

# Can It Be Done?

by

**Leopold Kohr**

*The Final Chapters  
of  
The Breakdown of Nations*

*There are, at the present time, two great nations in the world which seem to tend toward the same end, although they started from different points: I allude to the Russians and the Americans. Their starting-point is different, and their courses are not the same; yet each of them seems to be marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe.*

*Alexis de Tocqueville*

## **Matters Discussed**

Instability of present unions.  
Division of great powers essential.  
Question is not: Can it be done, but how can it be done?  
Division by war and division by proportional representation.  
Assigning more votes to great powers if federal representatives are elected at district level.  
Federalization of great powers and the gradualness and imperceptibility of their dissolution  
Districts correspond to ancient state units - division therefore not artificial.  
Native particularism ensuring popular approval.  
One cannot turn back the clock.  
Prevention of reunification of small states.  
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We shape our buildings, and our buildings shape us.  
America's anti-empire.  
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The role of the United Nations as a tool of imperialism.  
The two United Nations.  
The ultimate world state.

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The preceding chapter has demonstrated that no *satisfactory* local national or international organization can function except on the basis of a small unit pattern. It is the only pattern that solves the problem of effective administration. As a result it would seem that neither a United World nor a United Europe can last for any length of time on the basis of the existing arrangements uniting as they do an indigestible medley of small as well as large states. Organizations of this nature lack the vital *internal* balance that could give their federal structure more than a passing success. In their present form the various attempted international unions of our day can therefore be held together only by means of an external force such as the threat of aggression. Once this is passed they must either burst, collapse, or be transformed into single-power tyrannies. As free, democratic unions of nations they cannot survive.

While a federal balance could theoretically also be established on the basis of a large-unit pattern leaving the great powers intact and uniting as a counter-measure the small states until they, too, were to form powerful blocks, a balance of this kind would produce so inelegant and clumsy an arrangement that every slightest tug or twitch would threaten its existence.

For all practical purposes, therefore, international unions must seek, instead of the heavy stable balance of great-power organizations, the fluid mobile balance of multicellular small-state arrangements. The solution of their problems lies in the micro- not in the macro-political field. They must eliminate from their system not the small states but the great powers. This alone will furnish them with the internal mechanism for coping with the daily frictions of social life without the necessity of building up a governmental machine of such proportions that it could not be maintained even if it could be created.

The question now poses itself, even for those who have been convinced by the arguments of this book: can it be done? Can the great powers be divided? Will Soviet Russia and the United States accept their dissolution merely to save the United Nations? Will France, Italy, Great Britain, or Germany ever give their consent to their own liquidation merely because this would be wise? Can the clock be turned back?

One might answer this question very simply by saying that it is not the question in the first place. If regions such as Europe really desire union, the question to be answered is not: can the great powers be eliminated? but *how* can they be eliminated? If regions containing great powers *want* to unite, they *must* divide these powers. And what *must* be done, *can* be done. Even the clock can be turned back - to pick from the barrel of objections one of those stereotypes with which our theorists so often try to wreck a case without taking issue with it. Those who use this slogan as an insurmountable barrier to the break-up of large political powers are frequently the same who advocate in the economic field decartellization, the break-up of great economic empires, without realizing that this means turning the clock back, too. What they call reactionary politically, they call progressive economically. No engineer will dream of hiding behind this slogan when he discovers flaws in a nearly completed bridge. Instead of saying that he cannot turn back the clock, he will do precisely this, if he is to save his reputation. He will tear down the structure and begin building it all over again. No author, writing himself into a blind alley, will perpetuate his frustration by insisting that, having advanced so far in pursuit of his plot, he cannot turn back the clock. Maybe he cannot, but then his work will be a failure. But if he can, he may turn it into a masterpiece yet. Finally, even in the most literal sense, the famous clock slogan, which has caused so much intellectual havoc, is not only meaningless as an analogy but silly in its own right, since there are few things that are easier than to turn back the clock. Just try it. In fact it is so easy that one does not even need to apply an outside force. Unaided and unbullied, the clock comes back to where it started every twenty-four hours simply by moving ahead on its slow and gentle course.

Thus, the clock *can*, of course, be turned back, and the great powers can be eliminated just as the great powers themselves, such as France or Hitler Germany, were able to eliminate their internal power blocks without listening to the particularists protesting that they could not do this. They could and did. The sole question to be answered then is: *how* can it be done?

One way of splitting the great powers would be through war. A man like Hitler could have done it and, maybe, would have done it. The victorious Allies have done it with regard to Germany which, for the first time in a hundred years, with Prussia subdivided into a number of smaller co-equal states, has a chance to

federate successfully. By the same token, the Allies could have gone a step further and dissolved the last remaining framework still holding the German states together. However, no one can suggest so blunt and bloody a method for the destruction of other powers without being called a warmonger. It is mentioned here as a method only in reply to the argument that the division of great powers is impossible. If it cannot be brought about by other means, it can be by force of arms, and, since this is a method too, it seems that division *can* be effected.

But war is fortunately not the only means by which great powers can be divided. Engulfed in a swamp of infantile emotionalism, and attaching phenomenal value to the fact that they are big and mighty, they cannot be *persuaded* to execute their own dissolution. But, being infantile and emotional, they can be tricked into it. While they would reject their division, if it were presented to them as a demand, they might be quite willing to accept it, if offered to them in the guise of a gift. This gift would be: *proportional representation* in the bodies governing the federal union of which they form part. The acceptance of this offer would cause nothing less than their eventual disappearance.

### 1. Division through Proportional Representation

The *conventional* federal principle of government grants an equal number of votes to each participating sovereign unit of a federation irrespective of the size of its population. This is quite reasonable since international law does not distinguish amongst sovereigns, and does not make the degree of sovereignty dependent on quantitative considerations. France, with 45 million inhabitants, is not more sovereign than Liechtenstein whose population numbers less than 13,000. While she has more *might* than Liechtenstein, she has not more *right* than that miniature principality. Nor does she have more of a physical existence. For this reason, large member states of international organizations are always clamouring for proportional rather than state representation so that their numerical strength might be brought into play in a more realistic manner. But as long as the law of nations considers every sovereign state the co-equal of any other, the great powers have no chance of gratifying their passionate desire to be considered not only bulkier than small states, but greater, and endowed with more rights as well.

