Psychological Impediments
To Effective International Cooperation

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The basic objective in international relations is lasting peace between peoples. The peace we seek is the habitual regulation of international differences by civilised means and patience, and not by violence and the destruction of human beings, goods and values. As a Swede I would particularly remind you that peace “at any price” is no solution.

The task is to make prevail a universal will for permanent peace. In this sense the problem is at bottom a problem of psychology. The will for peace today is dwarfed and distorted by mutual suspicion and fear. As tension is mounting, suspicion and fear may even, and perhaps not only on one side of a dividing line of mutual hostility, inflate the idea of peace as something obtainable only by an “inevitable” war which must be got over with and fast. But we know that in the bitter ashes of a new major war would reign only the peace of death.

The limitations of past and present international cooperation in the political, economic and social fields are well known to us. For we all see as consequences an incredible wastage of material resources and suffer a gnawing away of our communal and individual bodies and souls. I shall describe certain aspects of the frustrating experience on this international level of social relations, and I shall refer to the emotional disturbances which jumble the values by which we act. I hope thus to indicate some of the major factors which block the way to world understanding and to a life-fulfilling and life-enhancing cooperation between individuals and between nations.

As is perhaps natural because of my previous training and my present experience, I will approach the matter of psychological impediments to effective cooperation from the institutional angle. I also feel that this point of view needs to be stressed in the psychological discussion of the general tensions problem. But even with this special orientation of my paper, I want to mention that, when attacking the psychological aspects of the problem, I am fully aware of speaking as a layman to experts. And, apart from this, my analysis cannot be exhaustive but only exemplificatory and indicative. Such a treatment of the subject can at best but suggest problems for research and formulate certain plausible hypotheses.
This treatment can perhaps also once more stress the paramount importance of bringing these grave problems to the forefront of the interest of all who work in the social science field, among them not least the psychologists and the psychiatrists. None of our individual disciplines has a broad enough research front to attack in a decisive and completely fruitful way the problem of how to bring about effective international cooperation. It is only when all our resources are pooled together that we can hope for a real clarification of the issues and a forging of the powerful tools of social engineering which are so badly needed in this field where more than anywhere else the practitioner must at present work by rules of thumb.

I. National Integration versus International Disintegration

With your permission I will start out by recalling some worn commonplaces which should be and are almost inevitably brought to mind when one begins to think about the pending destiny of mankind. Technical progress is proceeding at a breath-taking speed, and the speed is ever more accelerating. Man is really becoming the master of the material world: he can split the atom, already make fertilizers out of the air and probably soon food and clothing; he can operate on the heart and the brain and procreate artificially; he can prepare for the speedy killing of the inhabitants of an entire continent and make the earth uninhabitable for another geological era. Against this amazing technical progress stands out the very slow development, if any, in our power to master human relations, particularly in the wider world community, to control our own impulses and understand their dark and hidden emotional causation.

One effect of modern technical development is that the rapid shrinking of the world increases the interdependence of all the separate national and political groupings, called states, under which the many hundred millions of human individuals live. All these peoples are now suddenly and almost violently thrown together to live closer with each other, compelled to cooperate or fight. They are of different colours and tongues, have different stateways, philosophies, religions and prejudices, different habits of eating, dressing, lodging, resting, pleasure seeking, of family formation and everything else. The large majority of these peoples are almost incredibly poor and, though it is not generally noticed outside the circle of economic experts, the majority of this majority is getting poorer every year. A minority is in comparison extremely well off, and getting better off all the time. In none of the existing national cultures are people educated to know and like people in other countries who are different from themselves. On the contrary, they are often brought up to national self-righteousness and are apt to despise, fear and hate those who are outside the nation and live differently.
In many of the states there are also big differences internally between
the inhabitants and, in some degree correlated to these differences, resent-
ments exist between groups of people within the state. In the orderly
development of the state the resentments are kept down to a level where
they do not prevent peaceful coexistence and cooperation. It is almost
everywhere the gradually enforced ethos of the national state to decrease
the chasms and to make cooperation between the groups within the state
ever more effective.

Meanwhile, the states have on the whole during the last couple of
generations increasingly become integrated internally as a result of a
very complicated process of social change, in which technical develop-
ment itself has played the role of a driving force.\(^1\) This is particularly
true of the highly industrialised Western states but, in a degree, it is
also true of other societies except the very primitive and stagnant ones.
In the Soviet Union and the other totalitarian states under Communist
dictatorship the integration has been forcibly impelled upon the people
by a conscious policy purportedly aimed at reaching a classless society.

The suppression of inter-group resentments and the extension of
cooperation represent a general value which, usually under considerable
agreement among the citizens, the state intentionally attempts to inject
into this integration process. The state also has the legislative and admin-
istrative machinery to enforce this orientation of the social development.
But it should not be forgotten that to a large extent this social orientation
is at the same time also a "natural" effect of the integration process
going on as an outcome of quite other forces and embracing practically
all social relations: to a large degree the lessening of inter-group tensions
within the states has occurred without an intentional policy directed
towards this effect.

For in the process of national integration, the relative isolation of
different social classes, local communities and to an extent also the
individual family households has gradually been broken down. Social
functions have progressively been transferred to ever larger and more
remote—less personal—structures within the state. Private relations have
changed into public relations, secondary contacts have multiplied at the
expense of the primary ones. In material terms and from a particular
angle the pace of this process towards national integration can be
approximately measured by the continuous rise since more than two
generations of the portion of the national income which is passing
through the public budgets.

All sorts of habits, standards and values, including political opinions.

\(^1\)Cf. “The Trend towards Economic Planning”, The Manchester School of Economic
and Social Studies, January 1951.
are in this process gradually equalised to a considerable extent. Under a totalitarian regime conformity to the established political creed is ruthlessly enforced by all available means; the ideal is the monolithic state. In the democratic states a gradual ideological equalisation is instead the result of an endogenous and self-perpetuating development. That this equalisation in the democratic milieu is the result of a slow process of change, that it develops in a sense voluntarily and anyhow not under state compulsion, and that it allows for a considerable amount of individual and group deviations and, moreover, for free discussion—which even continues to perform a decisive social function in moulding public opinion according to the changing circumstances—all this should not close our eyes to the fact that in our democratic states since a long time we are in a general way becoming more and more like each other, not only in speech and manners, dress and living standards but in fundamental attitudes to the problems of how to arrange our living together.

