

The roots of pacifism,

Mr. Chairman,

May I state in what sense, and in what sense alone, I could consent to be called a pacifist? Mussolini stated the position of Fascism to pacifism thus: "A doctrine which is founded upon the harmful postulate of peace is hostile to Fascism". What Mussolini here denounces as the "harmful postulate of peace", ~~is~~ <sup>is the doctrine I stand for. It is</sup> not an idealist or sentimental contention such as ~~that~~ "peace is good" and that therefore, it "ought to be" or any other equally meaningless assertion, but this postulate implied a <sup>political & economic</sup> definite diagnosis of the present crucial stage of the development of human society. It is to this specific diagnosis that I subscribe. According to this diagnosis at the heart of the ~~present struggle between the nations, the economic, political, and economic crisis of our days there is~~ <sup>political & economic</sup> the problem of the international political organisation of life - ~~that is~~ <sup>that in</sup> other words the problem of war. If to uphold such a belief makes a man a pacifist then I am a convinced pacifist. *I will have to deal with it lengthily.*

If, however, pacifism implies the acceptance of the command "Not to fight" then I am emphatically not a pacifist. My specific diagnosis implies, on the contrary that, perhaps for a long time to come human beings will have to fight if the institution of war is ever to be abolished.

*What is the root of the danger of war in our age? It is this.*

The actual forms of the material existence of man are those of world-wide interdependence. The political forms of human existence must also be world-wide. Either within the boundaries of a world empire or in those of a world federation - either through conquest and subjection or by international co-operation - the nations of the glo

must be brought within the folds of one all-embracing body. <sup>if our civilization is to survive</sup> Until peace is organised in <sup>one</sup> either of these two ways wars, and wars on an ever increasing scale must continue.

<sup>Our starting point is economic interdependence.</sup>  
 The reference to the material factor has in this case nothing whatever to do with so-called economic self-interest. Not incomes profits, wages, and standards of groups or classes of the population, but the very lives of ~~dozens of~~ millions of human beings depend upon material the factor in question. That which would involve the deliberate destruction of tens ~~or even hundred~~ of millions of people, becomes, in the nature of things, politically <sup>impracticable</sup> impossible and morally indefensible.

~~Now let us be quite clear about this.~~ But for the actually existing economic interdependence, the nations and peoples could decide to-morrow that they will henceforth live peacefully, as independent sovereign states, in economic self-sufficiency. Passion and prejudice might prevent them from following this course; but political and morally it would be justified. But for one factor <sup>present</sup>, the economic. The establishment of universal self-sufficiency would necessarily and inevitably cause such a sudden & fateful drop in the material resources of mankind as would reduce the population of the earth to a very considerable degree. <sup>For</sup> the enforced return to primitive conditions of production would involve ~~in fact~~ the starvation and death of vast masses of human beings.

For this one fundamental reason the solution of the problem of war by the <sup>going back up an economic interdependence as by previous history</sup> ~~method of~~ universal self-sufficiency is ~~morally~~ unacceptable. ~~Must~~

Most important consequences follow. If universal self-sufficiency offers no ~~possible~~ <sup>practical</sup> solution we must attempt to secure at least that measure of

\*) The Empire solution is only anti-Russ pro Teas.



international economic co-operation which existed until recently. The question is how to achieve it, ~~under present conditions?~~

Our thesis is that this cannot be done in the traditional forms of economic co-operation. These have broken down for good and all and cannot be restored. New forms of economic co-operation will have to be created. <sup>the</sup> It is the necessity of creating these new forms of economic co-operation that compels us to establish new forms of political organisation on an international scale. ~~and~~ It is precisely in the imperative need for new forms of international life that we must seek for the ultimate cause of all the strain, stress and suffering that mankind has to undergo at present and <sup>may</sup> yet ~~undergo~~ have to undergo in the future.