This unsatisfied desire is the key with which the great powers can be tricked into accepting gracefully their own liquidation. They shall be given what they so sorely want - but with a string attached. Let us illustrate this with the example of the *European Council* which is composed of four large powers, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, and a number of small states such as Belgium, Luxembourg, Denmark, or the Netherlands. Its principal problem of survival is the division of in four self-centred and thus basically unco-operative great powers. France - to illustrate the technique of division on a country clinging with particular tenacity to power and glory concepts - would never agree to be split up into her original historic regions. But she would certainly not object to the invitation to sit in the representative bodies of the *European Council* with, let us say, twenty voting delegates compared with, let us say, one delegate from Luxembourg, three delegates from Denmark, and five delegates each from Belgium and the Netherlands.

However, while France and the equally favoured Great Britain or Germany would naturally be agreeable to such a redistribution of votes, Luxembourg, Belgium, Denmark, or the Netherlands would not, for the simple reason that it would leave the great-power domination of the *European Council* unchanged. In addition, it would make an unpleasant actual condition legal as well. But the smaller countries would raise few objections if the twenty members of the French delegation were elected, not nationally, but regionally and were, consequently, to be entrusted only with *regional* responsibilities and *regional* representation. Such a shift in the source of delegation would alter the entire picture in an imperceptible, yet radical and fundamental manner. It is this that would bring about the eventual dissolution of France. Why?

France, as she effected her subdivision into more than ninety *departments* for reasons of internal administration, would now, in order to benefit from the increase in her voting strength, have to divide herself into twenty federal districts in the administrative interest of the European Council. Each of these districts would directly elect its representatives to the various federal bodies, and each would remain the exclusive formulator of the mandates and instructions given to its own delegate. Thus, the twenty members elected in the various districts of France would not appear in the federal assemblies as a unit,

but as twenty individual members representing not one but twenty electorates, not one but twenty majorities, and not one common but twenty different regions. These members would serve only two political organisms, their district and the *European Council*, as the Swiss serves only two organized units, his canton and the overall federation. And, as already pointed out, just as Switzerland recognizes no half-way organization in the form of a subfederation of German or French cantons to act as a disruptive intermediary between the canton and the federation, so the *European Council* or, as it might eventually be called, the United States of Europe, would recognize no disruptive intermediary in the form of a subunion of French districts. From a federal point of view France, as also Great Britain, Germany, and Italy, would therefore cease to exist as a component part of a European union.

However, the mere division of France into European-Council districts would not be enough. France is a tightly centralized state and, like others, owes her development as a great power to this very fact. As long as centralization exists, great power exists, and any division under these circumstances would be but fiction. To make division effective, the great powers would have to undergo a fundamental internal change. As a preliminary step towards *successful* integration in a larger international organization they would have to transform their present centralized systems into decentralized federations. This would make their division real and thus actually usher in their gradual dissolution. It is a characteristic feature of true federations that the principal share of public power is entrusted to the small member unit, while progressively diminishing amounts of power are reserved to the higher governmental levels. In this way power is given where it can do no harm, and withheld where it might assume dangerous proportions and invite abuse. With the highest organs in a federation possessing but few powers in their own right, no obstructive power complex can develop at the top. As a result, it would be relatively easy to transfer the last weak remaining national powers to a larger international authority. In this manner, division could be effected by the inoffensive device of the internal federalization of the great powers brought about through the offer of proportional rather than national representation. Professor Henry Simons has expressed a similar idea when he wrote:

‘A great virtue of extreme federalism or decentralization in great nations is that it facilitates their extension toward world organization or their easy absorption into still larger federations. If central governments were, as they should be, largely repositories of unexercised powers, held simply to prevent their exercise by constituent units or extragovernmental organizations, then supranational organization would be easy if not almost gratuitous. Indeed, such great-nation decentralization or deorganization is both end and means of international organization.’<sup>1</sup>

The question now is: could France or any great power be made to accept such self-division through federalization? The answer is yes, and for a variety of reasons. In the first place, as has just been pointed out, division would be presented in form of a gift. Instead of one voice in the *European Council*, the French (though not France) would be offered twenty. Since federalization would mean transition by steps and stages, with governmental powers not to be eliminated but merely redistributed, and with no official act terminating the state of France, no patriotic feelings would be hurt. The revolutionary change would be purely internal in character. It would be destruction by which nothing that counts is destroyed. It would be elimination without victims. There would be no foreign laws, no foreign occupation, no change in traffic or commerce or anything except in the fact that government and sovereignty would suddenly have come closer to the individual, endowing him within the smaller sphere of the new sovereign units with a dignity and importance not previously possessed. He would find this charming, not distasteful. His district would be infused with new vitality, his provincial capital would assume new glamour, and his prefect would be transformed from an appointed functionary into an elected head of state. A whole new range of intriguing activities would now take place close to his home instead of in distant Paris, new governments and parliaments would spring up and, instead of the ambitions of a few, the ambitions of many could be satisfied.

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<sup>1</sup> Henry C. Simons, *Economic Policy for a Free Society*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1948, p.21

The actual political and international dissolution of France would thus go practically unnoticed. But it would be effective none the less. The provincial delegates from Normandy, Picardy, or Pau would no longer meet in Paris but in a new federal capital city that may develop in Strasbourg or elsewhere. Being the capital of a larger area than France, they would meet there the delegates from the other federally dissolved regions of the union. While there might still be a lingering of traditional unity amongst the groups of French-, German-, Italian-, or English-speaking delegates at the beginning, the groundswell of regional particularism and individualistic difference would soon break down the last vestiges of the present great-power blocks. In the absence of any unifying intermediary authority, we would soon find conservative Burgundians siding with conservative Bavarians against socialist Saxons and Normans for the same reasons that cause Swiss or American political representatives to take sides not on the basis of regional but intellectual or ideological groupings. In the end of the development Paris, like Olympia or Athens in ancient Greece, would be merely the *cultural centre* of the French-speaking world, while its *political* authority would not transcend the boundaries of its own little state of *Île de France*. With the transfer of the basic state powers from the nation to the district, the districts would automatically become the true sovereign members of the European federation. Then proportional representation could once more give way to state representation. Since the districts would all be of approximately equal size, the traditional federal principle of equal votes for equal sovereigns could again be restored.

## 2. Restoration of Europe's Old Nations

This leads to a second reason why France and other great powers could be induced to accept their division. I have called these new subdivisions *districts*. But they are not simply districts. As Chapter III has shown, they are France's and Europe's original *nations*. Their restoration would consequently not mean the creation of an artificial pattern but a return to Europe's natural political landscape. No new names would have to be invented. The old ones are still in existence, as are the regions and peoples which they define. It is the great powers which lack the real basis of existence and are without autochthonous, self-sustaining sources of strength. It is they that are the *artificial* structures, holding together a medley of more or less unwilling little tribes. There is no 'Great British' nation in Great Britain. What we find are the English, Scots, Irish, Cornish, Welsh, and the islanders of Man. In Italy, we find the Lombards, Tyroleans, Venetians, Sicilians, or Romans. In Germany we find Bavarians, Saxons, Hessians, Rhinelanders, or Brandenburgers. And in France, we find Normans, Catalans, Alsatians, Basques, or Burgundians. These little nations came into existence by themselves, while the great powers had to be created by force and a series of bloodily unifying wars. Not a single component part joined them voluntarily. They all had to be forced into them, and could be retained by them only by means of their division into *counties*, *Gaue*, or *departments*.

