

THE
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AND
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MISSION

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By the Author of: **The Divine Plan
of World Government** 4d.

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY FOR THE CONSTITUTION
OF A HOLY NATION (HOLY NATION SOCIETY),
5, THE RIDING, N.W.11, LONDON, ENGLAND.

TRADE DISTRIBUTORS: PEACE BOOK COMPANY,
5, GOODWIN'S COURT, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.2.

THE HOLY NATION AND ITS MISSION

By Hugh Joseph Schonfield.

THE understanding of man individual, his psychology, his potentialities, and his perfectibility, is far in advance of the understanding of man corporate or national. The ideal of the righteous man and the perfect man has long been before us as a genuine goal of attainment which each must strive to reach. Many would say that the pattern of manhood has not only been set before them ideally, but has been exhibited practically in One whom they accordingly venerate and seek to emulate.

Compared with the antiquity of even civilised man the nation is no more than a babe in arms: it is a very late-comer in history. Consequently there is as yet no fully-developed ideal of nationhood, no clear perception of what constitutes the righteous nation and the perfect nation into the likeness of which the nations should seek to grow. Neither is it possible to point to any historical demonstration of the pattern of nationhood.

Nevertheless, the qualities accepted as noble in man must be nearly identical with those which should represent the nobility of nationhood, for it is a corporate grouping of manhood. But the transference of these qualities from man to nation has been mentally difficult to achieve, for the virtues are operative in conduct, and the conduct of nations in their relationships has hitherto been arbitrary because the sense of national responsibility has not had time to evolve like the sense of individual responsibility.

In its practical aspects the realisation of the corporative state as a living organism appears to be something new though it has been anticipated in the Church in the very expression descriptive of it as "the body of Christ" and the explanation under this figure of the mutual dependence and distinctive functions of its members. Unfortunately, with the corporative state as with early man it is the evil lust for power arising from the sudden consciousness of inherent strength and vitality which has proved an overwhelming temptation and unseated morality. The suggestion "ye shall be as gods" has been more seductive than "ye shall be like God."

The *ratio sapiens*, like *homo sapiens*, can only achieve complete self-fulfilment through identification with the eternal *Sapientia*: and we are taught that "the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (Jas. iii: 17).

The revulsion against nationhood, which the erring of nations has occasioned in many minds, while natural, is really an evidence of spiritual defeat. It is like calling in question the salvability of man. "Who then can be saved?" must be answered also in respect of nations. "With God all things are possible." We must accept nationhood as we must accept manhood as essential to the terrestrial scheme for the accomplishment of a high purpose. The despatching attack on national sovereignty is as futile as would be an attack on individual sovereignty. National rights are as sacred as individual rights; but rights must balance with responsibilities. *Happiness is a partnership of liberty and law.*

It is a heresy to deny the salvability of nations. What we have to recognise is that this salvation is something to be "worked out." The working would obviously be all the easier if we had a nation-saviour, one that had trodden the path for us, lived for us, and if need be sacrificed itself for us. Our lost, anarchic condition demands a Christ-nation to take away the curse of disobedience, of abuse of our national selves, to show us a pattern of national godliness full of grace and truth.

The Utopian dreams of political thinkers are but a prophetic voicing of a longing for such an ideal of nationhood, becoming more insistent with each graver crisis. God is not heedless of the cry that has gone up to Him, and He is making ready a holy nation to be the world's servant and deliverer.

When we speak of the nation being holy we have to define the term, for in common usage it expresses a religious dedication of a mystical order, an abnormal concentration on the purest essence of being. Yet the word in its true meaning, and as we shall use it, implies no deprivation of natural activities and behaviour, and we must not be misled by those who have chosen the road of isolation and limitation in their efforts to achieve holiness. *Holiness is the conscious direction of our powers and capacities to the performance of their pure and proper function.* The most exact machine cannot be holy, for it is not in conscious control of its purpose. This applies also to the lower organisms. But men and nations have the endowment to function consciously, though it is still only partially developed, and they can accordingly achieve good or evil results in the utilisation of their possessions and potentialities.

The holy nation, therefore, is one in which not only are the parts knit together through the cultivation of the group soul, but in which every activity of nationhood is consciously employed for its true end.

There are three principal functions, the *productive*, the *protective*, and the *progressive*. Under the first are included all activities of an operational character, those which have to do with supply whether of personnel, services or commodities. Under the second are included all activities for the preservation of health and harmony, relating to social and legislative matters, trusteeship and corporate responsibility. Under the third are included all educational and vocational activities, culture and development.