The total volume of tension in a community might in this process not decrease. It might even be increasing. In the dynamic stage when the more integrated community is gradually taking its form, established and inherited mores are continuously giving way and disintegrating. And as at the same time the barriers of group isolation are crumbling, the individual often experiences an increased sense of personal isolation. He tends to feel bewildered, desolate and insecure in spite of all the new supporting public structures erected around him: social security programmes, trade unions and labour legislation, agricultural assistance, enlarged public responsibilities for health and schooling, and the whole machinery of modern communications of information and ideas. This process of social change we have here called integration. In highly industrialised communities with rapidly rising standards of production and consumption it takes the direction of the “security state” or the “welfare state”, and continuously raises severe demands for readjustments and adaptations on the part of the individuals. This tends to raise tensions in society. But the important thing is that, as the old group isolation is broken down and the individuals emerge in more diverse patterns, the tensions are less likely to be channeled into intergroup hostilities. This is what happens within the community; we will find a different situation in regard to international relations.

A considerable degree of tolerance towards each other’s peculiarities and of like-mindedness in viewing our common problem is, as a matter of fact, always a condition for the effective functioning of a democracy and thus for its survival. As the internal integration proceeds, rapidly increasing the sphere of responsibility of the state and its organs for the relations among people, an even greater degree of like-mindedness among the citizens than in earlier times will be needed. And it will also come as a result of this development. For these internal integration and
equalisation processes are causally interrelated and therefore cumulative. Compulsion is not involved, and freedom of thought and civil liberties generally would not normally be endangered. The present trend of compulsion towards political conformity in our democracies is, of course, a pathological phenomenon. It springs from the national hysteria concomitant to the cold war and represents a dangerous intensification of repressive tendencies which are always operative to some extent.

On the international level integration is, however, lagging vastly behind. This is, of course, the more dangerous for peaceful co-existence of states and nations because of the compulsion to closeness and interdependence which the shortening of all distances and the shrinking of the globe has caused.

In many fields of international relations—for instance the crucial one of trade and finance—the development has instead, on balance, gone to disintegration. It is indeed a most disquieting fact that the strengthening of the ties within the nations and the increasing scope and responsibility of state policy have rather tended to cause international disintegration.

When, for instance, the state has taken responsibility for preventing economic depression and mass-unemployment—and all advanced states have done so—it is not any longer in a position passively to permit outside forces to determine its level of prices and costs, and of production and trade. There existed for some time a system of relative quasi-automatism in international trade and payments, and internal economic conditions had to adjust to the working of this system. Though this international system never functioned perfectly and though from time to time it inflicted heavy social and economic damages to the individual nations, it nevertheless functioned as a device to preserve international equilibrium in trade and capital movements. But that old system is gone and is gone for ever.

For even if we assumed, which we cannot realistically assume, that there were agreement among the states to restore the old quasi-automatic international monetary system, it could not possibly be restored. When it ruled, it was at bottom founded upon certain inherited and unquestioned behaviour patterns of the bankers to react in a certain way to impulses of change and it relied upon certain inhibitions among the politicians which kept them from interfering with developments in the monetary and financial field. A functional system of habits, beliefs and taboos can exist as a psychological result of an historical development. But once destroyed, it cannot purposively be recreated. A system of managed currencies cannot be managed back again to automatism. Even in the social field there are irreversible processes. As said my old teacher and friend Gustav Cassel, when he felt nostalgia in pondering
over the gold standard: "When man has eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he can never become so innocent again".

If we should believe that international disintegration is a necessary and ultimate consequence of national integration, we would be doomed to despair. For national integration is a deep-rooted historical trend which cannot be reversed. The remedy is, of course, a purposive international planning and coordination of national policies in the common interest.

Now the International Monetary Fund was, in fact, created to provide a system of channels for international payments and an organ for purposive international cooperation in determining the exchange rates. It has never really even started to function.

The cause of this is not directly the East-West conflict and the cold war. The fact that the Soviet Union and the other Communist countries, which taken together do not account for more than a minor portion of world trade, are not cooperating in the Fund, should per se not have prevented the rest of the world from organising their financial relations in a mutually satisfactory way. Neither can the failure be ascribed simply to the very disbalanced world economic situation in the wake of the war. For it was precisely against this situation and with the intention and a studied plan to restore, and thereafter to preserve, equilibrium that the Fund was created. The basic cause why it did not function is that the individual sovereign states were not prepared to permit the international integration envisaged in the Bretton Woods Agreement and, particularly, were not prepared to accept the implied limitations of freedom in national policies.

Indirectly the disbalanced world situation was, of course, a main cause, for it was forcing very high the demands for national adjustment. And indirectly the cold war also enters into the picture as already the immense expenditures for armament are putting every nation under severe financial strain and counteracting every move to restore internal and international equilibrium.

The International Monetary Fund is only the most striking example of failure by the governments to live up to an international charter which they had agreed upon in the hopeful period towards the end of the war when the foundations were bravely laid for the new international organisations. Also the other organisations have all to a much smaller extent than was anticipated and hoped for been permitted by the governments to become organs for real international integration. Much of the effort in international councils is lost in empty and hostile controversy, much becomes a sort of perfunctory going through motions without arriving anywhere.
As a matter of fact, in sharp contradiction to all our ambitions of a few years ago, the type of international cooperation which in this unhappy period we can foresee developing relatively more effectively has rather taken the course of the formation of two power blocks, centred in Moscow and Washington. This development is understood to be supremely dangerous, but it is also generally considered prudent in the present world situation and, indeed, necessary from the point of view of national and cultural self-preservation.

As we all know, the cooperation within the Western block does not labour without frictions. Now and then it suffers from occasional outbreaks of resistance. At bottom there is much basic disillusionment and half-heartedness. About its present effectiveness I will have to make the reservation that the degree of coordination in the field of military strategy is outside my purview as a social scientist. But I can testify that in the economic field no accomplishment of Western cooperation has as yet broken decisively the general trend of economic international disintegration to which I have just referred. The process of integration of the Eastern block is less observable, but general considerations as well as occasional and sporadic insights tell the story of similar tendencies of resistance and failure at work there, even if, on the other side of the iron curtain, they become more effectively suppressed.

This is, in rapid strokes, the picture of the general world situation, against the background of which I will make my attempt to probe into the problem of psychological impediments to effective international cooperation as they are present and visible in the day-to-day evolution of world history in our times. I will make one very big omission. The East-West conflict I will skip altogether. The grave psychological problems which are particularly related to this all-dominating world worry need separate treatment.