It may be objected by our modern unifiers that, though this be true, centuries of joint living have fused them into inseparable units and created changes which it would be reactionary to undo. One cannot - *hélas*, again - turn back the clock. But nothing has changed. So little fusion has taken place that, whenever the grip of a big power seems to loosen, its component parts, far from coming to its rescue, try everything to liberate themselves. When Hitler crumbled, the Bavarians wanted to secede from Germany and restore their ancient kingdom. Similarly, the Sicilians tried to set up an independent state after the defeat of Mussolini. The Scots of today are as Scottish as they were 300 years ago. Living together with the English has only increased their desire for living apart. In 1950, they petitioned the King for the establishment of a separate parliament in Edinburgh, and a few months later dramatized the fact of their continued national existence by 'liberating' the *Stone of Scone* from the 'foreign' soil of Westminster Abbey. In Cornwall guide books greet the English tourist by telling him, gently and humorously, but still telling him that, as long as he is on Cornish ground, he must consider himself a foreigner. And in France, even in relatively calm and settled times, there is a constant undercurrent of separatist movements and sentiments not only amongst the Alsatians, but amongst Catalans, Basques, Bretons, and Normans as well.

Thus, in spite of having been submerged in great unitarian states for long periods and having been subjected to an unceasing battering of unifying propaganda, particularist sentiments still exist in undiminished strength, and few of Europe's numerous little nations, now held together within the framework of great powers, could be left alone for a single week without at once getting busy with the

establishment of their own capitals, parliaments, and sovereignties. There are, of course, people such as elementary-school teachers, national politicians, military men, collectivists, mankind maniacs, and others glorying in unitarian developments, who will oppose the concept of small democratic states with fanaticism and the outcry of reaction - as if the pattern of nature could ever be reactionary. But the bulk of the inhabitants of the regions in which these states would be restored have shown time and again that they think differently. They do not seem to want life in vast meaningless realms. They want to live in their provinces, in their mountains, in their valleys. They want to live at home. This is why they have clung so tenaciously to their local colour and provincialism even when they were submerged in great empires. In the end, however, it was always the small state, not the empire that survived. That is why small states do not have to be created artificially. They need only be freed.

### 3. Preservation of Small-state Pattern

One final question to be answered is whether the small states would not immediately begin to form new alliances and great-power combinations. Eventually they would, since nothing ever lasts indefinitely. But it might take them as many centuries as it took the present great powers to form. It must not be forgotten that the creation of a divided small-state pattern may mean unification in a larger international federation. This entails that there would now be an *effective* federal government whose task would be not only to keep the member states united but also to keep them apart.

There is no reason to believe that under a small-state arrangement, created for the very purpose of rendering federal government effective, the prevention of interstate alliances would pose greater difficulties than the same problem poses to the governments of the United States, Canada, Mexico, or Switzerland. With the federal government having an easy margin of strength over the small individual states or even a combination of them, the danger of a successful regrouping of great powers would be a remote possibility.

From all this we see that the technical obstacle to the division of great powers and the preservation of a small-state pattern is anything but insurmountable. By using the device of proportional representation together with an appeal to the powerful particularist sentiments always present in human groups, the condition of a small-state world, so essential a prerequisite of successful international union, could be established without force or violence. It would mean nothing but the abandonment of a few silly, though cherished, slogans of the turn-the-clock-back category, a bit of diplomacy, and a bit of technique.

*It can be done!* And if unions are to survive, it *must* be done!

*But Will It Be Done?*

No! It will not be done!

This looks like a sad ending for a book whose principal purpose was to prove that there could so easily have been a better one. And sad endings are not at all in conformity with the mood of the time of which our opinion experts tell us that it is opposed to purely destructive analyses, ignoring the fact that its chief intellectual offspring, existentialism, is the most sensuous rave of destructiveness the world has enjoyed for centuries. Nobody would be so childish as to demand happy endings in Sartre! But if the pressure of an old-maidenish public for rosy outlooks is considered infantile in literature or philosophy, why should it not be the same in politics? And who is this new autocrat, the mood of the time, who even in democracies tries to prescribe the limits of debate, permitting criticism only on the understanding that our basic conceits are not touched? It is the same wily old tyrant whom we have already encountered under so many other disguises, here as average man, majority, people, and there as fatherland, proletariat, party line. Now he shrouds himself in the mantle of time, demanding, presumably, that I end this book on a less cynical note than a confession of my inability to believe in the applicability of my own conclusions.

Yet, although it should make no difference, this is neither cynical nor destructive. The purpose of an analysis is to analyse, to conclude, and to suggest. This I have done. To come forth with ringing appeals to humanity and declarations of faith in its wisdom, as is now so fashionable, is an entirely different proposition. In this particular case, most will even agree that, to believe in the willingness of the great powers to preside over their own liquidation for the purpose of creating a world free of the terrors which

they alone are able to produce, would not be a sign of faith in the first place, but of lunacy as it is the sign of lunacy, and not of faith, to believe that atom bombs can be produced but need not necessarily be detonated.

Nevertheless, I agree that this analysis cannot simply be ended with a declaration of lack of faith. There is still one question to be answered. If there is no chance of the restoration of a small-state world because of the unwillingness of the great powers to apply the principle of division to themselves, what then?

### **1. The Road of Bigness**

Obviously, the only alternative to littleness is bigness, and the only thing the world can do if it refuses to go back is to go ahead, treading the road of great power to its logical end. Where does this lead us?

It has been pointed out before that the road of bigness is characterized by the gradual shrinkage of the number of great powers. As some of them continue to grow, others must by necessity give way. This has not always been the case, since previously each could satisfy its appetite for expansion by feeding on little states. However, the supply of the latter became to all intents and purposes exhausted with the end of the nineteenth century when those still in existence at that time became unavailable for further absorption through entering, if not the actual territory, at least the power orbit of their large neighbours. As a result, ever since then the great powers have had to fall on each other. World War I thus saw for the first time in many centuries the disappearance not of small but of large countries, Turkey and Austria-Hungary. World War II eliminated three more, Japan, Italy, and Germany. And this was not all. When peace returned, two others were discovered along the road in a condition of complete exhaustion, China and France. Unable at first to arise, and, once arisen, to keep afoot by their own efforts, they still bear the name of great powers but clearly no longer fit the definition.