It is not difficult to discern in the national sense which are holy and which are unholy uses of these functions, if

the holy spirit is in us ; but, for example, it may be stated that maldistribution is an unholy employment of the productive function, war is an unholy employment of the protective function, and persecution is an unholy employment of the progressive function.

The primary business of a holy nation is to enunciate and demonstrate the pure and proper function of every power and capacity of nationhood.

Any nation on earth can walk the path of holiness if it is so minded. But knowing our weakness, and our fear to do the right thing because of its apparent inconveniences, God has appointed one nation in particular to lead the way.

This nation is at present nameless and in process of constitution ; but in the very near future it may begin to function because the time has come for it to do so. Its nationals and potential nationals are those in all countries who are ready to answer the call to world service to the extent of surrendering the citizenship and protection of their own states (though not necessarily their residence in them) and to dedicate their lives to a new order of national expression.

The holy nation will know no barriers of race, or creed, or territory. It will have integrity without locality, government without party, and dominion without domination.

To speak of a nation in these terms may sound so ideal as to be divorced altogether from reality. Yet the writer dares to claim that the only hope for the world lies in making it a reality ; and only those have a right to doubt who believe that the Kingdom of God can never come on earth, and then they will be wrong. They will be wrong because there is an unshaken confidence in man, the common man, that anarchy must give place to order, injustice to justice, and distrust to goodwill. They will be wrong because there are more people in the world to-day than ever before who are willing to make every sacrifice for righteousness sake.

Long ago, before slogans were regarded as pithy phrases to be invented in order to concentrate thought or effort on a desired end, One in a certain place told his small circle of followers "The Field is the World." And since that time there have always been those who took these words as a command and an incentive to transcend limitations and boundaries in the determination to universalise the message of peace.

All processes must have their culmination, and this the grandest of them all, is fast nearing completion. The old prophetic cry is heard: "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which guards the verities may enter in" (*Isa. xxvi: 2*).

It is not being asked, Can there be a New Order? and Can there be World Peace? But it is being asked, What kind of Order? and What kind of Peace?

There already exists a widespread recognition of many aspects of the mission of the holy nation, supposing that such a nation can be established and accepted by the world's governments. What might serve as a code for it has been devised by Mr. H. G. Wells and his committee in the "Declaration of the Rights of Man." Only those who are studying the problems of peace and social betterment do not yet for the most part speak of a nation: they entrust the mission to an international authority, variously conceived as a form of Federalism or an extension of the League of Nations, or as a series of independent World Commissions.

The body to be created, in the opinion of the experts, is to be representative, not distinctive, that is to say, its constituents are to be nationals of the various states combined in council for certain specific undertakings which can best be dealt with by common planning for the common good. It is in this sense that the body is to be international: it is not non-national or supra-national. At the same time the body is to have a measure of independent authority by the voluntary delegation to it by the nations of special powers some of which have hitherto been reserved by states as sovereign prerogatives, so that in effect the body is to be super-national.

In the efforts to define the international authority there is evident considerable confusion of thought, due to the attempt to make it both independent and representative. If the authority had only to act in an advisory capacity no serious difficulty would arise, but then also its usefulness would be very slight. It is because it has to be invested with plenary powers that its nature and composition cause so much heartsearching. There is the instinctive dread of creating a monster, and the anxiety not to give full play to rivalry and jealousy through attempts on the part of larger states to make the council an instrument for self-aggrandisement.

It would appear that while it is easy to define the spheres in which an international authority could successfully operate, and the purposes for which it is essential, there exists so much mistrust of any such body as it has been imagined as to negative the prospect of its practical organisation.

The mission of the authority commending itself so much to reason and good sense, it can only be assumed that there is a serious fault in the conceptions of its nature.

The fault is twofold. It consists, firstly, in the supposition that an international authority must be one in which the nations jointly participate, and, secondly, in the belief that it must have coercive powers to enforce decisions on recalcitrant states.

Facing the facts of the situation it is obvious that the kind of authority most likely to succeed is one which requires the minimum of co-operation from the nations and interferes least with their affairs. Preferably it must be able to establish itself independently and without any preliminary of world conferences, covenants or pacts. If such a thing could be possible its members must be world representative and world-minded, and without allegiance to any country which could create a conflict of loyalties and detract from the universal purpose of the authority's establishment. Then, the authority must have so patent a moral and ethical basis as to earn the admiration of men everywhere, and be so clearly beneficent in character with

a programme solely of service as to secure ever wider consent to its proposals and be voluntarily entrusted by the nations with mandates and commissions. Finally, it must have a constitution which makes it the peer and equal of the nation-states so that dealings with it can be conducted through the ordinary machinery of governments and diplomatic exchanges. Needless to say, it must be unsupported by any physical force: its function being to win respect for international law.

