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## THE DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN

The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace—Ex. 4:14.

THE complex and difficult resolutions tentatively formulated by Mr. H. G. Wells for public debate, have for their ultimate object the replacement of the existing chaotic political, economic and social conditions by a new world order. For the achievement of this very laudable and the most desirable object, he has invented a new machinery called the Declaration of the Rights of Man, somewhat analogous to its great historical forbears. It will be remembered in this connection that the Red Swede, Miles Bjornstam in Main Street once declared, "I am about the only man in Johnson County that remembers the joker in the Declaration of Independence about Americans being supposed to have the right to 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness'." We are perfectly prepared to believe that Mr. Wells and the eminent gentlemen associated with him, who propose to embark upon the somewhat perilous adventure of evolving permanent peace and harmony among mankind, do not themselves suffer from any malignant taint of national passions and prejudices, and that they possess the manly gifts of an international mind and universal sympathy, capable of seeing inspired visions of the lost Paradise, which, by the zealous and solid co-operation of the

forward nations, they evidently hope to recapture and plant somewhere in Europe or America, radiating sweet love and divine contentment to the remote corners of the world. But surely none of the sponsors of this new movement can have any reasonable faith in the objective existence of a Paradise, which, they know only too well, resides in the human heart, from which, however, it has been successfully banished by war-minded religions, pestiferous imperialistic impulses and the most baneful racial ideologies, together forming the most impious products of our sublime culture and competitive civilization. In the prefatory note setting forth the aims and objects of his new Declaration, Mr. Wells in his inimitable cheerful optimism explains that, if the mental confusion and political incompetence of the existing governments were removed, the advent of universal peace and lasting happiness would be rendered easy and natural, provided their foundation is laid on the decalogue he has propounded.

We admire Mr. Wells' courage. We honour his conviction. He has set before himself and his colleagues a task which would have shockingly baffled the great Founder of the official religion of their country. However, the world will bless them, if they succeed in assembling under a single white tent all the nations, peacefully and lovingly eating the fat of the land and drinking the dew of heaven, without baring their teeth at each other like belligerent rats. Everyone will agree with Mr. Wells when he says that we must fight against all that Hitler stands for,—violence, cruelty, bad faith, implacable aggression,—and that we must put in its place "a world and nothing less than a world at peace, where men can be

free, without fear and so on". The appearance of Mr. Wells in his new character as a politico-ethical evangelist is explained by the fact that he claimed for the novel the powers of regenerating mankind, which he expressed thus, "it is to be the social mediator, the vehicle of understanding, the instrument of self-examination, the parade of morals and the exchange of manners". Where the politician has failed, perhaps the novelist may still succeed. His efforts must be supported by the energy and enthusiasm of all men and women, who approve of his resolutions in their present or in their amended form, though novelists like politicians are men and not giants.

We are not quite sure about the potency of the Declaration of the Rights of Man as a preventive machinery against dangers to international relations, or as an article of social faith for the establishment of non-violence, goodwill, tranquillity and economic progress. The word "Rights" generally implies prerogatives, privileges and immunities, and the individual, social and civic "Rights" have always an astonishingly awkward tendency to transform themselves into the "Rights" of States and Communities, thus giving rise to the principal classes of cases in economic competition in which governments intervene. If we trace the origin of human troubles, we shall discover that they began when primitive man first conceived the idea of possessing things exclusively, and developed the notion of defending his possession as a "Right" and of extending further aggrandisement also as a "Right". The significance and value of "Rights" are purely biological concepts, and their application as an ethical doctrine in the social and political spheres is always understood with consider-

