest of the distance to the Pacific was done in a few decades.

If we had the resources of the cinema it would be interesting to show a map of North America year by year from 1600 onward, with little dots to represent hundreds of people, each dot a hundred, and stars to represent cities of a hundred thousand people.

For two hundred years you would see that stippling creeping slowly along the coastal districts and navigable waters, spreading still more gradually into Indiana, Kentucky, and so forth. Then somewhere about 1810 would come a change. Things would get more lively along the river courses. The dots would be multiplying and spreading. That would be the steamboat. The pioneer dots would be spreading soon from a number of jumping-off places along the great rivers over Kansas and Nebraska.

Then from about 1830 onward would come the black lines of the railways, and after that the little black dots would not simply creep but run. They would appear now so rapidly, it would be almost as though they were being put on by some sort of spraying machine. And suddenly here and then there would appear the first stars to indicate the first great

cities of a hundred thousand people. First one or two and then a multitude of cities--each like a knot in the growing net of the railways.

This is a familiar story. I recall it to you now to enforce this point--that the growth of the United States is a process that has no precedent in the world's history; it is a new kind of occurrence. Such a community could not have come into existence before, and if it had it would, without railways, have certainly dropped to pieces long before now. Without railways or telegraph it would be far easier to administer California from Pekin than from Washington. But this great population of the United States of America has not only grown outrageously; it has kept uniform. Nay, it has become more uniform. The man of San Francisco is more like the man of New York to-day than the man of Virginia was like the man of New England a century ago. And the process of assimilation goes on unimpeded. The United States is being woven by railway, by telegraph, more and more into one vast human unity, speaking, thinking, and acting harmoniously with itself. Soon aviation will be helping in the work.

Now this great community of the United States is, I repeat, an altogether new thing in history. There have been great empires before with populations exceeding 100 millions, but these were associations of divergent peoples; there has never been one single people on this scale before. We want a new term for this new thing. We call the United States a country, just as we call France or Holland a country. But really the

two things are as different as an automobile and a one-horse shay. They are the creations of different periods and different conditions; they are going to work at a different pace and in an entirely different way. If you propose--as I gather some of the League of Nations people propose--to push the Peace of the World along on a combination of these two sorts of vehicle, I venture to think the Peace of the World will be subjected to some very considerable strains.

Let me now make a brief comparison between the American and the European situation in relation to these vital matters, locomotion and the general means of communicating. I said just now that the United States of America owe most to the revolution in locomotion and have felt it least. Europe on the other hand owes least to the revolution in locomotion and has felt it most. The revolution in locomotion found the United States of America a fringe of population on the sea margins of a great rich virgin empty country into which it desired to expand, and into which it was free to expand. The steamboat and railway seemed to come as a natural part of that expansion. They came as unqualified blessings. But into Western Europe they came as a frightful nuisance.

The States of Europe, excepting Russia, were already a settled, established and balanced system. They were living in final and conclusive boundaries with no further possibility of peaceful expansion. Every extension of a European state involved a war; it was only possible through war. And while the limits to the United States have been set by the steamship and the railroad, the limits to the European sovereign

states were drawn at a much earlier time. They were drawn by the horse, and particularly the coach-horse travelling along the high road. If you will examine a series of political maps of Europe for the last two thousand years, you will see that there has evidently been a definite limit to the size of sovereign states through all that time, due to the impossibility of keeping them together because of the difficulty of intercommunication if they grew bigger. And this was in spite of the fact that there were two great unifying ideas present in men's minds in Europe throughout that period, namely, the unifying idea of the Roman Empire, and the unifying idea of Christendom. Both these ideas tended to make Europe one, but the difficulties of communication defeated that tendency. It is quite interesting to watch the adventures of what is called first the Roman Empire and afterwards the Holy Roman Empire, in a series of historical maps. It keeps expanding and then dropping to pieces again. It is like the efforts of someone who is trying to pack up a parcel which is much too big, in wet blotting paper. The cohesion was inadequate. And so it was that the eighteenth century found Europe still divided up into what I may perhaps call these high-road and coach-horse states, each with a highly developed foreign policy, each with an intense sense of national difference and each with intense traditional antagonisms.

Then came this revolution in the means of locomotion, which has increased the normal range of human activity at least ten times. The effect of that in America was opportunity; the effect of it in Europe was congestion. It is as if some rather careless worker of miracles had

decided suddenly to make giants of a score of ordinary men, and chose the moment for the miracle when they were all with one exception strap-hanging in a street car. The United States was that fortunate exception.

Now this is what modern civilization has come up against, and it is the essential riddle of the modern sphinx which must be solved if we are to live. All the European boundaries of to-day are impossibly small for modern conditions. And they are sustained by an intensity of ancient tradition and patriotic passion.... That is where we stand.