The concept of the holy nation answers to these requirements in every particular as no other sort of international authority does or can. Once peace is established no objection to its institution would be raised in any quarter. There are thousands of able men and women with a world outlook in every profession and occupation who for the good of humanity would be ready to apply for naturalisation as soon as their citizenship could be accepted. Neither, except in point of nationality, would any state be deprived of the usefulness of these people, seeing that for the most part they would remain in it contributing their quota towards its prosperity and well-being. They would be more than friendly aliens, they would be a conscience and an inspiration.

If those, therefore, who advocate an international authority will advocate instead the holy nation, not only their own difficulties will be removed, but their proposals will gain in concreteness and practicability, while a whole new vista of possibilities will open out before them.

Let us consider some aspects of the work of an international authority, as they have been imagined, and their realisation through the holy nation. For this purpose we may take the statements made at four conferences on peace aims held under the auspices of the National Peace Council, and published in a booklet under the title *What kind of Peace?* For each conference session a questionnaire had been prepared in answer to which the speaker was required to express his views. We shall quote extracts from these views which bear on our subject, and add our own comments.

The Moral Basis.

"I do not think you can build a new international order except on the conscious acceptance of some moral principles. We are living in a fool's paradise if we think we are going to get a world order without a moral basis" (Dr. Herbert G. Wood).

It is one thing to accept moral principles and quite another to live by them. Such principles were accepted in the preamble to the Covenant of the League of Nations, but they were not implemented by the signatory Powers, neither was there any real effort to reconstruct national life on a moral basis. Consequently the old evils returned and increased. The holy nation will be guided by these principles in all its activities, and thus initiate a new order which will eventually embrace the whole world.

Science and the Better Life.

"The promotion of scientific knowledge and research is of international interest. Scientists are naturally impatient with the way in which the whole development of our political order hampers them at every turn, and here you have a great positive human interest in which people of every race and every nation are united and would be more and more united if only we gave them their chance. There is endless scope here for co-operation of a positive order which ought to enable us to apply science to the achievement of getting rid of degrading poverty and preventable disease. The new international order would make scientific men of every country feel that now they had got their chance of giving their best to mankind" (Dr. Herbert G. Wood).

Scientists are pre-eminently men and women whose life is dedicated to the service of all mankind. The holy nation will make them free of all cramping restrictions and encourage and support them in all their work which is for good. Armed with the nation's respected passport and commission it will be possible for research work to be carried out anywhere in the world. The nation will also be trustee for all new treatments and discoveries, ensuring that their benefits are equally available to all

nations and all classes. It will be impossible in future to create monopolies or to corner drugs and medicinal minerals.

Education.

"What kind of world citizenship are we going to try to build up, to bring into being...? Might it not be possible that a part of the world order of the future, and an early part of it, should be the setting up of international schools in every country where boys and girls would get an education not national in conception, an education which would take history as one of the outstanding subjects and regard it as a way of progress for mankind—which would get away from strictly nationalistic interpretations of life to that larger conception of mankind as one?" (Rev. Henry Carter).

The holy nation, being a world-diffused nation, will through its Ministry of Education promote the knowledge of man, spiritually, physically, and materially by the issue of popular text-books in all languages, by radio talks, by films and the drama, by music and art. Wherever practicable it will endow schools and college chairs with courses in world understanding.

Economic and Social Problems.

"The essential international machinery for economic and social purposes is, I think, (a) some form of co-ordinating financial authority, but not necessarily an international bank or an international currency; (b) an international trade council for the planning of international trade, for general supervision and consultation about tariffs and trade agreements, and for the fostering of complementary bargains either on a bilateral or on a multilateral basis for the positive promotion of international trade; (c) an international health organisation, which I hope can be developed on the foundations laid by the existing health organisation of the League; (d) an international labour organisation similarly developed out of the I.L.O." (G. D. H. Cole).

For the full development of the usefulness of such bodies as are here proposed it is essential that their work

should be sponsored and supervised by an entirely impartial and unprejudiced body competent to guide and to arbitrate. Officials of the holy nation would serve in that capacity, they having no local problems to preoccupy them to the detriment of more universal considerations, and having only the general good in view. At any council of the nations, for whatever purpose convened, the holy nation would appear as *the advocate of mankind*.

Colonies and Backward Races.