My attention will be directed to psychological factors of an even more permanent and basic nature which would have been present even if the relations between the Soviet Union and the West had come to develop in the way most people, including statesmen, in the Western countries and particularly in America rightly wished but mistakenly expected during the war. These factors are at work in the attempts of Western—or without-Eastern, non-universal—cooperation which now form almost the entire scope of practical activity of all the organisations within the UN family. Almost all of the United Nations Specialised Agencies are thus, in the absence of Eastern participation, now “Western” in scope. And the fundamental psychological factors are also present in the new Western organisations which were created for their less all-embracing purposes.
II. Attitudes

A corner to start out from may be the observation which must have been made by everyone who has followed at close range the work in the international organizations, that whenever something goes wrong or when an unfortunate incident occurs, this has a much higher news-value than when something happens to be accomplished. International cooperation has continuously a bad press. The responsibility is not the reporters’; they serve a market and deliver the news which is in demand. It is the public which tends to be something more than apathetic. Part of its unfriendly attitude can best be described by the untranslatable German word Schadenfreude. This is particularly true of the popular attitude to the work of the international organizations which are still not openly and formally partisan. And this group includes all the organizations under the UN label. I have often felt that the public is in a sense taking a revenge on its own international idealism and its hidden wishes.

Something similar is, of course, true in all other fields of human striving than international cooperation: that a house is built is no news, that it is burnt, is. Any rumour of a scandal around a person in public life, however unjust or incredible, any degradation of a high endeavour, is eagerly inbibed by the public. As most people are schooled and as they are living in the constant experience of tension, maladjustment and frustration, they lust in indulging in what is shabby, weak and insufficient in their neighbours. The masochistic character of this urge is revealed in the fact that it is so often specifically directed against their own leaders and their own innermost ideals. Entering into public life and becoming socially visible as striving for the good therefore means in our countries to doom oneself to much unpleasantness. The publicity which particularly the Americans have become accustomed to organise in defence of the leaders and the ideals seldom really carries home. The public has become conditioned not to believe too much in publicity, except of course when it is discrediting, antagonistic and aggressive.

As I said, this is true in all fields of human endeavour. But in internal politics there are counter-forces. Interests are involved which are commonly experienced as real and specific. Around these interests there are organised pressure groups, movements and parties with which the citizens have identified themselves. This makes for some consolidation of more positive approaches. Also, people tend to become somewhat more rational in their opinions insofar as they are more aware of many issues and how they concern their own welfare. By this means people also come to assemble political experience and knowledge. The further the internal integration of the state proceeds, and the more politics comes to enter upon things of immediate and concrete interest to the individuals, the stronger should these forces of identification and insight which work for realism and rationality become.
In matters relating to foreign policy the rational corrections are much weaker, often almost absent. There a larger space for uninhibited play is left for the impulses of aggression and hostility, so deeply embedded in human beings schooled in the way they are and living as they do under the constant influence of personal bewilderment and insecurity, of squeezed ambitions and inhibited desires. In reality, the increased interest in foreign affairs often serves, and is stimulated by, the need felt for an outlet for suppressed hostility.

This difference is very understandable in a situation where the state is rapidly becoming increasingly integrated while the world becomes disintegrated. On the one hand, to an ever larger number of people internal politics takes on a character of having a clear and concrete significance which is commonly understood and of being related to definite choices which are manageable and more under the control of the will of the citizens. This tends to give a sense of relative security. International politics, on the contrary, becomes a dark destiny, largely outside “our” control, a focus of indeterminate fear. There is an objective element of uncertainty in foreign policy, namely the absence of a certain reasonable predictability concerning the consistency of other nations’ attitudes and policies which is necessary for confidence to move ahead in cooperation. It is this element which can be amplified to any degree when attitudes become uncontrolled by reason.

In internal politics we can succeed to circumscribe the scope of partisanship and have a basic personality level where we feel and think in terms of “we”. The goal of all education to citizenship is to enlarge the number of people who are capable of feeling this “belongingness” to the whole nation. But in foreign politics there are, indeed, very few people who have such a basic foothold from which they can react in any other way than that of narrow national partisanship—right or wrong, my country.

This all means that there is in existence hardly the beginning of a world community. So extremely few persons even in our most advanced countries are “sufficiently mature to be capable of being ‘world citizens’”. I am here quoting George Brock Chisholm, who gave the first lecture in the Kurt Lewin Memorial series. Chisholm continued:

Up until now very few people indeed in any country have really developed emotionally even to a truly national degree of maturity. Such development to a national level requires an equal degree of concern for the welfare of all the kinds of people within the nation, irrespective of colour, racial origin, religion, education, social or economic group—or even political party. Few people have reached even this stage of development, and yet only through this stage is it possible to develop to a degree of maturity in which there is a “belonging” feeling in relation to all peoples, and an equal concern for the welfare of all of them. Very few such people have been developed but it is clear that they are the prototype of what the world
must have, in large numbers, before there can be any reasonable degree of assurance that the human race will survive for even another generation.

There is now only one basic importance in the world, the one importance on which the very existence of the race depends, the emotional relationship between the people of the world.

Chisholm wants the employment in international politics of experts on human relations and he requests that all education—from pre-school care to adult education—should be directed towards conditioning people in the direction of becoming world citizens. With this I entirely agree. But I want to add that the gradual success in educating people to national citizenship has been very largely due to the fact that there are in existence organised integrated national states. They have been “learning by doing”, which not least in this field remains the superior method of pedagogics. How are we to produce world citizens when we have no world community to train them into? This question is equally as pertinent as the opposite one, to which Chisholm devoted his attention: How are we to create a world community without world citizens to uphold it? Both questions are so crucial because of the disastrous direction of present world trends and their speed.

III. Opportunism and Instability

Another general observation concerns the extreme opportunism and the great instability of public opinion in the field of foreign relations. I need only make a general reference to the big latitudes of the changes in attitude during the last five, ten or fifteen years among the American public to the Japanese, the Chinese, the Germans, the Yugoslavs, the Finns or the Russians. Take also the effort to recall the mountains of books and articles which talented persons manufactured at every point of time to give the illusion of reason and permanency to the popular opinions of the day by rationalising them in terms of national character and national history through centuries back. Remember the writings on the Germans and the Russians in the years before, during and immediately after World War II. The opportunistic rationalisations contained in this literature are revealed by the eagerness with which it was later suppressed in the public mind and concealed by its authors. Even the attitudes towards countries like Great Britain, France and Sweden are highly instable and sensitive to respond, particularly in the negative direction, to what is in the news of the day.

In this connection it must be stated that it is an untrue pretence when it is sometimes said that the likes and dislikes are focused on the political systems of other countries, and not on the nations themselves which are supposedly always liked as people. For all sorts of systems are represented both among the liked and disliked nations. When it is opportune, any political system is swallowed. Among the nations who
have experienced particularly violent ups and downs in public esteem during the last decades there are several whose political system has remained about the same. I need only mention Finland, the Soviet Union, and lately Yugoslavia and Spain.