The citizens of the United States of America are not without their experience in this matter. The crisis of the national history of the American community, the war between Union and Secession, was essentially a crisis between the great state of the new age and the local feeling of an earlier period. But Union triumphed. Americans live now in a generation that has almost forgotten that there once seemed a possibility that the map of North America might be broken up at last into as many communities as the map of Europe. Except by foreign travel, the present generation of Americans can have no idea of the net of vexations and limitations in which Europeans are living at the present time because of their political disunion.

Let me take a small but quite significant set of differences, the inconveniences of travel upon a journey of a little over a thousand miles. They are in themselves petty inconveniences, but they will serve

to illustrate the net that is making free civilized life in Europe more and more impossible.

Take first the American case. An American wants to travel from New York to St. Louis. He looks up the next train, packs his bag, gets aboard a sleeper and turns out at St. Louis next day ready for business.

Take now the European parallel. A European wants to travel from London to Warsaw. Now that is a shorter distance by fifty or sixty miles than the distance from New York to St. Louis. Will he pack his bag, get aboard a train and go there? He will not. He will have to get a passport, and getting a passport involves all sorts of tiresome little errands. One has to go to a photographer, for example, to get photographs to stick on the passport. The good European has then to take his passport to the French representative in London for a French visa, or, if he is going through Belgium, for a Belgian visa. After that he must get a German visa. Then he must go round to the Czecho-Slovak office for a Czechoslovak visa. Finally will come the Polish visa.

Each of these endorsements necessitates something vexatious, personal attendance, photography, stamps, rubber stamps, mysterious signatures and the like, and always the payment of fees. Also they necessitate delays. The other day I had occasion to go to Moscow, and I learnt that it takes three weeks to get a visa for Finland and three weeks to get a visa for Esthonia. You see you can't travel about Europe at all without weeks and weeks of preparation. The preparations for a little journey to

Russia the other day took three whole days out of my life, cost me several pounds in stamps and fees, and five in bribery.

Ultimately, however, the good European is free to start. Arriving at the French frontier in an hour or so, he will be held up for a long customs' examination. Also he will need to change some of his money into francs. His English money will be no good in France. The exchange in Europe is always fluctuating, and he will be cheated on the exchange. All European countries, including my own, cheat travellers on the exchange--that is apparently what the exchange is for.

He will then travel for a few hours to the German frontier. There he will be bundled out again. The French will investigate him closely to see that he is not carrying gold or large sums of money out of France. Then he will be handed over to the Germans. He will go through the same business with the customs and the same business with the money. His French money is no further use to him and he must get German. A few more hours and he will arrive on the frontier of Bohemia. Same search for gold. Then customs' examination and change of money again. A few hours more and he will be in Poland. Search for gold, customs, fresh money.

As most of these countries are pursuing different railway policies, he will probably have to change trains and rebook his luggage three or four times. The trains may be ingeniously contrived not to connect so as to force him to take some longer route politically favoured by one of the intervening states. He will be lucky if he gets to Warsaw in four days.

Arrived in Warsaw, he will probably need a permit to stay there, and he will certainly need no end of permits to leave.

Now here is a fuss over a fiddling little journey of 1,100 miles. Is it any wonder that the bookings from London to Warsaw are infinitesimal in comparison with the bookings from New York to St. Louis? But what I have noted here are only the normal inconveniences of the traveller. They are by no means the most serious inconveniences.

The same obstructions that hamper the free movement of a traveller, hamper the movement of foodstuffs and all sorts of merchandise in a much greater degree. Everywhere in Europe trade is being throttled by tariffs and crippled by the St. Vitus' dance of the exchanges. Each of these European sovereign states turns out paper money at its own sweet will. Last summer I went to Prague and exchanged pounds for kroners. They ought to have been 25 to the pound. On Monday they were 180 to the pound: on Friday 169. They jump about between 220 and 150, and everybody is inconvenienced except the bankers and money changers. And this uncertain exchange diverts considerable amounts of money that should be stimulating business enterprise into a barren and mischievous gambling with the circulation.

Between each one of these compressed European countries the movement of food or labour is still more blocked and impeded. And in addition to these nuisances of national tariffs and independent national coinages at

every few score miles, Europe is extraordinarily crippled by its want of any central authority to manage the most elementary collective interests; the control of vice, for example; the handling of infectious diseases; the suppression of international criminals.

Europe is now confronted by a new problem--the problem of air transport. So far as I can see, air transport is going to be strangled in Europe by international difficulties. One can fly comfortably and safely from London to Paris in two or three hours. But the passport preliminaries will take days beforehand.