Of the nine great powers entering the twentieth century with the customary belief in their own indestructibility, only three can therefore be said to have reached the mid-century mark, Russia, Great Britain, and the United States. And even amongst these the process of further shrinkage has already begun to manifest itself so that before long there will be actually only two survivors, Russia and America. Though these two joined the circle of the mighty last, they were destined through the interplay of their overwhelming population potentials and the vast expanse of their territories to outlive all the rest from the very beginning. Indeed, so inevitable was their course that as early as 1840 Alexis de Tocqueville was able to foresee every step of their development in such minute detail that what he wrote would be one of history's great prophecies were it not simply a masterpiece of deductive reasoning spun from premises that permitted no other conclusion. These are his words:

‘The time will therefore come when one hundred and fifty millions of men will be living in North America, equal in condition, the progeny of one race, owing their origin to the same cause, and preserving the same civilization, the same language, the same religion, the same habits, the same manners, and imbued with the same opinions, propagated under the same forms. The rest is uncertain, but this is certain; and it is a fact new to the world - a fact fraught with such portentous consequences as to baffle the efforts even of the imagination.

‘There are, at the present time, two great nations in the world which seem to tend toward the same end, although they started from different points: I allude to the Russians and the Americans. Both of them have grown up unnoticed; and while the attention of mankind was directed elsewhere, they have suddenly assumed a most prominent place among the nations; and the world learned their existence and their greatness at almost the same time.

‘All other nations seem to have nearly reached their natural limits, and only to be charged with the maintenance of their power; but these are still in the act of growth; all the others are stopped, or continue to advance with extreme difficulty; these are proceeding with ease and with celerity along a path to which the human eye can assign no term. The American struggles against the natural obstacles which oppose him; the adversaries of the Russian are men; the former combats the wilderness and savage life; the latter, civilization with all its weapons and its arts: the conquests of the one are therefore gained by the ploughshare; those of the other by the sword. The Anglo-American relies upon personal interest to

accomplish his ends, and gives free scope to the unguided exertions and common sense of the citizens; the Russian centres all the authority of society in a single arm: the principal instrument of the former is freedom; of the latter servitude. Their starting-point is different, and their courses are not the same; yet each of them seems to be marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe.’<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime, the condition so lucidly foretold has become a political reality. The unpreventable consequence of the road of bigness which the world has chosen in preference to life in small communities has arrived with such punctuality that there are only two real sovereign states left today, the United States, now indeed a nation of ‘one hundred and fifty millions of men’, and Soviet Russia. As a result, what we actually have is not a world whose one half is dominated by Russia enforcing the principle of servitude while the other is composed of a multitude of free nations joined for a common purpose. What we have is a world composed of two empires, each swaying the destinies of half the globe, and fulfilling nobody’s purpose except that of their two central powers. And this answers the question of the alternative to a world of little states. It is a world of two great empires keeping each other in a terror-spreading uneasy state of balance.

## **2. The Anti-empire**

We find, of course, no particular pleasure hearing this word applied to America and, if we accept its implications at all, shall do so only under protestations of innocence. For is not our whole history characterized by our consistent fight not for but against imperial domination? Even today our sole aim is to liberate the world, not to master it. And if we are so determined to unite at least one half under our leadership it is, in fact, not to create an empire but an anti-empire.

Which is quite true. But conditions breed their own mentality irrespective of our personal preferences. This is once more a materialistic way of looking at history, but is it not once more the same thing Winston Churchill implied when he said in defending the reconstruction of the British House of Commons in its original narrow and oblong form: ‘We shape our buildings, and our buildings shape us’? Just as the essence of British democracy with its cultivation of brilliant debate and its rejection of platitudinous oratory was thus presented by one of its staunchest defenders as a result not of a flattering national character but of the intimacy forced on its politicians by the physical narrowness of their meeting place (and, one may add, on its citizens by the narrowness of the English pub), so a country’s imperial predestination is the result not of its historic ambitions but of the physical character of the home it has decided to build for itself.

Empire may be contrary to everything we have planned and cherished. But if we did not want it, we ought to have organized ourselves in a manner that would have precluded it. We ought to have built a different house, as did the New Zealanders who were satisfied to live within the confines of a relatively small island world. Instead, we set out at the very beginning of our history to eliminate all restrictive boundaries and to create a country of such spread and wealth that, once its population had reached a certain density, it was doomed not only to become a great power but a power that could in the end have only one rival. We were an empire at birth.

Though it is true that we never wanted world dominion, it has been thrust upon us none the less. But what difference does it make to the foreign subjects of our new imperialism, how we got that way? As Tocqueville has said, our starting-point was different from that of Russia. We believed in liberty and they in servitude; we in the ploughshare and they in the sword. And the courses we followed were not the same. We acquired involuntarily and almost without our consent what the Russians acquired eagerly and with force. The nations of our side came by their own volition while those joining Moscow did so under duress. Yet, the results are identical. We find ourselves just as much in possession of one-half of the world as Russia is of the other. Our plan was to build an anti-empire. But anti-empire is empire, too, as we can see from the fact that the capital of this side of the Iron Curtain is not the seat of the United Nations but Washington. This is where the statesmen of the free world go to pay their respects.

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<sup>2</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*. London: Oxford University Press, 1946, p.286-7.

### 3. Empire by Implication

If we still have illusions about the imperialistic implications of our power, few others have. Though joining us freely, they have long since discovered that, in spite of the huge material profits accruing to them, their partnership is not one of equality, and that there is only one nation which is truly free in this new arrangement, the imperial nation, the American.<sup>3</sup> This is why they give us the same mixture of hatred, abuse, and humility which subject peoples have at all times rendered their masters. They are humble because they cannot maintain their standards without our assistance. They hate us because they cannot have our assistance without taking our directions. And they abuse us because, in spite of the unchallenging facts of our empire, we have committed ourselves to retaining the fiction of their freedom and equality, not so much to respect *their* feelings as *ours*. For it is we who cannot believe that we have acquired an empire, not they. And it is we who were trained through our traditions to find no charm in the idea of an empire, not they who, overpowered by the proximity of imperialistic Russia, realized before us that their only alternative to absorption by the East was to place themselves under our protection. But what does protection mean except that the countries seeking it have become our protectorates?