I believe it would be in the service of rationality if this instability and opportunism in public attitudes to foreign nations were more carefully studied by the psychologists and the results widely publicised.² A reminder of people's foolishness at an earlier point of time might calm them down a little and make them less cocksure today. I could even see the usefulness of a silent moment at church services and other public occasions devoted to the evaluation of everyone's earlier opinions in the field of foreign policy. But we should not exaggerate the possibilities to reach a greater degree of emotional calm and rationality by research and other intellectual exercises. There is nothing which the public resents so much as being robbed of its follies.

I have chosen my examples with particular reference to America, as I am directing myself to an American audience. But, even if American public opinion is notoriously more labile than that in the older European countries, the difference is only one of degree. The shortsightedness, opportunism and instability of attitudes in the foreign policy field is a general phenomenon. This is all very human and easily understandable.

I am in this paper not writing this out in order to criticise the general public—which would be a meaningless attempt for a democrat because what other political authority has he to suggest?—but only to establish a fact important to the grave practical problem I am discussing. This fact is that people's attitudes are immensely more sensitive and unstable, much less calm, realistic and dependable in international than in internal affairs. The explanation of this is again that the states are integrated communities where people live in firmly established relations, experiencing fairly constant and well appreciated real interests, so that

²As an example of the type of facts which I believe it would be useful to place before people as a mirror, I take from a UNESCO study the following account of adjectives chosen by Americans who were polled in 1942 and in 1948 to characterise the Russians:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>1942</th>
<th>1948</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hardworking</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intelligent</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practical</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conceited</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cruel</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brave</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progressive</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ideas are under a considerable degree of realistic and rational control. While international relations, on the other hand, are anarchic and consequently allow attitudes to float without rational anchorage.

There is danger in this since foreign policy is just as much dependent on public opinion as national policy. As a matter of fact it is more dependent. For in the integrated state so much of national policy has become enfettered in vested interests as well as in a bureaucratic machinery of administration which put up a considerable inertia against short-range impulses for change. It is thus commonly taken for granted that much planning and preparation must precede a health reform or a big change in social security or housing policy. To declare a war, to take a foreign policy stand pregnant with heavy commitments for the future, or otherwise to get into a radically changed relation to foreign countries is actually a much simpler thing to bring about.

We must now again recall that it is not precisely people’s most charitable, their wisest and most rational selves which spring ahead to provide the momentum in the dynamics of attitudes in foreign relations. As I have pointed out, this is rather the field left free for exercising one’s floating aggressiveness and hostility. These inclinations are so commonly present in society that to get tough with outside nations easily acquires the character of displaying national virtue. The joining with others in showing dislikes and the standing together in voicing threats and recriminations against other nations actually increase the individual’s subjective experience of national “belongingness” and are therefore felt to be unifying moral forces in the people. It is one of the shortcuts to patriotism, an easily available substitute for the true “national maturity” of which Chisholm spoke.

It is a sad but accurate commentary on the mental state of humanity today that it is always so much easier to get people to join against something than for something. The foreigner is the obvious choice of an adversary if one wants to use this means to preserve and enhance the unity of a nation. We can get our compatriots to be against the foreigner rather independently of what he really is and what he wants.

The politician, even the good and responsible politician, operating in the psychological milieu I am describing must often feel pressed to exploit this easy device of directing aggressions outward as a means for acquiring a national backing of his policies. And the same factors are operating on the other side of the national boundaries.

In international relations the existence, or the intentional creation of tension can, as a matter of fact, often render definite tactical advantages in the short run. A government negotiating with other governments may thus strengthen its own bargaining power, if it can get the nation solidified behind it by an extra propaganda dose of antagonism.
Already in its slumbering state the irrationality of the nation at home can be utilised as a weapon in foreign bargaining. This opportunity offers itself in particularly convenient form for the American Government which, according to the inherited American Constitution, does not necessarily carry the confidence of Congress and least of all can rely on its backing on any specific issue. As is commonly referred to by foreign diplomats and negotiators, and understandably resented by them as an unfair practice, it is becoming somewhat of a habit for American negotiators at crucial points in a negotiation to use as a threat the American Congress and the American public as though these were unreasonable and irresponsible and had to be placated in order to come along. They explain that even if they themselves see a point, and even if the Administration would be inclined to agree, this would not be understood and accepted by the Congress and the public, and they, as negotiators, therefore have to maintain their demands. When it is tactically helpful the negotiators may be tempted to picture the Congress and the public as more irrational than they actually are.

As in the post-war period this method of diplomacy has been increasingly applied, and as it had proved tactically a successful method, it has also increasingly become adopted by others, for instance by the Germans. Governments like that of the British have however been operating for centuries within a firmly established parliamentary practice and on the basis of a public opinion that is generally assumed to be, and probably is, calmer and from long experience better educated in questions of foreign relations. They are at considerable disadvantage in this game. For their negotiators are constantly in the position actually to commit their governments and states, and they can hardly even pretend to the contrary. That the development of a diplomacy of attributed pressure is not in its general, long-run effects contributing to effective international cooperation is clear.

More generally, the temptation to appeal directly to the irrational impulses in a nation, particularly concerning the most fateful questions, must often be irresistible. Let us assume that a government feels good reasons for a considerable rearmament or substantial subsidies to prospective allies. A means of getting the citizens to accept the consequent increase of the tax burden is to frighten them a bit more than would be rationally motivated. The temptation to use this device is stronger the weaker the government is, the more it is under attack by the opposition, and the more the nation is conditioned by its history to feel disinclined to making military preparations and forming military alliances in peacetime.

An extra disadvantage with all purposive propaganda of this type is that it cannot be switched off when that might be desirable. Besides, honest men cannot carry on a propaganda directed to the general public
without gradually and partly becoming the object of it themselves. It is difficult for anyone to say more than he believes. If he tries, he will end up believing more than he originally did. He had chosen propaganda as a means, but it becomes his master. This amounts to partial abdication of leadership.

I have here referred to honestly motivated politics carried out by responsible politicians. As has often been pointed out, to the demagogue exploitation of the almost boundless potentialities of pitching up hostility to other nations is an easy road to fame, popular backing and power.

It can also be utilised to distract people's attention from distress at home. It can thus serve as a substitute for internal reform. In every country there are for this reason powerful vested interests—besides those conventionally remembered in this connection, the munition industries—which may feel it to their advantage to support an aggressive foreign policy.