~~Further~~, It might be objected, Why ~~could~~ <sup>the</sup> traditional forms of economic co-operation ~~not~~ be restored ~~again~~? And why should the creation of new forms of international economic co-operation necessarily involve the tragedy of fratricidal wars and civil wars? *Can I main*

*our problems;*  
The traditional forms of international economic co-operation have broken down. An international gold standard, an international capital market, an international commodity market, based on the free exchange of goods and payments, has passed away. The system hinged on the

*(Explain)* international gold standard. It can not be restored, because it has become apparent that the <sup>clear</sup> ~~greater~~ the interdependence of the nations

~~becomes~~, the greater ~~is~~ the sacrifices needed in order to keep ~~the~~

*The system why?*  
~~going~~ <sup>why?</sup> The working of the international gold standard implies the readiness of all countries concerned to allow their internal price-level to move up and down according to ~~the~~ uncontrollable changes

in the international balance of payments. As long as the swing of the prices is upwards, governments might agree; but a permanent fall in the price level means <sup>a slowing down of production</sup> a drop in the consumers wealth produced, it means mass-unemployment and <sup>the</sup> consequent danger of the dissolution of the social fabric. <sup>that.</sup> No government can deliberately bring about such a condition of affairs; no society could maintain itself under such conditions.

The alternative to the present forms of international economic cooperation is the setting-up of new forms. Why can these ~~not~~ be rightaway established?

At least in the stage of transition - ~~and~~ this stage may cover a long period - massive economic sacrifices on the part of all countries concerned would have to be ~~made~~ <sup>made.</sup>. Under our present economic system the people of no country will voluntarily embark upon such ~~a course~~ <sup>sacrifices.</sup>. The reason is obvious. A genuine community might very well resolve to ~~make~~ <sup>make</sup> heavy sacrifices for the sake of a great purpose and persevere in its endeavour as long as necessary. But under our industrial system society is divided <sup>not into a community of real unit. The property system</sup> into two separate sections. - the people who are responsible for the actual carrying on of industrial production <sup>the</sup> as owners and managers of the means of production, and the people who <sup>have</sup> have no such responsibility. <sup>the</sup> The latter can not be seriously expected to shoulder the economic burden of wage-cuts and unemployment consequent upon a general policy the actual costs of which ~~we~~ <sup>they</sup> are not in the position to assess. For this ~~simple reason~~ <sup>simple reason</sup> it is impossible under our present system to make the whole of the population act as a single unit where economic questions are concerned. ~~This is the~~

P  
Capitalist  
work.



This is the ultimate reason why our nation-states as at present constituted are ~~unambiguously~~ inadequate to the task of setting up a new system of economic co-operation, <sup>self-sufficiency (T. H. Morgan & F. H. Coase)</sup> ~~in the international sphere~~.

Incidentally, I wish to give you an ~~example~~ <sup>example</sup> of the economic reasoning of our outstanding pacifists. The point at issue is no less than ~~the decisive question~~ whether or not economic self-sufficiency is possible. Decisive ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup>, as we have shown, (this is the one and only supposition under which human communities as at present constituted could settle down to peaceful existence in independent sovereign states. ~~Also~~ the point is far from academic ~~firmly established~~ for the practical pacifist. In Bertrand Russell's view pacifism, as you know, is justified only as a short-term policy in the face of the imminent overwhelming dangers of modern air-warfare. He advocates pacifism to-day and admits that he may not stand for it to-morrow. ~~Now~~ This is what Russell says on the possibility of self-sufficiency: "I do not think it can be doubted that by the application of existing knowledge Great Britain could, within ten years, become capable of producing the amount of food necessary to support life for its own population." It would be "much easier than usually supposed to develop our domestic food supplies". He proceeds to quote at length an article of Dr. C.W. Willcox from the "New Republic" (of 3rd June 1936) in which this American writer on agro-biology refers to the work of Dr. W.F. Gericke, of the University of California. Dr. Gericke asserts, that he has produced 217 tons of tomatoes per acre and has grown 2465 bushels of potatoes per acre, i.e. some 20 times the national average of the U.S.A. The plants were not set in earth at all. Shallow tanks, filled with liquid chemicals

were used, into which the roots of the plants were dipped. The liquid chemicals were heated by electricity. "Already we are hearing stories, Dr. Willcox concludes his article, of an occasional scientist who is <sup>said</sup> to grow a year's supply of potatoes for a large family in a tin pan under the kitchen table. There is, as a matter of fact, no reason why we should not have skyscraper farms on which the rows of shallow pans would be stacked one above the other to the height of a hundred - or a thousand - feet. ..." Personally, I do not <sup>in the least</sup> doubt the possibility of scientific agriculture. Indeed, ever since agriculture existed, it has been more or less artificial. But the socialist construction in Soviet Russia offers the best example of the economics of such a venture. <sup>Great capital outlay means a check on the standard of life</sup> Does Bertrand Russell realise the amount of the capital outlay involved in schemes of this kind if they are planned on anything approaching a national scale? This capital outlay would, in terms of labour and commodities, mean the enslavement of the people of this country for something like a generation. Obviously there would also have to be tin-pans for cotton, coffee and tea plants tin-pans for rubber, orange and lemon trees, and even tin-pans for pigs, sheep and oxen in order to procure the meat. *think some 6000*