By their own admission, once proud states such as France, Italy, Greece, or Yugoslavia exist only by our strength and grace. Unlike Great Britain, they have shown no disposition ever to try it the hard way again and do without our assistance which they demand not only for the future, and not only militarily, for their defence, but also economically, for the maintenance of their living standards. But what are countries so utterly and perpetually dependent on our support that they have practically written it into their constitution, other than our dependencies, our colonies?

Realizing this better than we do, they have lost no time in adjusting their policies. On the one hand, they treat us exactly as we want to be treated. They send us an unending stream of missions and personalities, calling us liberators and promising to be loyal to us, to consider our enemies as theirs, and to shun neutrality if war should come. When President Auriol of France visited Washington, the *New York Times* captioned its report: 'Head of Paris Regime Insists His Nation Will Shun Neutrality and Be Worthy U.S. Ally.'<sup>4</sup> But clearly, a country desiring to be worthy of any power other than itself can only do so if that power is its overlord. No French President could possibly commit his regime to a policy of worthiness of England without being accused of treason. Nor is it conceivable that an American President could promise that the United States would try its best to be worthy of France without being torn to shreds by our commentators and electorates. Worthiness of someone else indicates a purely one-way relationship of inferior to superior.

On the other hand, they pile upon us abuse in awareness, this time, less of their subjection than of the fact that we ourselves have not yet grasped the full impact of our domination. Whenever we make a step to withdraw from their political scene in accordance with our original illusion of having merely come to set them free, they tell us that we must be out of our minds. Instead of gratitude they show us insolence, and instead of releasing us from our contributions they threaten us in no uncertain terms that they will turn communist unless assistance is not only continued, but intensified, increased, speeded up, enjoying our malaise with the subtle sadism typical of those caught in hopeless subjection. They are almost clinical about it, as if it made no difference to themselves whether they are in our camp or in Moscow's, knowing that their continued adherence to the West is infinitely more important to us than to them. And they are right, in a way. While practically 100 per cent of Americans are interested in seeing Italy, for example, on this side of the great divide, only 60 per cent of Italians are.

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<sup>3</sup> Illustrating this sentiment, the conservative Paris weekly *Le Monde* of 12 June 1951, writes for instance the following on the Atlantic Treaty structure: 'The fundamental inequality of the alliance is turning it more and more into a hidden protectorate in which protestations of national pride are not enough to compensate for a growing enslavement. The Roman Empire had its citizens, its allies, and its foreigners. The new empire has its allies of the first zone (the Americans), its allies of the second zone (the British), and its continental protégés: in spite of all their haughtiness, the latter are becoming to an ever-increasing extent the Filipinos of the Atlantic.'

<sup>4</sup> *New York Times*, 30 March 1951.

But why should we, in Washington, feel it a threat to our interests if an allegedly independent Italy should decide to turn communist unless she has actually become a part of our defence system from which we cannot let her go even if we wanted because the only alternative open to her would be to join the defence system of our rival empire? However, if Italy lies within our defence system, our own boundaries must lie in Italy. This means that, whatever we may declare, subconsciously and by implication we consider her as one of our dominions, free to choose her own road only within the limits of our pleasure. And the same is true of all other countries this side of the Iron Curtain. To realize this, we need only scan the headlines of our newspapers and magazines which, in their condensed form, give frequently a sharper picture of an article's true significance than the article they try to summarize. Thus the *New Leader*, a great liberal publication and certainly the last to endorse imperialistic ambitions, carried the following titles indicative of the advent of our empire in a number of recent issues: 'The Proconsul of Japan'; 'Only America Can Save France'; 'Turkey, Mid-East Bastion'.<sup>5</sup> Whose bastion? Certainly not of Belgium or Italy, neither of whom would spend a penny on its fortification. It is the bastion of the organism whose nerve centre is Washington. Since a bastion must lie within and not outside one's orbit of power, Turkey is thus by implication considered as inside the American orbit. But an orbit larger than a nation's boundaries is not a national but an imperial orbit. Only empire can stretch beyond one's country.

#### 4. Empire by Attitude

However, even within our own ranks the awareness of empire is no longer just a subconscious apprehension creeping into headlines without registering on our minds. Those of our officials who, by virtue of their position, have come into direct contact with it, show already all the symptoms of *conscious* overlordship, leading to such critical pronouncements as General Eisenhower's remark regarding the civilian leaders of Western European countries: 'I don't think, sometimes, the politicians do too good a job',<sup>6</sup> or to such last-ditch counter-attacks as the protest of Canada's Secretary of External Affairs, Mr. Lester B. Pearson, who proclaimed the 'easy and automatic relations' with the United States a 'thing of the past', and emphasized that Canadians were 'not willing to be merely an echo of somebody else'.<sup>7</sup> Maybe they are not willing, but they will hardly be able to change the relentless logic of historic development.

Many other incidents illustrate this trend. In fact, whenever in recent years a foreign country has gone too far in insisting on the exercise of sovereign power it once had but now no longer possesses, our statesmen have shown no hesitation in setting the record straight and, as a rule, have done this in even blunter terms than was evident in General Eisenhower's gentle rapping of politicians whose supposed task is to please their domestic electorates, not an American general.

Thus, when Israel bombed a few border settlements in a reprisal raid against Syria in April 1951, neither the United Nations, nor Paris, nor London took any particular notice. But Washington sent her immediately a stern 'rebuke' without bothering for an instant about the minor legal technicality that it had no authority over actions of nations living 5,000 miles away on the distant eastern shores of the Mediterranean.<sup>8</sup> A similar rebuke, though for different reasons, was sent to Italy after she had announced with a flush of pride that she had succeeded in balancing her budget of 1950. Although she hoped thereby to have given evidence of her wise use of American aid, she did not realize that the idea of a balanced budget had long ago ceased to be a sign of a flourishing public household in the United States. So, instead of receiving the expected compliments, she was surprised to see a minor ECA official arrive in Rome and deliver a stern lecture on the Keynesian principles of deficit spending together with a warning that, another balanced budget, and she would find herself struck off the list of American aid recipients. There

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<sup>5</sup> *New Leader*, 19 March 1951, 25 December 1950, 5 March 1951.

<sup>6</sup> *New York Times*, 20 September 1951.

<sup>7</sup> *New York Times*, 11 April 1951.

<sup>8</sup> *New York Times*, 10 April 1951.

was nothing left for the half-stunned and half-delighted Italian government but to accept the master's rebuke and promptly run up the required deficit.