Under the influence of all these opportune motives the vocal forces working on public opinion in a country will often over-reach themselves. The turmoil of public opinion as it is represented in the newspapers, as we know, therefore, often gives an exaggerated picture of the unrest among the people. Studies of public opinion polls continue to underline the fact that in general the nation is calmer and more rational than the opinion and policy makers. As has often been referred to in the general literature on the problems of our civilisation, and with considerable truth, the "intellectuals" of the world—those of the urban upper-middle class who have specialised education, who speak in the parliaments, write in the newspapers, who stand up as informed spokesmen on all sorts of public occasions, and who thus are the overt moulders of public opinion—have not on the whole played a very honourable role during the past thirty years. Instead of being a force for understanding and reason they have often tended to be more irrational, opportunistic and unstable than the people they lead and pretend to represent. They have, again on the average and with many notable exceptions, been in the forefront when the national and international disasters of our time were produced.

If we now think of the large under-developed regions of the world, where huge masses of poverty-stricken, illiterate people eke out an existence of utter frustration and where an immense potential volume of aggression is freely floating and almost ad libitum can be directed against the rich, the Jews, the Americans and British or foreigners in general, we realise that it must require an almost superhuman level of wise statesmanship on behalf of their political leaders, and in addition an equally almost incredible degree of understanding and generosity on behalf of the industrially advanced nations, if the course of speedy
but orderly internal reform shall not be perverted into nationalistic convulsions.

IV. Cultural Isolation

A psychological impediment to effective international cooperation which in this sketch should not be forgotten is the existing cultural isolation between the inhabitants of the different national states. In spite of the increase of touristing around and the rapid development of modern communications generally, it is a question open for debate whether the degree of isolation between the nations is really decreasing to any appreciable extent.

In Scandinavia very notoriously the boundaries between the states are purely the result of historical accidents; they have no foundation whatsoever in geography, race or any other "natural" factor. When travelling there I have been struck by the evidence of how, on the contrary, the more integrated modern state is giving increased cultural meaning and import to the political frontiers.

It shows up in a small matter like the language. Thirty years ago there were in Scandinavia no sharp language boundaries between the States insofar as the older generations were concerned, but only a gradual change of dialect as anywhere else within one of the countries. The younger generation which had enjoyed an improved schooling was, however different. Today the older generation of thirty years ago has gone and there is now a real language boundary.

More important, however, is the fact that the entire social development during the last two or three generations in Scandinavia has increased immensely the interest ties of every single individual to the community on his side of the boundary. And, on balance, this probably counts more than the very intensive conscious efforts which have gone on in Scandinavia to strengthen the ties between the countries, for instance in the fields of civil and social legislation.

The integration of the state itself creates the loyalties and also the limitations on loyalties on the basis of which it is functioning. An inhabitant of the Southern corner of Sweden does not question the appropriateness of his "belonging" to the same community as an inhabitant of the Northern corner a thousand miles away, with the very real implications that he is prepared to use the same currency as the man in Northernmost Norrland, to allow that man to move freely into his neighbourhood if he should wish and take employment there in competition with himself, to contribute to his support if he becomes unemployed, and to go to war if he is attacked. He does not come to think of being under the same obligations to the man on the other side of Oresund a few miles away, in spite of the fact that Denmark a couple of hun-
dred years ago should have been his fatherland, and in spite also of
the facts that the Dane lives on a soil, in a climate and under general
living conditions much more similar to his own, that he speaks a tongue
which, despite the improved schools, still is nearer his own, and that
they on the average see more of each other socially and perhaps even
professionally.

This is not the result of a strong acculturation policy, because for
many generations there has not been a spur of one. In general terms
everybody on both sides of the boundary is for cultural integration,
and quite particularly in Scandinavia very intensive conscious efforts
have been pursuing it. No, this is simply the psychological miracle of
belonging to a sovereign state and of sending representatives to a legisla-
tive assembly when this assembly increasingly functions by actually
regulating an ever larger portion of one's relations with other people.

The fact of cultural isolation can be studied in the behavior of the
press. As the national ties are increasing, the newspapers direct their
interests inwards, to what happens within the boundary. A closer study
of the content of the Swedish press would give a picture of an almost
isolated national chronicle and debate. It is astonishing how much of
what happens anywhere in Sweden is supposed to interest any Swede,
and how little of what happens in Denmark or Norway. From these
countries only incidents are reported: because they are very important,
because they happen to relate to Sweden, or simply because they are
amusing to a Swede, which does not always mean out of his greatest
kindness. In addition there are, of course, the traditional columns filled
by the agency reports of the world news in international politics. But like
the sports columns they cater to a special circle of readers, though
probably a very much smaller one.

I have chosen as an example the Scandinavian countries where rela-
tions are so relatively close, and where conscious efforts are strongly
directed towards cultural integration among the nations. The cultural
isolation between nations elsewhere is of course much greater, and the
influence of national integration to increase it must be stronger.

As I have mentioned there is much more travelling nowadays. But
the travelling is mostly for touristic reasons. It is open to question how
effectively such travelling breaks the cultural isolation even of those
who travel. There is a French saying that people travel abroad and
come to know other people better and then each to dislike the other
the more. Even if this saying contains an exaggeration, it is probably
axiomatic that an increase of superficial contacts rather tends to increase
friction. It is when people go abroad to live and work that they really
get inside another country and a dissimilar culture and start to develop
some loyalties besides the narrow ethnocentric ones.
Before the First World War there was a considerable amount of such professional movements. The big emigration stream to the US went on unhindered. In Europe there was an old and established habit that young workers often spent some years abroad to advance in their trade. The entire labour market was less rigidly split up according to national boundaries. Italian plasterers worked in Sweden. When trade was slack for masons in Stockholm they went to work in Oslo. Often they stayed on, married, had children and settled down to a new nationality. This was also the time when, west of Russia, passports and visas did not matter.

After the war came the immigration restrictions in the US. Gradually the European states introduced laws according to which permissions were needed for foreigners if they wanted to work; and as a rule such permissions were not granted. The mass unemployment in the period between the two wars built up vested interests in preserving these restrictions even, and soon foremost, in the trade unions and the labour parties. A fact which is now almost forgotten is that originally the labour movement, in line with inherited internationalistic ideals, had opposed the restrictions.

After the Second World War the full employment or overfull employment which has reigned in most countries provided a golden chance to restore the free labour market in Europe. Unfortunately the chance was missed. The modern integrated state is not inclined to give up any type of regulation which has once been imposed.

Scientists and experts of internationally recognisable qualifications, and people with money have been welcome anywhere. They have been able to live and work pretty much where they wished. Students granted a fellowship could do it for a year or two. The ninety-nine percent of the people who are workers, clerks and farmers may have saved money for a tourist trip. But so far as their more permanent stay is concerned they are bound to the state of which they are citizens, just as rigidly as the serf in feudal time was bound to the soil of his lord’s estate. In my view this is one of the most blatant social inequalities that exist between rich and poor in our countries. The intellectual snob may hold that the liberty to feel free to move to another country for a period or forever is a right which does not interest common people. I do not share this view. This inequality has been built up immensely in the last generation.