"What are the essential definitions of an effective international trusteeship?" The answer is first that these basic principles must be laid down in some international document and assured or sanctioned by some international body with authority to see that they are observed. . . . There must be somebody to whom the trustee is responsible; and that body must be an international authority. . . . I hope that we should be prepared to advance a stage towards international government of colonies. Again, of course, I assume a more effective international supervision over all countries which are not yet self-governing; but in some of them anyhow—those which have made the smallest advance towards self-government. I should like to see introduced at once an international authority which would choose the administrators of the country and see to the whole direction of the administration" (Professor Norman Bentwich).

The present Mandates system is by general admission open to grave criticism, and there still continues the exploitation of backward and non-self-governing peoples. The whole question of guardianship and trusteeship can best be dealt with by making these peoples and territories wards of the holy nation in due legal form. The holy nation would also act as umpire and arbitrator in tribal disputes, boundary demarcations, etc. It would furnish the personnel for the supervision of international waterways and air routes, parks and preserves for rare fauna and flora, and for every purpose where disinterested administration and legislation is needed.

Promotion of World Unity.

" We have to persuade the world that an international constitution is possible, whether it be in the form of a League, or something more ambitious in the shape of federation " (Sir Norman Angel).

The world will only be persuaded by proof, and the holy nation will offer that proof. It will provide the bridge to ultimate world unity. It will be the kernel of a world state, to which can be added layer upon layer as one universal function after another is brought within its scope until world government is finally reached by a natural process of evolution. At an early stage it will absorb the work of the Permanent Court of International Justice, codify, amplify, and extend the influence and application of international law. Its own constitution will demonstrate the practicability of an international constitution, and every advance towards the goal of hope of all mankind will be brought about by sane and moral methods, without disruption or dislocation of individual national affairs.

Thus under the various aspects which an international authority has been visioned the holy nation is found to offer a practical and satisfying fulfilment. It demands no sudden revolution and postulates no sudden conversions. Its programme is consonant with the ways of God and the natural order which He has ordained.

* * * *

The path of service which the holy nation is to follow is clearly distinguishable in its principal features, and whatever the conditions which may prevail in the world in the immediate future—and no one supposes they will be pleasant—there is nothing to hinder the speedy constitution of the nation and its embarkation on its manifold tasks.

It is important to emphasise this. There is nothing that prevents the holy nation from functioning as such whenever it wills. Its existence does not depend in the first instance on the consent of governments or peoples,

but solely on those who are ready to play their part in its formation, the dedicated individuals who look for a New World Order "having foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. xi: 10).

Already the movement to establish the nation--this nation of unique character and purpose--is advancing with rapid strides. Since the publication of the previous booklet, *The Divine Plan of World Government*, the writer has received request after request to address thoughtful groups on the theme, and at every gathering the message has been received with quiet and objective enthusiasm. Theists and Agnostics, Conservatives and Socialists, Jews and Christians, peace-seekers and humanitarians of all kinds, have alike been profoundly moved. In some cases lives have been transformed completely, and the response to the challenging call has been of overwhelming significance. Correspondence, too, has developed with many whom the writer has never met, and in several places this is leading to the creation of further groups.

No attempt has been made or will be made to influence persons who have not a world outlook, and a desire for world service, but it has become necessary for the maintenance of contacts and the co-ordination of activities to form a Society for the Constitution of a Holy Nation (HOLY NATION SOCIETY). Those who join it may do so as members or associates, and they will be expected as the only condition to subscribe to the appropriate undertaking printed on the inside back cover of this booklet. There is no fee payable. The object of the Society is such that, to achieve it, it is understood that all concerned will voluntarily make the utmost financial sacrifices, and that full members especially will count no cost too great in possessions, in time, and in service: it will be a glad surrender inspired by the highest loyalty and devotion.

We give glory to God that this illuminating vision has come at the time of the world's greatest darkness, and that this momentous work of construction has been initiated in the midst of unprecedented desolation.

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All who wish to join the Society should write out, sign, and send in the appropriate undertaking printed below.

For Members.

Believing that the hope of the world is in the establishment of a holy nation, I pledge to it my utmost loyalty and service.

For Associates.

Believing in the need for a holy nation, I promise to further its formation and legal recognition by every means that lies in my power.

When writing or forwarding contributions the shorter title, Holy Nation Society, should be employed.

PUBLICATIONS.

THE DIVINE PLAN OF WORLD GOVERNMENT ... 4d.
THE HOLY NATION AND ITS MISSION ... 3d.
HOLY NATION NEWS SHEET (issued periodically, free).

In preparation.

EVANGEL FOR NATIONS ... (probable price, 5s.).