An even sterner lesson was given Greece when her government had quite sensibly decided to buy a yacht for the king in order to relieve the drab misery of the people by investing at least their representative with a bit of the glamour and cheer they cannot have themselves. This is one of the great functions of a royal court, as the British have so well demonstrated during the long years of unbroken austerity. Yet our embassy officials, having been raised on a different diet, and never having experienced the emotional starvation that accompanies material misery, got so mad at this alleged provocation not of Greece's but, as they so characteristically asserted, America's public opinion that the embarrassed government of Athens had no alternative than to repent, vow chastity, and cancel a purchase in which not a single American dollar was involved.<sup>9</sup>

But the outstanding enforcement of our imperial will on foreign countries was directed at Great Britain who, after all, is still an almost-great power in her own right. Yet, when she decided to withhold support from the American sponsored United Nations resolution declaring communist China an aggressor because this was in line with her own public opinion rather than ours, and reflected the judgement of the leaders chosen by the English rather than us, she was immediately put under such massive pressure that she, too, had to go the road of submission. And what was our weapon? An atom bomb? No! The simple threat of *catastrophic* consequences on the public opinion of the American people who is master of many but is mastered by none. We let everybody go his own way except in the case of conflicting interests. Then it is *our* choice and interpretation that counts, not anybody else's, not even that of an international authority, as was shown by the blustering Senator of a charming cartoon. Pleading fervently for American adherence to an International Court of Justice, he proclaims in zestful imperial style: 'As we have never lost a war, so shall we never lose a case.' We never shall.

### 5. Empire by Sacrifice

But the American Empire manifests itself not only by our implied or deliberate behaviour as unchallengeable rulers. It shows itself also in the burden it carries. As it is an empire of domination, it is also an empire of sacrifice. And it is here, at least, where it seems to be different from the empire of the Russians. Unlike the latter, we meet the principal cost of defending our sphere of influence not through our satellites but by our own efforts. While Russia fought the Korean war by not participating officially in it at all and letting the Chinese do most of the dying, we were in it up to our necks. Though we called it a United Nations war, the armies involved, even those of other countries, were equipped with material not from the United Nations but the United States, and the soldiers dying were in the main American soldiers, not those of the agency in whose name their battles were fought, as the following breakdown of casualty figures issued in April 1951 indicated:

United States	57,120
Turkey	1,169
United Kingdom	892
France	396
Australia	265
The Netherlands	112
Siam	108
Greece	89
Canada	68
The Philippines	55
New Zealand	9
South Africa	6
Belgium	0
Luxembourg	0

<sup>9</sup> *New York Times*, 8 June 1951.

By April 1951 the United States, with a population of 150 million, had thus suffered 57,120 casualties, while all other participants on our side, with a combined population of 220 million (not counting Korea,<sup>10</sup> a non-member, nor the non-participating members of the United Nations) had suffered only 3,169. No American public opinion would have put up with such a stupendously unequal distribution of sacrifice were it not for the fact that it really reflected quite faithfully the distribution of interests involved.

As we carry the principal share of the cost of our imperial consolidation militarily, we do so also economically. While the Russians snatch from the larders of their satellites whatever passes their hungry vision, we fill those of ours with an unending stream of commodities drawn from our own store houses. While the empire of the Soviets is depressing the potentially higher living standards of its subject nations to the low level of its master race, we are raising the low and declining standards of our dependencies to the relatively still high level to which we ourselves are accustomed. Wherever we arrive, we come laden with the products of our ploughshare rather than the might of our sword.

And it is, indeed, this particular circumstance that illustrates the main difference in the manner in which Russians and Americans organize their respective empires. We proceed with seduction where the others use force. We assimilate the world through our goods, the others through their ideology. While the unity of the East is brought about by every Czech, Russian, or Chinese becoming a communist, the unity of the West is created by every Frenchman, Dutchman, or Italian becoming an American. This is preferable, I presume, but it spells national extinction for the peoples concerned all the same. We may say that, as Americans, they will at least be free, but so will all Czechs or Chinese once they have become convinced communists. Assimilation does not destroy freedom. It makes it meaningless.

It is thus in *our* sign, not in Europe's, that Europeans are assimilated and united. If their armies already look like a common instrument, it is not because they have developed common *European* features, and placed themselves under common *European* commanders. It is because they are all beginning to use *American* material and to follow *American* commanders. Similarly, if the differences in their habits and tastes are already visibly withering away, it is not because of their common appreciation of everything European but because of the common interest in everything American. Their new unity is a product of the U.S.A. It is not Italian Chianti, French Burgundy, Danish Akvavit, or German beer which bring them together. In fact, these keep them distinguishable and apart. What brings them together is that they are all developing a fatal taste for Coca-Cola. Though this is the most harmless symbol of American life, it is so significant of our soft-drink approach to empire-building in contrast to the strong-arm method of Russia that the irate Frenchmen have come to consider their liberty more endangered by this than anything else, and have given it the appropriate name of *coca-colonization*. They have long realized that a bottle of coke, or any other commodity so lavishly bestowed upon them at the slightest gesture of supplication, is as formidable a weapon of assimilation as a sword, and even more dangerous. For, while everybody resents a sword and the pain it inflicts, most everyone will eventually succumb to the gentle drug effect of a coke. We just need to put it on their table and, in time, they will reach for it by themselves. But whoever begins to drink of it will, at the last stage of the process, cease to be an Italian, Frenchman, or German, and become, spiritually at least, an American.

And this is what Europeans and many others at this moment are doing anyway. American products, ideas, tastes, advisers, and generals have become their only common denominator, and the only union they will have will be a union under the flag of American merchandise and the United States. This is why a country such as Syria, still trying to escape the whirlpool of coca-colonization, defiantly announced, though nobody had invited her to it, that she would not apply for Point Four aid for fear that Western imperialist penetration might be imposed on her in the form of gift parcels. How right she was could be seen from the slightly hurt manner in which *Time* drew the following 'lesson for the U.S.':

'It is not enough to offer aid to backward peoples; the U.S. *must* also *persuade* their rulers to use the assistance for their countries' *true* benefit or *find men who will co-operate* with the U.S. That is a very difficult job, at which the U.S. so far has been notably unsuccessful;

<sup>10</sup> The casualties suffered by South Korea during the same period according to *Time* of 9 April 1951, amounted to 168,652.

but unless it is done, and *done well*, U.S. plans for help to backward lands will be doomed to failure.’<sup>11</sup>

The italics are mine. But the concentrated dose of a behind-the-Iron Curtain sort of vocabulary advocating everything from forceful persuasion to the finding of men willing to co-operate and understanding correctly the true benefits in store for them is that of *Time*, an American magazine of singular influence. Even the languages of American and Russian imperialism are beginning to sound alike in their pontifical interpretation of what is and what is not a *true* benefit.