The national bondage of people is here pointed to as a cause perpetuating cultural isolation. Growing cultural isolation under increasing physical proximity undoubtedly adds stress to the difficulties in international cooperation. It opens up wide possibilities for misunderstandings between nations, and I mean misunderstandings in the literal sense.
I retain a general impression from my years as an international civil servant, in the course of which I have had the interesting experience of approaching intimately different nations and their leaders from the objective position of serving an organisation to which all of them belong. The general impression is that international conflicts more often than not emerge from false perceptions of the facts, from people's "seeing" things as they are not, and the spreading of this false knowledge.

The fundamental interests in themselves are not so different. They do not in most cases really conflict, except that in the absence of a reasonable general agreement the situation remains tense and even tends to deteriorate in such a way that it leads to a political clash. Everybody's main interest, if it were realistically apprehended, would be to cooperate, because in nine cases out of ten or ninety-nine out of a hundred there are large potential gains to be realised by a settlement; from these gains all parties could be satisfied. It is therefore typically not people's interests but their mistaken ideas about their interests which are at the bottom of situations of international tension and conflict. Everyone who is a participant-observer of international work could out of his own experience write volumes to exemplify this thesis.

Now these untrue beliefs are not accidental. They are bred by the normal apprehension, suspicion and aggression which exists between peoples who do not identify themselves with a community containing them all. Isolation decreases this possibility of identification. It also decreases the control of attitudes by rational knowledge, because it hinders rectifying experiences and information. It enlarges the possibilities for hostile propaganda to create chasms.

Indeed, as the international tensions mount we actually tend to disarm ourselves against propaganda. We are now far away from the situation which painstakingly had been built up during the thirties, when the respectable press found it to be its responsibility to warn the readers to be aware of propaganda in the news, when "propaganda analysis" was a fashionable topic in adult education aimed at preserving a healthy democracy, and when the general goal was conceived as that of making the citizens "propaganda-safe". Even the technical terms put within quotation marks above are now in oblivion.

This belongs to the social costs of the cold war. Instead of "propaganda analysis" we have "psychological warfare". I cannot now enter upon the big problem of the East-West conflict but I want to note in passing that one of its incidental costs is the decreased rational control of attitudes also in all other international relations.

V. The Personnel

The ministries of foreign affairs in most countries—and this is
particularly true of the older countries with traditions from the operation of the "Concert of Europe"—have developed the pattern of handling their matters in a certain seclusion from the general public and, as a matter of fact, also from the rest of the administration and, indeed, the rest of the government. A very amusing essay could be written on the unostensible but effective devices which have been developed in various countries to preserve this inherited situation.

The preceding analysis gives rather strong rational reasons why, to a point, this tendency to continued exclusiveness on the part of the professionals in the foreign policy field is functional and practical. While it was said with much truth that war is too serious a matter to be left to the generals, it can on the contrary be argued that foreign policy is too hot a brick to be handled, without creating grave public danger, by the people, the parliaments or even the governments. The open diplomacy championed by President Wilson has not proved too successful. As a matter of fact, what fruitful cooperation is actually accomplished in international organizations is for the most part reached in private sessions, closed to the public, or in the couloirs. And now, as during the time of the League of Nations, the governments regularly bypass the international organizations and attempt to settle issues by use of "ordinary diplomatic channels".

Nevertheless professionalism does not solve the issue in modern democracies. When foreign policy matters become really important, the governments, the parliaments and the general public cannot be kept out. They will break the seclusion and force the issues. Thus, if we want to foster more effective international cooperation, we face the most difficult task of educating the politicians and the peoples for such cooperation. The professionals will nevertheless have a most important role to play in international politics, and not only as executors of the public will.

Meanwhile it is important to recognize that the great bulk of problems actually dealt with in the international organizations are of a technical and detailed nature. For this and other reasons they are not very much in the public eye (except when an incident or striking development occurs). The stand taken on these technical issues has often not even been decided at the cabinet level in the government. Taken together this technical work, which goes on in numerous meetings of all sorts of committees and working parties all around the year, is not at all unimportant. Contrary to the public display of controversy in the gladiator contests taking place at the open conferences, they are the main evidence that under great difficulties and in spite of all an organized international community is gradually coming into being. These closed, technical meetings are run by a special brand of professionals. A brief reference in this paper to the psychology of this type of official and government expert may therefore not be out of place.
In a very apparent contra-distinction to the excitable politicians, journalists, opinion makers and the general public, their whole training has conditioned them to a calm, cautious and almost unenthusiastic approach. Again, in contrast to the general public they are apt to steer for a compromise, not for a usually impossible head-on-victory. For them foreign policy tends to lose most of its moral and absolutistic connotations of good and evil; this is both their strength and their weakness.

As there is nobody listening—the public and the press are excluded—they are not too interested in scoring propaganda points at their meetings. They have usually no illusions one way or another concerning either their opposite numbers or their constituency at home. And they know the limitations under which they and their colleagues are operating. Again I fall to the temptation of quoting Chisholm who, from similar experience, has reached similar conclusions:

Even now many national delegations cannot behave in as civilized, mature and co-operative way as they know they should do, and as they would like to do, because of the certainty that such civilized, mature and co-operative action would not be acceptable to their own governments or political chiefs. A national delegation cannot misrepresent its own people at home. If the majority of the population of a country is insular, or prejudiced, or antagonistic against some other nation, or aggressive or just plain ignorant, its delegation in the councils of the nations must reflect those qualities in order to keep their jobs.

I am here discussing what the Germans call the Idealtypus of professional representatives of a government. As always, the personal element of deviation from the type plays its important role. The presence at a meeting of an unusual man, or a number of unusual men who are filled with the urge to accomplish the maximum of international cooperation which is attainable and who are prepared to take risks with their own governments at home can make all the difference between modest success and failure. Unfortunately these men are rare in the group of professionals I am describing. Scepticism and a narrow cautious consideration of the national interest rather than courageous internationalism is fostered by their training and experience. In the camaraderie of officials from different countries this negativism is actually what they expect from each other and what they mutually respect. A man on a national delegation with too positive an approach is almost a disturbing element to the rest of the delegates.

I have often reflected on the difference in spirit between dealings in big business and in inter-governmental negotiations. Private business has acquired a sort of generosity which it has found repays. Officials in the service of national governments and states are not given to this rational generosity. Figuratively speaking officials on a delegation to
an international meeting or in a bilateral bargaining situation are apt to fight for the individual national penny while together they are losing the common pound sterling.

