Peace and Justice

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by

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The year, 1952, as the first year of the coming into force of the Japanese peace treaty, enjoins on us the exercise of special care and exertion.

The peace treaty signed at San Francisco is unprecedentedly generous as one imposed on the vanquished who surrendered unconditionally. It is truly a treaty of reconciliation and trust. This spirit of reconciliation and trust in the Allies has developed during the past six years of the Occupation which has been marked alike by generosity never before seen in history. This peace treaty embodies, in this sense, a creditable ending of the Occupation. But for the Occupation, a peace treaty of this sort would have been impossible. That the Occupation has become protracted and that there has been much delay in arranging for peace has had the favorable effect of furthering the Allied understanding of Japan and deepening their good will toward this country, culminating in the conclusion of this generous peace treaty.

We are not, of course, so unsophisticated as to assume that the Allies have been actuated solely by idealistic high moral motives all alone. Nor, on the other hand, do we believe that the sole or the main motive which prompted the statesmen of America to play the leading part in concluding such a peace with Japan was their high appraisal of Japan's strategic, political and economic utility value in the postwar international situation in which the menace of Red imperialism has greatly increased. If motives underlying any action of individuals are admittedly very complex, a greater complexity of motives usually enters into any action of a state. This notwithstanding, I am ready to admit for many reasons that America was impelled to her attitude more by the high ideal of expanding Christian humanism, pacifism and democracy to the whole world than by any utilitarian motives.

The peace treaty has restored Japan to a status of complete independence. But of even greater significance is the fact that it has admitted Japan into a community of nations. In view of the Soviet Union's possession of the right of veto, Japan's formal entry into the United Nations may not be effected in the near future, yet Japan is bound to act

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in all matters in conformity with the spirit of the United Nations Charter. Accordingly for all practical purposes, Japan has assumed both rights and obligations toward the United Nations.

But, as the history of the recent San Francisco Conference shows, the community of nations to which Japan now belongs does not cover the entire world; the Soviet Union and its satellite countries are not of the number. That is to say, Japan has got to join one of the two rival worlds.

Advocates of an over-all peace treaty, deploiring this state of affairs, take exception to the new peace pact, but they should stop to consider why and by whom over-all peace was rendered impossible. Before attacking America, their critical eye ought to be directed to the character and policy of the Soviet Union.

Barring those who are bent on turning Japan into a Soviet satellite or those who are prone to leave Japan open to encroachment by Red imperialism, a fairly large number of the advocates of over-all peace are obviously actuated by the motive of averting war by all means, apprehending, as they do, that, should World War III be precipitated, it might prove destructive of mankind and its culture because of atomic weapons which would surely be employed in it. It is, of course, very natural that all people, the Japanese people especially, should revolt against the bare thought of being exposed to the horrors of war again, but such feeling, natural though it is, must be weighed against reason.

Non-Communist advocates of over-all peace persist in their belief in the possibility of neutrality between the two worlds. But it must be kept in mind that the problem is by nature ethical, not political. Our choice lies between a dark world in which truth is distorted, man is enslaved, people are deprived of the freedom of speech, the freedom of conscience and the freedom of political association secret trials are held and children spy on their parents and the other world in which human rights and freedoms are guaranteed not by the letter of the law only but are protected in actual practise also, though there may exist therein a certain degree of social inconsistency attendant on capitalistic economy.

So long as we remain faithful apostles of the new Constitution, our choice is quite obvious. We must needs align ourselves with the group of nations adhering staunchly of the United Nations Charter which, in fundamentals, is identical with Japan’s new Constitution.

Advocates of neutrality are ones who either fail to recognize or are skeptical of distinction between justice and injustice and between good and evil or ones who, if they recognize it, possess no strong sense of justice and morality. None but relativists can be neutral between
justice and injustice or between good and evil. And skeptics alone are capable of a compromising attitude toward both.

The problem of permanent world peace bears on evil rooted in human nature. Ought we, like Tolstoi and the Quakers, to be non-resistant against this evil? Must the use of force be regarded as criminal even when it is directed against evil?

Seeing that human nature is immutable and that the advance of human moral consciousness is very slow, it is impossible to expect an early advent of Paradise on earth, no matter how hard we may endeavor to bring it about. If in a highly organized national community robberies, thefts, frauds and all kinds of crimes are still rampant and are not likely to be rooted out in the near future, much less possible is it to expect an international community which is still in an incipient stage of organization to be rid of buccaneering activities of some unscrupulous states. In both domestic and international fields, therefore, it is incumbent on mankind to endeavor to maintain moral order by combating evil influences, and to this end it is quite inevitable that force should be used.