able mental reservation. Far more fundamental to the cause which Mr. Wells and his supporters have proposed to establish, must be a clearer, a deeper and a more humane perception, and an intuitive practice of our duties and obligations toward our fellow-men, more than toward ourselves. Mr. Wells, wearing the wreath of literary supremacy with Mr. Bernard Shaw, is reputed to be a prophet, and it is therefore inexplicable why he has formulated the Declaration of the Rights of Man, while he and every man capable of thinking rationally and justly, must recognise the supreme need for a Proclamation of the Services of Man. How do individuals and nations exercise their rights? Is it or is it not a fact that in endeavouring to use and protect our rights we pretty nearly succeed in restricting the rights of others? Do not nations feel triumphant if, after considerable diplomatic exchanges and political negotiations, they finally succeed in either circumscribing or subordinating the rights of other nations? Do individuals and nations instinctively recognise and maintain the sanctity of their duties and obligations to each other? The fact is that in the case of "Rights", it is exhilarating to claim and protect special interests; whereas in the case of "Duties and Obligations", it is apt to be painful to practise the universalism of Christ. Between "Rights" and "Duties" there is a world of difference, and this difference explains the saying, "In this world there is tribulation."

It seems to us that the principal reason why we emphasise rights is because the spirit of Jehovah is still firmly ingrained in the heart of Christendom, and also because the tyranny of a mechanical civiliza-

tion has subordinated the spiritual values of human relations. We are not convinced that, after centuries of religious teaching and educational influence, the human mind has become sufficiently righteous, meek and pacific to resist the temptation of abusing individual and national rights. In drafting the clause relating to personal freedom, Mr. Wells observes, "there again I admit difficulties. They centre upon the idea of conscription. It may be objected to the draft Declaration as a whole that it says much about rights and nothing about duties. It may be true that any one, who observes the rights of others to the full extent of the Declaration, has already undertaken very considerable obligations, but that does not dispose completely of this objection". There is an enormous mass of human document in the form of treaties, conventions and understandings establishing national goodwill and cordial relations, besides the Commandments and Injunctions of revealed religions, proclaiming the doctrine of the brotherhood of man and of universal love, and we have witnessed how in the past everyone of these articles of good faith, fellow-feeling and personal rights has been prosperously infringed or circumvented, throwing back society into barbarism and into the worshipping of the Golden Calf. Mr. Wells has not disclosed to us the authority which he proposes to invoke for the due and general observance of his new Declaration, but, if he relies on his ten clauses being received with open arms by mankind as a new Gospel for their temporal salvation, and on their being loyally and cheerfully followed without transgression, for at least a reasonable period, we are afraid that he is making too great a demand upon human nature,

There is a cartoon forming the frontispiece to *The Potwell Inn*, in which the figure is portrayed in the heavy panoply of a knight-errant, holding a mop instead of a lance. If we add a goose-quill to its accoutrements, the caricature might then come nearest to expressing Mr. Wells' present intention, of sweeping away the accumulated wrongs of the world and writing a new charter of human liberties, rights and peace. It would almost seem that the Gods in planning our existence, have deliberately mixed it up with strife and low cunning.

And Isaac interested the Lord for his wife, because she was barren, and the Lord was ~~interested~~ of him, and Rebekah, his wife, conceived. And the children struggled together within her, and she said, if it be so, why am I thus. And she went to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels, and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger.

The Lord blessed Jacob. He became the founder of modern diplomacy and science. In the Gospel according to St. John, we read that

The Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables.

Even that monumental Embodiment of Love could, in moments of grave provocation, lose temper and take the law into his own hands. Does Mr. Wells suppose that under the dispensation of his new Declaration the world is going to enjoy uninterrupted peace? Practically in all religions, the Lord is

conceived as blood-thirsty, either directly engaged in conflicts, or assisting and encouraging His beloved people to wage war, "for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God".

Before the Israelites were led by Moses from Rameses to Succoth, the Lord enjoined him to "speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold and raiment". The Lord proceeded to give the Israelites "favour in the sight of the Egyptians so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians". There was a manifest need for the Ten Commandments thereafter.