This is again said not in a criticising mood but in an attempt to understand and explain the impediments to effective international cooperation. The officials are as they are because of the factors that condition them. Their personalities are moulded to respond to the role they play and the institutions in which they work. It must be remembered that their responsibility is solely to a national government which is, in turn, responsible only to a national parliament (in the best case) and to a nation. In fact, there is no international authority in existence because there are no effective international sanctions available—except war, which is as different from national enforcement of law as anarchy is from organized order. This is the basic explanation for the nationalistic pettyness of national officialdom when operating on the international plane.

On this point a comparison between, on the one hand, the officials and experts of a national delegation and, on the other hand, the staff members of the international secretariats is appropriate. They are the very same sort of people. As a matter of fact, the latter group is regularly recruited from the first. Nevertheless, they show a different set of attitudes. To some extent this is, of course, explainable in terms of selection. Undoubtedly we tend to get internationally-minded people to our secretariats. But the main thing is that they come to live and work in a different institutional setting, they are given a different role to play and then develop a different system of loyalties.

This is true to a much greater extent than is generally realized. I often say that my most encouraging personal experience during recent years has been this, that it is possible to build up a staff of international civil servants who direct their loyalties and their allegiance to the common cause, and not to the exclusive interest of the particular state or nation. This result cannot be reached by pep-talks or even direction. It is achieved, if at all, by moulding the institutional working conditions for that precise purpose. Favourable factors are, first, an active recruitment policy which goes after competence and character and systematically avoids government appointees; second, the sustaining of safeguards for the integrity of staff members in the face of national pressures; thirdly, the stimulation of a continuous awareness of the larger objectives of the organization; fourthly, the guarding of the secretariat initiative in the sphere constitutionally provided for it, and the continuous formation of a cautious but clear and firm secretariat policy so that the secretariat does not become relegated to the role of a loose and aimless crowd of in-sitters and record takers; and, fifthly, the incident, if
it happens, of some modest success on the practical and technical level where the secretariat is operating.

Under conditions where these factors have been present to a reasonable degree it can be observed how in the individual cases a change occurs after a man has taken up his duties in an international secretariat. It occurs as a response to his new role in a changed institutional setting. He almost lays off one personality and fits himself into another. In the typical case he begins to "lean backward" and comes to be aware even of his own compatriots' special interests and prejudices. In the new milieu this behavior corresponds to the expectancy of the group into which he enters and to whose values he tries to accommodate.

This is not an altogether unimportant matter. Of the five "principal organs" of the United Nations of which the Charter speaks—the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, and the Secretariat—it is only the Secretariat which is homogeneous in its direct allegiance to the international community. In a sense the members of the Secretariat are the only ones who have a continuous and routine experience of something approaching an image of the still non-existing world community. And they are in the uniquely favourable position of having no direct power but of being compelled to depend entirely on their influence—the influence of skill and tact, of reason and faith.

This is, however, again only the ideal situation which is seldom reached and never completely. A badly recruited and insecure staff, set to work under the impact of continuous high tension and controversy between member governments and increasingly frustrated by the absence of any considerable accomplishments in international co-operation, can sink to any depth of demoralization. Yet, even in a seriously demoralized staff the ideal of international allegiance will often be preserved, hoping for a chance to express itself if ever an opportunity might present itself.

VI. The Organisations

The phrase in the introduction to the Charter of the United Nations: "We the peoples" etcetera, is a constitutional falsehood. Many peoples are represented at an international meeting, it is true, but only very indirectly: through delegations, instructed by governments, responsible to the parliaments which in the end are elected by the peoples. Each of the governments is sovereign and a majority vote does not solve any important substantive issue.

In these circumstances, contrary to popular thinking, the veto institution is basic and essential to all practical international cooperation.
Important issues between nations can only be solved by means of nego-
tiation and agreement.

It must be clearly grasped that the session of an international
organization is everything else than a parliament. The individual mem-
er cannot on his own responsibility speak for the world community
because he has not the inherent authority of having been elected by a
constituency of people. Instead he is appointed to speak as a member
of a delegation, on the responsibility of the government of one separate
and sovereign nation. No government has the political right, not to
mention the moral authority, to speak for the international community
as a whole. And each government has the right to decline to agree.

The nations as individual entities are represented, the world as a
whole is unrepresented. These reflections are, of course, the inspiration
for the dreams about a world government backed by a world parliament
elected by the people. Against the background I have given it does not
need to be elaborated how totally utopian these dreams are. A totalitar-
ian world state ruled from an imperialistic power centre may be think-
able, but a democratic world state in this historical era is not thinkable.
Even an Atlantic federal state is out of question.

International political organizations in our age are primarily organs
for inter-state negotiation and possibly mediation and arbitration. If
we are dissatisfied with their work, to leap for the fantasy of a panacea
is escapism.

My critical attitude towards panaceas does not, of course, preclude
that we should try to improve the constitutional setups of the inter-
national organizations so that they may work more effectively. However,
the machinery should be built and re-built to meet practical needs and
reasonable possibilities. As usual, the hard realistic road is to face the
situation as it is, analyse its causation as intensively as we can with the
intellectual means available to us, and then keep on trying, against all
odds, gradually to improve conditions. If only peace can be preserved,
international cooperation may in time become considerably more ef-
fective than it is today, provided we have enough good people labour-
ing on the task.

One specific difficulty which also has its psychological amplifications
springs from the fact that the nations cooperating in the international
organizations are of such an unequal size and importance. The consti-
tutional issue has often been debated whether or not it is really in ac-
cordance with democratic principles that they all should have an equal
vote. As we know, in some of the organizations the voting power of
member nations has been graduated in some proportion to their size
and their financial contribution. But this has minor significance. As I
have pointed out, no really important issue can be decided by majority

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vote anyhow, but only by negotiation and agreement. And even small countries try to keep firmly to their right of independence.

What then actually happens is that the great powers put the smaller powers under pressure to line up with them. They feel justified in doing so because of their greater importance, their larger contributions and their greater responsibility generally. They often even are in the position to feel that they are actually acting in the common interest. For, as international cooperation assumes agreement among the participating states and can never get farther or proceed faster than the least interested and the slowest moving one permits, they can render international cooperation more effective by pushing some of the smaller states who tend to drag their feet.

The smaller states, however, may feel their role humiliating, and commonly resent being pushed around. They tend to respond by finding a way in the end even to avoid shouldering their smaller share of the burden of responsibility and sacrifice for the common goal. This in its turn gives the bigger states increased justification and also active opportunity to run the matter pretty much as their own show. And this again increases the smaller states' feeling of non-concernedness and irresponsibility, and so on.

