

1910

*The*  
*League of Nations*  
*and*  
*Industrial Peace*

LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION

15, GROSVENOR CRESCENT, S.W. 1.

*October, 1920.*

THE present state of Europe is absolutely disastrous to British trade.

The present race of wages after prices in England is the direct result of the existing chaos on the Continent.

The only remedy for the chaos on the Continent is united international co-operation.

That is only possible through such an organization as the League of Nations.

The League of Nations cannot work unless it has behind it an overwhelming backing of public opinion. That public opinion arises automatically as soon as people know the facts. The task of the League of Nations Union is to tell British people the facts, and show them what the League can do. Other similar societies are doing the same work in other countries.

The League of Nations Union cannot do its work without money. That money must be provided by English people. The alternative is Bolshevism and bankruptcy, not in Russia, not in Germany, but *here in England itself*.

These propositions admit of very simple demonstration:—

The basis of Great Britain's trade is her exportable surplus of coal and manufactured goods. Simply stated, British trade mainly consists in the exchange of British coal and manufactured goods for food and raw material. The greater the abundance of produce abroad, the more we can obtain in exchange for our exports. The less the exportable surplus of foreign countries, the less we obtain. If there were no such exportable surplus, the situation would be exactly as if this country were blockaded. Millions of our population would be faced with starvation.

We are now actually in the state of semi-blockade. All the European countries with whom we traded before the war are less able than formerly to supply us—they have less exportable surplus. The bulk of them

are in no condition to trade at all. Some are lapsing into "Peasant States" which, conceivably, may have almost no exportable surplus for years to come.

This situation, the direct outcome of war, is disastrous to British trade.

The race of wages after soaring prices is due to it. For the less the exportable surplus possessed by foreign nations, the less those nations can give in exchange for our produce. Our produce, therefore, loses value in proportion to the lessening of this exportable surplus from abroad. Prices, therefore, rise here. The more prices rise, the less the working man can get for his wages and the more wages he demands. *The more, therefore, the Continent is plunged into economic disorder, the less is produced abroad, and the less we can obtain for what we can afford to pay.*

The remedy for all this is to bring about peace on the Continent of Europe, and re-establish international credit. To do this is to revive Continental industry, to increase the trade of this country, and, therefore, to reduce prices and improve the standard of living. There is no greater error than to imagine that the elimination of foreign trade is beneficial to our trade. Exactly the opposite is the case.

Credits can only be granted to countries in a state of peace. Otherwise the risk is too great for the credit to be made available on any except prohibitive rates of interest. Peace can only be maintained if the Great Powers of the world resolutely and unitedly set their faces against war. This necessitates a Union against War—an international society for the preservation of peace.

Such an association exists in the League of Nations. But the visible League—the Council, the Assembly, and the Secretariat—is only machinery for making easier the unification of the world. The true League—the driving force of the League machine—is something in the hearts of men; a law-abiding, co-operative spirit amongst the peoples; a world-determination to make the League fruitful.

This law-abiding and co-operative spirit can be fostered in the public mind. It has been done in the past. People have gradually learned to respect the law of the land, and to co-operate more or less automatically in matters such as hygiene, public order, sanitation, the rule of the road, and the like.

It is true, as some critics say, that behind the law stand the forces of the Crown. But behind the forces of the Crown stands the goodwill of the population; and it is upon this final sanction that it is sought to base the League. If the League is firmly based upon the collective will of the world, the necessary instruments for enforcing its decisions will never be lacking.

It is the task of the British League of Nations Union to develop a collective will for the League in the people of Great Britain, and to foster in them a spirit favourable to the development of international justice and international co-operation. This is not only in the interests of the highest morality; it is also in the practical interest of the country's prosperity as a whole. Other similar institutions are seeking to perform the same task in the remaining countries of the world, and their efforts are being co-ordinated by a Central Bureau, so that the development of the necessary collective will may proceed simultaneously throughout the world.

The support of the British League of Nations Union is the affair of the British people. The purpose of this paper is to show how it is to the material advantage of all English people, but especially those whose fortunes depend upon the cohesion and stability of society, to support the work of the Union.

The League of Nations stands for solidity against insolvency, for evolution against revolution, for order against disintegration and terror.

The League of Nations Union exists to develop for the League the collective will, without which it will inevitably fail and come to nothing.

Is it not the duty of all good citizens to join the Union and support its work?