"A world and nothing but a world at Peace" is mere rhetoric, or is a world reduced to the grey level of scientific dullness, and in the very nature of things we can hardly conceive its advent, though the ideal may be both desirable and necessary. The immediate object of Mr. Wells would, however, appear to be to secure for every man protection against the perils arising from individuals or from Governments, and for every nation, a reasonable measure of assurance to achieve its own destiny, freed from external intervention. In discussing measures for the attainment of this reasonable object, we often ignore the fundamental fact that human mind is incalculable and erratic, for it is really composed of separate layers, belonging to different epochs of its evolution, the animal, the savage, the childish and the civilized strata. The first is our inheritance, the second the race has passed through, the third a sort of mixture of the first two. which every individual

## ERRATA

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Editorial Article, p. 106, first quotation:

*For* "And Isaac interested" *read* "And Isaac intreated".

*For* "the Lord was interested" *read* "the Lord was intreated".

experiences, and the fourth is superimposed by the Church, the School and the Society. The extent of the existence and the degree of the activity of the first three layers necessarily depend on the strength and stability of the uppermost crust. In times of stress and crisis, the topmost bed often cracks; and we know the results. Before we proceed to discuss the practicability or otherwise of Mr. Wells' clauses, we must know how he and his distinguished colleagues propose to consolidate this very shaky top layer of the human mind into a Maginot line, withstanding the quakes of the subterranean strata. The foundation of Mr. Wells' Declaration is, in the last resort, the human mind, and, before he sets out to achieve moral harmony in the world, he must assure himself of three things: a deeper understanding based on the knowledge of life should develop sincerity of will; this sincerity of will must purify the heart; and this loving heart must spiritualise personal life. The path to individual freedom and to national peace does not lie through self-righteousness, though it be anointed with "a pound of ointment of spikenard", but lies in our capacity to own mistakes, to compromise differences, and above all rigidly to practise the doctrine, "do unto others as you would be done by". Mr. Wells' Declaration has not vitality enough to survive another international shock, and his resolutions are not likely to dissipate the causes which produce conflicts. We are all convinced that the present campaign against Germany is just and moral, and that the victory of the Allies is absolutely necessary for the independence and sovereign rights of all the smaller European States, and that all the forces of "civilization" should be mobilised for the

final overthrow of the spirit of aggression. The Allies hope that the termination of the present war will witness the birth of a new era of uninterrupted peace in the international life of Europe, and possibly Mr. Wells' Declaration is intended to pave the way for its inauguration. We shall co-operate.

Do the ten clauses drafted by Mr. Wells provide a basis for testing the preparedness of the world to receive the message contained in them? Students of contemporary political history must be aware of Clarence Streit's *Union Now* in which, after analysing the causes for the failure of the League of Nations, he has reached the conclusion, "that the only chance for the survival of the world as we know it and as it might be, would be pooling of some part of National Sovereignty and the eventual growth of a universal system of World Government which would be invincible against aggression and which would help against all economic and racial barriers". In examining the proposals for the establishment of a World Federal Union, the Marquess of Lothian in his book, *Ending of Armageddon*, has drawn attention to the principal difficulties of a coalition between totalitarianism and democracy, the national pride in giving up National Sovereignty, and the colonial problems involving the political and economic control over other people. The politico-economic doctrines which we have drafted below would, in our judgment, constitute a measure of the willingness of nations to consider them as the basis for evolving a new code of international morality, and the first step in this direction must obviously be a complete demilitarization of religion and the annihilation of the war-mindedness of politicians.

1. We will share on an equitable basis the raw materials of the world in common with other nations, and will always abide by the decisions once accepted honourably by ourselves and the members of the Federation.

2. We will scrupulously respect the religions, customs, manners and other social practices and ceremonial rituals of every group or community of people to whatever cultural level they may belong, and we agree that interference with their right to follow their own observances, shall entail forfeiture of further participation on our part in the benefits of the Federation. We will seek the aid of liberal education rather than that of religion in reforming such practices as *sati*, human sacrifice and head-hunting.

3. We will interfere with the politics of no country, big or small: we respect its sovereign right to enjoy any form of government it may choose; where, however, its activities are apprehended to threaten the integrity of the Federation, the other members shall agree to join in imposing an economic boycott on the offending nation.