The other day I wanted to get quickly to Reval in Esthonia from England and back again. The distance is about the same as from Boston to Minneapolis, and it could be done comfortably in 10 or 12 hours' flying. I proposed to the Handley Page Company that they should arrange this for me. They explained that they had no power to fly beyond Amsterdam in Holland; thence it might be possible to get a German plane to Hamburg, and thence again a Danish plane to Copenhagen--leaving about 500 miles which were too complicated politically to fly. Each stoppage would involve passport and other difficulties. In the end it took me five days to get to Reval and seven days to get back. In Europe, with its present frontiers, flying is not worth having. It can never be worth having--it can never be worked successfully--until it is worked as at least a pan-European affair.

All these are the normal inconveniences of the national divisions of

Europe in peace time. By themselves they are strangling all hope of economic recovery. For Europe is not getting on to its feet economically. Only a united effort can effect that. But along each of the ridiculously restricted frontiers into which the European countries are packed, lies also the possibility of war. National independence means the right to declare war. And so each of these packed and strangulated European countries is obliged, by its blessed independence, to maintain as big an army and as big a military equipment as its bankrupt condition--for we are all bankrupt--permits.

Since the end of the Great War, nothing has been done of any real value to ensure any European country against the threat of war, and nothing will be done, and nothing can be done to lift that threat, so long as the idea of national independence overrides all other considerations.

And again, it is a little difficult for a mind accustomed to American conditions, to realize what modern war will mean in Europe.

Not one of these sovereign European states I have named between London and Warsaw is any larger than the one single American state of Texas, and not one has a capital that cannot be effectively bombed by aeroplane raiders from its frontier within five or six hours of a declaration of war. We can fly from London to Paris in two or three hours. And the aerial bombs of to-day, I can assure you, will make the biggest bombs of 1918 seem like little crackers. Over all these European countries broods this immediate threat of a warfare that will strain and torment the

nerves of every living man, woman or child in the countries affected. Nothing of the sort can approach the American citizen except after a long warning. The worst war that could happen to any North American country would merely touch its coasts.

Now I have dwelt on these differences between America and Europe because they involve an absolute difference in outlook towards world peace projects, towards leagues of nations, world states and the like, between the American and the European.

The American lives in a political unity on the big modern scale. He can go on comfortably for a hundred years yet before he begins to feel tight in his political skin, and before he begins to feel the threat of immediate warfare close to his domestic life. He believes by experience in peace, but he feels under no passionate urgency to organize it. So far as he himself is concerned, he has got peace organized for a good long time ahead. I doubt if it would make any very serious difference for some time in the ordinary daily life of Kansas City, let us say, if all Europe were reduced to a desert in the next five years.

But on the other hand, the intelligent European is up against the unity of Europe problem night and day. Europe cannot go on. European civilization cannot go on, unless that net of boundaries which strangles her is dissolved away. The difficulties created by language differences, by bitter national traditions, by bad political habits and the like, are no doubt stupendous. But stupendous though they are, they have to be

faced. Unless they are overcome, and overcome in a very few years, Europe--entangled in this net of boundaries, and under a perpetual fear of war, will, I am convinced, follow Russia and slide down beyond any hope of recovery into a process of social dissolution as profound and disastrous as that which closed the career of the Western Roman Empire.

The American intelligence and the European intelligence approach this question of a world peace, therefore, from an entirely different angle and in an entirely different spirit. To the American in the blessed ease of his great unbroken territory, it seems a matter simply of making his own ample securities world-wide by treaties of arbitration and such-like simple agreements. And my impression is that he thinks of Europeans as living under precisely similar conditions.

Nothing of that sort will meet the problem of the Old World. The European situation is altogether more intense and tragic than the American. Europe needs not treaties but a profound change in its political ideas and habits. Europe is saturated with narrow patriotism like a body saturated by some evil inherited disease. She is haunted by narrow ambitions and ancient animosities.

It is because of this profound difference of situation and outlook that I am convinced of the impossibility of any common political co-operation to organize a world peace between America and Europe at the present time.

The American type of state and the European type of state are different things, incapable of an effectual alliance; the steam tractor and the ox cannot plough this furrow together. American thought, American individuals, may no doubt play a very great part in the task of reconstruction that lies before Europe, but not the American federal government as a sovereign state among equal states.

The United States constitute a state on a different scale and level from any old world state. Patriotism and the national idea in America is a different thing and a bigger scale thing than the patriotism and national idea in any old world state.

Any League of Nations aiming at stability now, would necessarily be a league seeking to stereotype existing boundaries and existing national ideas. Now these boundaries and these ideas are just what have to be got rid of at any cost. Before Europe can get on to a level and on to equal terms with the United States, the European communities have to go through a process that America went through--under much easier conditions--a century and a half ago. They have to repeat, on a much greater scale and against profounder prejudices, the feat of understanding and readjustment that was accomplished by the American people between 1781 and 1788.