War against aggression is none other than the use of force for the purpose of maintaining order and vindicating justice in the world. In a word, it is meant to uphold the rule of law in the international community.

For the vindication of law the existence and use of force is thus necessary in the international community as in the national community. In fact, if the use of force is recognizable in the national community, there is no reason why it should not be recognized in the international community.

Where law rules order is maintained and anarchy ruled out. The rule of law admits of no wolfishness of one toward another. It brings about peace between individuals. We are apt to interpret peace as an idea confined to international relationships, but, as a matter of fact, peace is an idea common to all kinds of social life and accordingly common to all kinds of laws. If our desire of peace in international relations is particularly intense, it is because anarchy has wrought havoc with such relations too often in the past.

Order (peace) is, however, not infrequently feudalistic in character and, as such, deserves condemnation, or it is sometimes created by self-seeking dictators or by a coterie of tyrannical leaders. We do not desire such order to be established in which human dignity and fundamental human rights and freedoms are set at naught. In some extreme case, we should have to risk our lives in order to gain liberty, as is eloquently expressed in Patrick Henry's celebrated words.
We desire peace most ardently, but we should not on that account submit meekly to international brute force. Should such brute force be brought to bear upon us, we must defend ourselves by resisting it resolutely in the name of justice. If, in such a contingency, we find ourselves not strong enough to cope with the situation, we need not be ashamed of calling in the aid of other countries. To defend ourselves against international lawlessness is not a matter concerning ourselves only. To neglect self-defense is tantamount to a toleration of lawlessness. It amounts to passive cooperation with the forces operating to destroy the order of the world.

Self-defense is an obligation any country owes not only to itself but to the international community as a whole.

We do not endorse the fatalistic view that war is unavoidable. It is true, as the UNESCO Charter asserts, that wars begin in the minds of men, and no effort should be spared to rid the world of wars, but if, in spite of all these endeavors, aggression survives, war must inevitably be made on it.

If the theory of peace at all costs were accepted, it would be difficult to justify either the war waged by the Allies to crush the inordinate scheme of Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo for world domination or the present action of the United States forces against the North Korean and Red Chinese armies. We wonder whether Japanese exponents of such a theory mean to claim that the Japanese people or South Korea ought to have meekly suffered enslavement at the hands of the Tojo militarists or Red imperialism.

Peace must essentially be founded on justice and common weal. Peace of a sort exists even under totalitarian despotism, but such a peace is but an ominous silence enforced at the point of the sword.

By signing and ratifying the San Francisco peace treaty Japan has definitely aligned herself, with one of the two rival worlds which are antagonistic to each other in their outlook on the world and in their political ideas. Since we, the Japanese people, have pledged “our national honor” to pacifism and democracy enunciated in the new Constitution, it behooves us to be faithful to the United Nations and UNESCO which are identical with the Japanese Constitution in spirit.

The two worlds will probably remain in rivalry for long. It must consequently be said that the United Nations has still many difficulties to contend with. To be faithful to it necessarily involves heavy sacrifices. It is axiomatic that the higher the ideal the heavier the sacrifices its attainment entails. Peace and freedom are treasures too precious to be gained without sacrifice.
The heavy sacrifices exacted from us by our militarists for years following the Manchurian Incident were for serving either misdirected idealism or national egoism. Now, however, we have before us a just and noble ideal. It is now possible for us to serve our country and the whole of mankind at the same time. We are in a position to tread the right path free from restraint. All forces, both spiritual and physical, which were once exerted toward leading our country astray are not in themselves nefarious. The unfortunate thing was that they were not employed for the realization of right ideals. We are now able to use these forces for the fulfillment of the lofty mission of promoting world peace based on justice and common weal in collaboration with the nations who love peace and freedom.

All signatories of the peace treaty expect a great deal of Japan in the matter of cooperating for the attainment of this mission. Should the Japanese nation by any chance suffer itself to be influenced by sentimental pacifism to the extent of playing fast and loose with the world of free nations it would lay itself open to the charge of breaking its pledge to the new Constitution. Nothing but national ruin can be the outcome of such an attitude of vacillation. As the present fateful conjunction nothing is more harmful than skepticism.