## 6. The Two United Nations

Thus, wherever we look we see the unmistakable evidence that the globe has not only been split into two political halves, but that the two halves are beginning to develop, for different purposes and with different methods, almost identical features. Both are consolidating around two heartlands, and both take the form of empires composed of giant central powers and a defensive ring of satellites. The two ultimate blocks will therefore not be Russia and the United Nations, but Russia and the United States.

One needs to be no Tocqueville to see this coming since the conditions described have already arrived. This is why I cannot see why we should continue to resist a destiny which is ours even though we did not want it, and to reject the implications of an empire engulfing us on all sides simply because, as one of my students put it with the most desolately sour face I have seen, ‘empire is such an ugly word’. This may be so but, unless we take a more outspoken and positive attitude towards it, we shall either become a nation of hypocrites or of neurotics, and still not gain the approval which we seem so pathetically to crave. Many peoples have had empire and, instead of flagellating themselves, enjoyed it thoroughly. Why should not we? Whether we enjoy it or not, we shall still have it and, what is worse, be accused of aspiring to it even if we had it not. This does not mean that I *advocate* empire. I advocate a world of little states. But we *have* empire, and what I advocate is consequently not the possession of what we do not have, but the enjoyment of what we possess. If we have measles, we can just as well enjoy them. For if we do not, we shall still have measles.

But what about the United Nations? Are not at least *they* a sign that our half of the globe will be different from that of the Russians, and develop into a world of free associates after all? Why should we otherwise adhere to them with such increasing faith and enthusiasm? Indeed, why should we? Obviously because we are discovering them increasingly as what they are, the cloak and tool of our imperial domination. This is why our first truly popular enthusiasm for their existence coincided with the outbreak of the Korean war into which they were led not by their but our determination. Up to that time we were more inclined to consider them as a tool of Russian obstruction, which they probably would still be had not Russia unwisely just then obstructed a bit too emphatically by not attending meetings. That gave us the first chance of turning them into an instrument of our own policy, and our instrument they have remained ever since. As *Washington Banktrends*, a realistic and unsentimental business news feature service, put it:

‘This nation is, apparently, cast for a heroic role in world affairs. To lead and police the world will be costly, bringing many changes. For example, a permanent munitions industry will be developed. . . It is a new kind of economy into which this nation is turning. It is the economy of world power, with world defence commitments of a permanent nature. With permanent arms and munitions will come, too, large standing armies and navies and air forces. Some form of the draft on a permanent basis is inevitable to support this heroic role in world politics. The subterfuge of a United Nations organization may serve to ease the transition period for those who find it hard to face the realities, but the burden of all accomplishment will be on the United States.’<sup>12</sup>

There is no reason to shed any tears about this apparent collapse of a great ideal because the United Nations never were such a great ideal in the first place. Though originally not meant to be the instrument

<sup>11</sup> *Time*, 18 June 1951.

<sup>12</sup> *Washington Banktrends*. Washington News Features, Washington 5, D.C., 5 January 1953.

of our imperial consolidation, they were not meant to be an instrument of the free nations either. Had this been their intent, they ought to have refrained from adopting the undemocratic veto principle or from turning the Security Council into a preserve of the great powers whose claim to their position of privilege rests not on wisdom but might. The best one could thus ever say of this great ideal was that it was a tool not of the free but of the big, and that, while not meant to foster the empire of one, it was designed under the 'subterfuge' of democratic verbiage to secure in perpetuity the empire of five.

The important thing, however, is that, even if the original intentions of the founders of the United Nations had been as idealistic as they appeared to be, the subsequent development would still have been the same. We have seen in analysing similar experiments that no international organization has ever succeeded in remaining an institution of free and equal associates if it had amongst its participants a few disproportionately large powers. If this was the case, the result was political cancer. And the consequences were always the same. Wherever it was attempted, the struggle for leadership amongst its principal members began almost with the instant the organization was set up, ending only after one of the two finalists had either been subdued or expelled. If the rivals were of such overwhelming and almost equal power as Prussia and Austria were in the pre-Bismarck German federation, or as the United States and Russia are now in the United Nations, the subjection of one was, of course, impossible. The only alternative to an internal collapse of the organism itself was then expulsion, with the rump organization gradually but inevitably becoming the instrument of the surviving great power within its frame.

As shown before, the latter variety of federal destruction occurred in the confederation of German states which, after the expulsion of Austria in 1866, became the instrument of Prussia. But it is so clearly shaping up also in the case of the United Nations that we have begun to consider them as the principal agent of the non-Russian or American half of the world though Russia is actually still one of their members. The only thing left for the latter is to ratify her already spiritual expulsion by withdrawing also materially. Russia has threatened this already, and it depends only on her timing when she will ring down the Iron Curtain for good.

But what then? Even her participation on the losing side has given Russia such an understanding of the advantage of a multinational sounding-board that she will hardly be content with a simple act of withdrawal. Rather, she will in all likelihood couple her official secession with the simultaneous announcement of the establishment of a United Nations of her own, an organization, this time, of *truly* free and democratic peoples, feeling *correctly* about every issue, and choosing as their new headquarters Leningrad which happens to be within as convenient a radius from Moscow as the headquarters of the Western United Nations is from Washington. As a result, we shall probably have two United Nations instead of one and, instead of looking different and decent with ours, we shall have just one more thing in common with the empire of the East.

This, then, is the prospective shape of the world in the near future. As the consolidation process advances, the two empires of East and West will dress themselves up as two liberal United Nations organizations. But their sole function will be limited in either case to serving their imperial masters as a convenient stage on which the mighty can perform in their favourite role as the humble. In contrast to the present United Nations, neither Russia nor the United States will claim any privilege in the succeeding arrangements in the form of a now meaningless veto power or a permanent big-power membership in the various councils. On the contrary! Instead of occupying seats of honour, they will be conspicuously satisfied with the places assigned to them by order of the alphabet. Insisting on the equality of all, they will permit the delegates of even the smallest country to orate volubly or slap them chummily on their backs. Their presidency will rotate, and their Assemblies will be like the Senate of ancient Rome where Caesar could prove how he was just another modest member of that exalted body, begging his colleagues to go along with him on this or that, provided of course that this suited the majesty of their will to which he was at all times ready to bow. Yet, as nobody in Roman times was fooled by the display of Caesar's gorgeous humility, no one in our time will be fooled by the role assigned to the various United Nations. Like the Roman Senate, they will be but bodies sitting in some famous piece of architecture with the privilege of hearing and accepting with proper laudatory remarks the decisions handed down to them from their true masters in Moscow or Washington, as the case may be.