But Dr. Willcox's discovery ~~has not been overlooked~~ has not been overlooked in other quarters where the scientific mind is even more in evidence than in Russell's case <sup>at least</sup> who is a great scientist in his own sphere. I am alluding to Aldous Huxley's recent book "Ends and Means".

"Dirless farming" devised by Professor Dr. Gericke holds honour of place ~~in the book~~ though, as Huxley <sup>cautiously</sup> adds, <sup>it is</sup> "still in the experimental stage". Dr. Willcox's book "Nations can live at home" has convinced Aldous Huxley that the English can live at home, without the ~~assistance~~ assistance of other homes. "To what extent is over-population a valid excuse for militarism and imperialism?" asks Huxley. "It is probable indeed that dirtless farming will produce an agricultural revolution compared with which the industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries will seem the most trifling of social disturbances".

<sup>How</sup> of the results of this trifling disturbance was that the population of England increased sixfold <sup>between</sup> 1700-1900. If "dirtless farming" only in an ~~results~~ results ~~of a~~ <sup>only in an</sup> sixfold increase of the population, the population of the earth may easily grow from 2 to 12, ~~thousand millions~~ thousand millions.





We have given ~~up~~ so much of our time to <sup>the</sup> Dr. Gericke's argument in order to show up the ~~almost inconceivable~~ levity with which serious pacifists sometimes treat these questions. Characteristically, it is not the religious pacifists, but the rationalist like Russell or the psychologically minded like Huxley who's arguments are conspicuous for their irrelevance. The religious pacifist alone can make out a consistent case. I need not say that in my conviction he is wrong.

But let us return to our argument. <sup>Mainly</sup> for economic reasons the international organisation of life must be restored. This can not happen on the traditional basis; for governments can and will not allow the economic system of their countries to be the foot ball of uncontrollable international forces; It can not happen on a new basis as long as our present economic system <sup>lasts</sup> continues. For our modern class societies are lacking in that degree of unity in the economic field which would enable them to shoulder the massive ~~economic~~ sacrifices involved in the establishment of a co-operative international. Only true communities can generate the moral forces of a historical <sup>heroism</sup> ~~idealism~~ without which no such ~~heroic~~ efforts are likely to be undertaken, ~~and~~ if undertaken, to prove successful in the face of <sup>obscure</sup> ~~insurmountable~~ obstacles.



~~It is necessary~~ <sup>We find ourselves</sup>  
~~Marxism finds itself~~ in the following situation:

In the international sphere the necessarily slow process of establishing ~~is~~ a world federation can not ~~come to an end~~ <sup>reach</sup> before it reaches its final consummation.

In the national sphere our present economic system will have to be replaced by a real economic commonwealth precisely for the reason that only such a commonwealth will be able and willing to pay the heavy economic price that must be payed for the establishment of a world federation.

This is why in the period lying before us foreign affairs must continue to dominate over home affairs.

The powers opposed to international co-operation will force their imperialist wars on the other countries. The powers which for whatsoever reason favour an international system will tend to oppose them jointly.

It will be in the course of this prolonged and painful attempts to evolve a co-operative solution that the inherent weakness of the present economic system <sup>as a unit of planetary cooperation</sup> must bear its ~~own~~ fateful fruit. For no ~~international~~ international system can prove workable that does not provide for the exigencies of genuine economic co-operation ~~in~~ on an international scale. Thus no measure of human suffering will bring us any nearer to the ~~desire~~ desired international political order except in the degree in which the nations themselves <sup>are transformed during</sup> ~~change their economic institutions~~ the course of the wars, the painful defeats and the no less costly victories, into true economic commonwealth.

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