

MEMO ON PEACE

Mr. Smuts at the dinner of the 10th Anniversary of the League of Nations spoke of the League as a baby laid by the United States on the doorstep of the old world. His words and his spirit show very well how these men trained in the League of Nations are inclined to treat the United States humorlessly and patiently. Later in the evening Mrs. Garland spoke of our youth and of the fear to carry on a venture which we may have inaugurated. Such seems to me of more consequence is our withdrawal from the League, which we certainly have inaugurated, if the political struggle into which we allowed ourselves to fall after the League of Nations was inaugurated. Our experience with the League is not a well worth studying. The matter is the behavior of nations which ought to be suggestive in trying to work out, not only the machinery, but the spirit in which it must be handled, the methods by which it must be handled, the difficulties which we may expect from ourselves in handling a thing to which we have put our hearts. Human behavior, behavior, mass behavior are all matters which we must carefully consider if we are to have peace in the world. We can very properly, I think, take the family as a sample of the way human beings brought together in groups act - the impatience, the selfishness, the irritation, the lack of understanding, the unwillingness to admit ourselves wrong, a whole list of human frailty which anyone of us, if he is prompted, will admit makes family life at times almost unendurable; the unwillingness of members of families to get down to the root of their own irritations. The reason is that they found the family

a tiresome uninteresting and unsatisfactory place^{in which} to live. All of these things apply in national life. We are in big groups but we are in small groups and primarily if we are to have peace we must admit our failure to understand ourselves or if we do understand ourselves, our unwillingness to act on that understanding. If we recognize to ourselves in the family that our personal greed - vanity, is one of the reasons why the family life is not as happy as it might be and are unwilling to correct the thought then we are making for the disruption of the peace of that family. This is true in the Nation, if we recognize that there is this in the making, then practice which is irritating to other Nations, which may be unjust to other Nations, which hurts their sensibility and as a Nation we persist in these practices - then if we are honest we must admit that we are building up a cause for international antagonism. The kind of antagonism which always in the past of the world has ended in War. What this means is that there must be in a Nation a constant corruption, a constant study of its behavior, its spirit, its message of deals with other Nations, according to their degree of sensibility, of understanding, of progress. This is not for the United States to deal with a backward nation, as it would be to deal with England - with France - with Italy, nor can the United States deal with Italy and France in the same temper as it can with England. But Italy and France, are Latin nations, England is like ourselves - Anglo Saxon. We

have a tempermental basis of understanding which is different from the tempermental understanding between Italy and France and the United States.

At the dinner last night Mr. Smuts and Philip Kerr called attention to the fact that the present world in its international relations is acting on an entirely different method, a different point of view from that in practice before the Great War. In 1914, Mr. Kerr pointed out that the one idea of the world to prevent War was force. Mr. Smuts has emphasized at every place where he has spoken that the most serious condition of opinion at the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919 was that between the advocates of the force of the method of preventing War and the advocates of the Conference Table. As a matter of fact the League of Nations was obliged to combine the two ideas, those who did not believe that peace was possible without some kind of a police force in each Nation. Those who believed that it was possible to keep the world in Peace by Conference only, brought to that decision as characterized all our peace efforts ever since. First in committees or divisions of the League of Nations deal with the handling of force, the controlling, the limitations, thinking of our great conferences. Most important to date that was held in Washington in 1922 deal with the matter of force recognizing it but desiring to limit it. The Conference now in session in London recognizes the idea of force but this to control unlimited. Most of the great conferences held have dwelt not on force but on temper, spirit, methods of peace. Probably the most successful of these,

emphasizing a conference was Locarno. The sessions of the assembly of the League of Nations are almost exclusively conferences, looking to the wiping out of irritations the world's court into which we if the spirit of this country is properly recognized by the Congress of the United States. The years with peace sit by conference for what are the dealings of this court, but of course to wipe out this into this League of Nations

Mr. Kerr described the methods of gathering evidence in the League of Nations. This seems to me one of the very important points. He described the League as a ^Tower of Babel where fifty four nations brought their difficulties and discussed them from the point of view of judgment, conciliation and spread of the question of whether they could or not muster courage to compell the Nation with which they had a disagreement to assent to their view of what should be done.

Lincoln's attitude toward this question of force and conference was clearly marked. He had seen Conference circle the slavery question, at least for the time being when he was very young - 1820, when the Missouri Compromise brought North and South to a common basis of agreement.