There will be other similarities with ancient Rome, that great pioneer in elaborating devices of imperial domination. Russia has already begun to experiment with them by extending the chief right of her hemisphere - membership in the great councils of communism - to prominent personalities from satellite countries. Similarly, we shall soon begin conferring on deserving foreigners the chief right of our part of the world - American citizenship. Our first choice will be foreign heads of state, members of government, politicians, and soldiers willing to fight in our armies. As a next step, along with our citizenship, we shall grant not only the personal privilege but the *ex-officio* right to outstanding foreign representatives to address during their visits to the United Nations headquarters in New York also the true centre of power, the American Congress. Trends to that effect are already clearly discernible. Eventually, to the most deserving of them all, we shall grant membership in our Senate until they will some day realize that they are ruling their respective countries no longer by virtue of their domestic election but on account of their confirmation as senators of the United States. When this stage is reached, we may even decide to do away with the label United Nations for our own imperial system and simply call it the United States.

Thus, as Rome turned the world Roman by extending in ever-broadening waves of imperial generosity her citizenship to increasingly distant peoples, so we shall turn our part of the world American by an identical process.<sup>13</sup> Only Americans will have the full privileges of freedom, but this will not mean much as practically everybody will be an American citizen. A similar condition will be brought about on the Russian side with the single peculiarity that its common denominator will be an ideology rather than a nationality. But even this will not make us look very different if we realize that communism is not only the *natural* system of huge organisms but the *only* system by which they can maintain themselves. Hugeness, as we have seen, needs conscious direction, supervision, control, obedience, conformity, efficiency, standardization, discipline, alikeness in habit and thought, unity, centralism - all concepts which in their sum constitute the essence and operating basis of socialism. Our empire being as huge as Russia's, and requiring the same continuous state of preparedness, will need as much centralization and direction and, though we may call our brand anti-communism or, perhaps, the mood of the age, it will be communism just the same. Thus, a time will come when the two halves of the world, organized along such different roads, will be identical in everything but their name. And the reason for it will be the same which is responsible for the fact that the only thing looking exactly like the North Pole is its very opposite - the South Pole. And this will be the end of the process of consolidation.

### 7. War, World State, and a World of Little States

But it will not be the end of the story. The result of the coexistence of the two ultimate power blocks of Russia and the United States will be war. Not because one party would now want to conquer the other. On the contrary. The two survivors of the elimination process of great power will be the most pathetically genuine addicts to the peace of the world which history will have known up till then. They will feel that only madness could plunge them into the final catastrophe whose shadow will paralyse their thoughts with a perpetual fog of fear. True, only madness could under these circumstances lead to war. But the constant fear and terror of the other's potential if not of his intentions will drive the sanest mad. In

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<sup>13</sup> Gibbon has given us an excellent description of the imperceptible Romanization of the ancient world through the same device by which both the United States and Russia are assimilating their respective dominions at the present time - by the colonization of previous allies sweetened by the simultaneous extension of citizenship. Those princes', he writes, 'whom the ostentation of gratitude or generosity permitted for a while to hold a precarious sceptre were dismissed from their thrones, as soon as they had performed their appointed task of fashioning to the yoke the vanquished nations. The free states and cities which had embraced the cause of Rome were rewarded with a nominal alliance, and insensibly sunk into real servitude. The public authority was everywhere exercised by the ministers of the senate and of the emperors, and that authority was absolute and without control. But the same salutary maxims of government, which had secured the peace and obedience of Italy, were extended to the most distant conquests. A nation of Romans was gradually formed in the provinces by the double expedient of introducing colonies, and of admitting the most faithful and deserving of the provincials to the freedom of Rome.' (Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. I, chapter 2, p. 35.)

alignments of such proportions, no human force can control the power the two ultimate antagonists will possess, and never surrender because neither will ever be able to trust the other.

So, unless the two empires will by some miraculous reason disintegrate as a result of the gigantic dimensions of their own efforts, the inevitable will occur. The mass of power accumulated on either side at a near critical volume will, somewhere, some time, touch the other, and detonate with the dreaded spontaneity of an atomic explosion.

The ensuing war may last a week, a month, or a century. Whatever its length, it will have only one survivor. This survivor will at last establish that monstrous ideal of our desolate planners, purchased to no purpose at such monstrous a price-the world state, the empire of total unity, conformity, and peace. Being an American, I have the hopeful presentiment that it will be American though this will mean no more to its eventual citizens than it meant to the latter-day Romans that many of their ancestors were defeated Carthaginians who once hoped to unite the world under their own sign. Man has the tendency to take to every nationality or ideology imposed upon him with sufficient determination and, as the multitude of flourishing political systems show, can be happy under almost any of them - which, though not to his credit, is his salvation.

We shall then, at long last, have the One World which has been prophesied with such enthusiasm. However, no authority could be powerful enough to keep it together for any length of time if the component great nations such as the German, English, Italian, or French were left intact, even if placed under the rule of the most reliably loyal proconsuls. Too soon, old powers would regain strength and challenge the central authority, however great it may be. As a result, the surviving empire, confronted with the task of administering the entire globe from a single control tower and without the balancing and containing effect of a great rival, will have to do what every other world power has done from the Persians, the Romans, and the Catholic Church, to Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Hitler. It will have to apply the principle of division to its great remaining national blocks, and cut them into units small enough to be governed without the necessity of a ruinously expensive executive instrument. In other words, the world state of total unity, if it wants to survive longer than the decade of its bloody act of birth, will have to recreate the very thing it may have imagined it had destroyed for ever - a world of small units, a world of little states.

Consequently, the conclusions of this study will, I hope, after all not be considered as so frivolous, destructive, and negative as they may have appeared when I suggested in Chapter XI, in the only word which it contains, that the principles of division and the small unit, which I had elaborated in the ten preceding chapters, would not be applied. They will be applied, though unfortunately not before but after another great-power war, and not for the sake of freedom but of rule. But they will be applied by the ultimate world state irrespective whether this be Russia or the United States.

However, since nothing is ultimate in this ever-changing creation, one may safely carry Tocqueville's predictions or, rather, deductions a step or two further and state that, whatever comes, the ultimate world state will go the road of all other ultimate world states of history. After a period of dazzling vitality, it will spend itself. There will be no war to bring about its end. It will not explode. Like the ageing colossi of the stellar universe, it will gradually collapse internally, leaving as its principal contribution to posterity its fragments, the little states - until the consolidation process of big power development starts all over again. This is not pleasant to anticipate. What is pleasant, however, is the realization that, in the intervening period between the intellectual ice ages of great-power domination, history will in all likelihood repeat itself and the world, little and free once more, will experience another of those spells of cultural greatness which characterized the small-state worlds of the Middle Ages and Ancient Greece.