This vicious circle can be studied in the work by the international organisations on technical assistance, in the aid to the Arabian refugees from Palestine, Korean relief, and many other matters. The formal observance of the principle of equal rights and sovereign independence of small and great states, coupled with the actual practice of great power pressure, often executed in less than discreet forms, and the log-rolling barter politics which develops under the circumstances, all of course cloaked in the queer, exaggerated vocabulary of international courtesy, create easily an atmosphere of unreality, non-seriousness and even cynicism which renders it more possible for everybody to care for his own unenlightened national interest and to economise on his international responsibility, while nonetheless feeling his conscience undisturbed. And the general public smells something rotten.

It is the smaller states who need most an organised peace, as they are the weaker, and it is they who also most need a stable, open world economy, for they are less self-sufficient and can exercise less influence on their foreign buyers and sellers. Rationally they should have an even greater interest than the bigger states in the effective functioning of the international organisations. Nevertheless, it is the delegations from the smaller countries who most often come with the instructions from home to guard above all against undertaking any new commitments. Interestingly enough, this is particularly true of highly civilised, decent countries like my own. Part of the explanation is the cumulative
process, hinted at here, of great power pressure and small power irresponsibility.

VII. The Basic Psychological Difficulty

In spite of all their very apparent weaknesses as organs for interstate cooperation, international organisations, when once established, and no matter how ineffective they are in carrying out their terms of reference, show an amazing resistance to death which contrasts sharply with the frequent instability of public opinion in international questions. An example of this is the Bank for International Settlements in Basel: during the war it was many times burned in effigy; at Bretton Woods it was solemnly declared dead and was buried by means of a formal resolution. The journalists danced on the grave. But today it lives stronger than ever, and has been the chosen instrument for setting into effect the European Payments Union, which is one of the more concrete and solid accomplishments of European economic cooperation up till now.

The social scientist seeking to explain this remarkable general experience can point to many causal factors contributing to the durability of international organisations. One is the vested interests of members of the Secretariat in preserving their jobs and their livelihood. Responsible officials, however, feel also the urge of their fundamental allegiance to the common cause of international cooperation, and desire to keep on trying against all odds.

But by itself this secretariat drive for self-preservation of the organisation would not carry too much weight. In addition there are, however, vested personal interests planted in all the member countries. Around every organisation there are a great number of persons everywhere, often hundreds and thousands, to whom the organisation represents a means of serving an internationalistic ideal. In their case, too, it carries an element of status at home and further provides a regular and respectable reason to get away on a trip from the family and the daily routine. For a steady-going organisation like the International Labour Organisation, specialising in rather lengthy meetings, the tripartite constitutional arrangement, comprising governments, employees and employers, may have its greatest political importance in spreading its basis of active participation and of vested interests more widely in the several countries than to the state administrations.

It would be unrealistic in a scientific discussion not to recognise these factors. Yet they can only be contributory. The main explanation of the fact that the international organisations are regularly upheld even through the most disappointing conjunctures is undoubtedly that people at bottom, and behind all the facade of nationalistic idiosyncrasies, do believe in and do desire international cooperation. This is their general
and long-range faith, however negative their attitude may be on particular issues of the day.

It is a little like people's religion and their democratic adherence to the broad ideals of equality for all and of the inalienable right of human beings to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. Everyday shortcomings in attitudes and behaviour do not obliterate the general ideal, nor do they exhaust it of significance for how we feel, think and act.

Often its import seems to be a negative one. I have already pointed to the masochistic and perversive character of many of the aggressions. People are constantly revolting against their own ideals, and idealism because of this is not conducive only of what is good. They can even get angry at the United Nations as an institution. But the United Nations is, after all, only the formal container of the efforts of all the governments to cooperate amongst themselves and thus, to a thinking person, not a very proper object for resentment, just as little as is the state of which we are citizens.

But more fundamentally and in the long run the ideal has a positive influence. Against all our weaknesses it tends to determine the trend. Under the turmoil of opportunistic short-range attitudes the general desire for international understanding and cooperation also exists and it has also its shares of influence in the compromise behaviour which human action typically is. The general ideal supports the continuation of the international organisations when they are once in existence. This undoubtedly explains in part the very apparent hesitation in every nation to destroy these organisations even at times when they are not very effective.

An indirect evidence that at bottom people everywhere have a reserve of international understanding and international idealism is also the fact, to which I have already pointed, that when in our international secretariats ordinary persons from many lands are given the opportunity to live in a situation where it becomes their natural role to work for the common good, they so effortlessly change over to this broader allegiance. As a matter of fact, whenever something, even if little, is accomplished in international cooperation—an agreement on a uniform classification of coal, on simplified customs procedures for goods transported across frontiers, a commodity agreement, an agreement on non-discrimination in tariff rates—these accomplishments give participating national delegates feelings of belonging and of satisfaction in serving the larger community which are not dissimilar from those experienced by international civil servants. Every practical achievement, however

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3 Cf. An American Dilemma, The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy, 1944, Methodological Appendix 1 and 10, particularly pp. 23, 1028.
humble, has, like every failure, a cumulative effect. For it works upon
the attitudes to international cooperation which, at the same time, repre-
sent its conditions.

The psychological impediments to overcome in making interna-
tional cooperation more effective are all concerned with how to get
governments, and behind them parliaments and ultimately the peoples,
to experience allegiance to the common cause, and to do this when, in
fact, international cooperation is still so weak. For while, on the one
hand, the main means of fostering this larger allegiance are the actual
experience of cooperation, cooperation cannot develop except on the
allegiance as a basis. This is the eternal problem of man and his insti-
tutions. The development of institutions presumes human attitudes fit-
ting them, but such attitudes develop only in response to living in the
institutions themselves. That this is the basic psychological difficulty in
international cooperation is the thesis of this paper.

Like many other social problems, the overcoming of this difficulty
truly amounts to something very much like trying to lift oneself by one’s
shoestrings. Nevertheless, many times in history a vicious circle down-
wards has been broken and turned into a cumulative process upwards.
Our one asset is the basic internationalism to which I have pointed.

To indicate the real magnitude of the difficulty, let me add, finally,
that it is an illusion to believe that it can be mitigated by injecting optim-
ism. I stress this here because the belief in optimism as a practical tactic
is a peculiar weakness of American culture. Unfounded optimism tends
to back-fire when the course of events corrects opportunistic false beliefs.
Therefore inspiring trust in success is a weak ground for courage and
persistency. We need people who have a courage and persistency even in
the face of failure.

The belief that truth and blunt truth-speaking is wholesome, while
illusions and false-to-fact propaganda are dangerous in the end, is na-
turally the acquired bias of a scientist. But it is practical experience
itself which leads me to hold firmly to this belief. Courage built upon
loose optimism is cheap and deceptive. We need now a rational founda-
tion for reasonable hopes, but also and especially a frank and fearless,
objective analysis of the dangerous realities which threaten our survival
and, on this basis, the courage of desperation.