4. We will hold no community in economic or political subjection or vassalage, to whatever colour and civilization they may belong: we will agree to develop the material resources of any country and to organise its industrial possibilities only when invited to do so, and that strictly on a contract basis, without creating vested interests.

5. We will relinquish all exclusive privileges in respect of the great trade routes of the world, which shall be free for all, and which shall be jointly protected and maintained strictly for mercantile and traffic purposes, and which shall not be allowed to be used for carrying fighting vessels of any description.

6. We will export our industrial and agricultural products on the basis of a

voluntary understanding between ourselves and the importing country, refraining from producing goods far in excess of home consumption so as to obviate trade rivalries and business competition.

7. We will spend out of our public revenues such sums as may be required only on those implements which may be employed for the preservation of domestic peace and order, and we solemnly bind ourselves to eschew all armaments capable of being employed against other nations.

8. We will acquire no fresh territory, except such vacant and uninhabited tracts as may be freely and willingly assigned to us by the unanimous consent of the Federation, in order to provide for our increasing demands. The boundaries limiting such grants shall on no account be infringed by us, and such countries shall not be used for extending our sphere of influence into the neighbouring territories.

9. We will establish a Federal Bank for controlling international currency, credit and exchange, and the Bank shall have power to refuse credit to any power infringing the articles of the Federation or engaging in a conflict with another federating member.

10. We will re-shape, re-adapt and re-construct our respective economic, industrial, racial, religious, cultural, social and political life in accordance with the general aims and purposes for which we establish the Federation, and in the process of re-arrangement we will so order individual life that, while it maintains absolute yet restrained freedom in all spheres of its activity, it is deprived of its potency for aggression abroad and terrorism within.

11. We will give up all existing monopolies and tariffs; we will relinquish our rights to hold colonies, dependencies, protectorates and mandated territories: we will arrange them on a fresh basis of

equity and justice such as may be determined by the Federation, subject to the doctrine of self-determination on the part of the colonies, dependencies, protectorates and mandated territories.

12. We will refer to the plenary session of the Federation all those classes of cases where international disturbances may be apprehended, such as, population problems, commercial policies, credit, currency and capital problems, transportation and raw material problems, diplomacy in relation to political and economic relations, political and social upheavals arising from dangerous ideologies and their reactions. We will uphold the supreme authority of the Federation in the settlement of these and other related problems, whose power

to enforce its decision shall reside in the willingness of other members to boycott the offender socially, economically and politically.

We are perfectly aware that we are not sufficiently pure at heart and meek in spirit even to look at any of these propositions, but we do not anticipate a better fate for Mr. Wells' Declaration of the Rights of Man. We have put forward the raw material out of which the legal and constitutional authorities might produce the general framework of a World Federation for discussion at a constituent assembly of the representatives of nations, after the happy termination of the war.

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## BARODA STATE FISHERIES

**THE** *Annual Report of the Department of Fisheries, Baroda State*, deals with the history of the fishery activities in the State from 1909, but it was not till 1936 that a Department of Fisheries was established and Mr. S. T. Moses appointed its Director in September 1937. Though the *Report* under review is full of details and constructive proposals, it is essentially of the nature of a preliminary report indicating the present state of fisheries of Baroda, the defects in their working and the difficulties that have to be encountered and overcome before any improvement can be effected. It is reported that the Director made a biological survey of the State and collected data about fish supply at various places. Several industrial experiments were carried out and already

the schemes for the establishment of an aquarium and biological station at Port Okha, starting of fish farms at Velan and Balapur, setting up of fish-hatchery at Muldwarka and a permanent fishery settlement at Kotdah (Velan) with an industrial depot for cold storage and curing and a smaller cold storage depot at Okha are under the consideration of the State authorities.

Considering the short period during which the work detailed in the *Report* has been carried out, a good beginning seems to have been made and we hope that in course of time the fisheries of Baroda will assume their proper place in the industrial development of the State. We take this opportunity to offer our congratulations to the Director and his small band of enthusiastic workers.

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