As you will all remember, these States after they had decided upon Independence, framed certain Articles of Confederation; they were articles of confederation between thirteen nations, between the people

of Massachusetts, the people of Virginia, the people of Georgia, and so forth--thirteen distinct and separate sovereign peoples. They made a Union so lax and feeble that it could neither keep order at home nor maintain respect abroad. Then they produced another constitution. They swept aside all that talk about the people of Massachusetts, the people of Virginia, and the rest of their thirteen nations. They based their union on a wider idea: the people of the United States.

Now Europe, if it is not to sink down to anarchy, has to do a parallel thing. If Europe is to be saved from ultimate disaster, Europe has to stop thinking in terms of the people of France, the people of England, the people of Germany, the French, the British, the Germans, and so forth. Europe has to think at least of the people of Europe, if not of the civilized people of the world. If we Europeans cannot bring our minds to that, there is no hope for us. Only by thinking of all peoples can any people be saved in Europe. Fresh wars will destroy the social fabric of Europe, and Europe will perish as nations, fighting.

There are many people who think that there is at least one political system in the old world which, like the United States, is large enough and world wide enough to go on by itself under modern conditions for some considerable time. They think that the British Empire can, as it were, stand out of the rest of the Old World as a self-sufficient system. They think that it can stand out freely as the United States can stand out, and that these two English-speaking powers have merely to agree together to dominate and keep the peace of the world.

Let me give a little attention to this idea. It is I believe a wrong idea, and one that may be very disastrous to our common English-speaking culture if it is too fondly cherished.

There can be no denying that the British Imperial system is a system different in its nature and size from a typical European state, from a state of the horse and road scale, like France, let us say, or Germany. And equally it is with the United States a new growth. The present British Empire is indeed a newer growth than the United States. But while the United States constitute a homogeneous system and grow more homogeneous, the British Empire is heterogeneous and shows little or no assimilative power. And while the United States are all gathered together and are still very remote from any serious antagonist, the British Empire is scattered all over the world, entangled with and stressed against a multitude of possible antagonists.

I have been arguing that the size and manageability of all political states is finally a matter of transport and communications. They grow to a limit strictly determined by these considerations. Beyond that limit they are unstable. Let us now apply these ideas to the British Empire.

I have shown that the great system of the United States is the creation of the river steamboat and the railway. Quite as much so is the present British Empire the creation of the ocean-going steamship--protected by a great navy.

The British Empire is a modern ocean state just as the United States is a modern continental state. The political and economic cohesion of the British Empire rests upon this one thing, upon the steamship remaining the dominant and secure means of world transport in the future. If the British Empire is to remain sovereign and secure and independent of the approval and co-operation of other states, it is necessary that steamship transport (ocean transport) should remain dominant in peace and invulnerable in war.

Well, that brings us face to face with two comparatively new facts that throw a shadow upon both that predominance and upon that invulnerability. One is air transport; the other the submarine. The possibilities of the ocean-going submarine I will not enlarge upon now. They will be familiar to everyone who followed the later phases of the Great War.

It must be clear that sea power is no longer the simple and decisive thing it was before the coming of the submarine. The sea ways can no longer be taken and possessed completely. To no other power, except Japan, is this so grave a consideration as it is to Britain.

And if we turn to the possibilities of air-transport in the future we are forced towards the same conclusion, that the security of the British Empire must rest in the future not on its strength in warfare, but on its keeping the peace within and without its boundaries.

I was a member of the British Civil Air Transport Committee, and we went with care and thoroughness into the possibilities and probabilities of the air. My work on that committee convinced me that in the near future the air may be the chief if not the only highway for long-distance mails, for long-distance passenger traffic, and for the carriage of most valuable and compact commodities. The ocean ways are likely to be only the ways for slow travel and for staple and bulky trade.

And my studies on that committee did much to confirm my opinion that in quite a brief time the chief line of military attack will be neither by sea nor land but through the air. Moreover, it was borne in upon me that the chief air routes of the world will lie over the great plains of the world, that they will cross wide stretches of sea or mountainous country only very reluctantly.

Now think of how the British Empire lies with relation to the great sea and land masses of the world. There has been talk in Great Britain of what people have called "all-red air routes," that is to say, all-British air routes. There are no all-red air routes. You cannot get out of Britain to any other parts of the Empire, unless perhaps it is Canada, without crossing foreign territory. That is a fact that British people have to face and digest, and the sooner they grasp it the better for them. Britain cannot use air ways even to develop her commerce in peace time without the consent and co-operation of a large number of her intervening neighbours. If she embarks single-handed on any considerable

war she will find both her air and her sea communications almost completely cut.

And so the British Empire, in spite of its size and its modernity, is not much better off now in the way of standing alone than the other European countries. It is no exception to our generalization that (apart from all other questions) the scale and form of the European states are out of harmony with contemporary and developing transport conditions, and that all these powers are, if only on this account, under one urgent necessity to sink those ideas of complete independence that have hitherto dominated them. It is a life and death necessity. If they cannot obey it they will all be destroyed.