The Anatomy of Peace

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mean "amount receivable" and "amount payable" as compensation under the Act.

L. Lloyd Evans.

**Book Review**

**THE ANATOMY OF PEACE**

By Emery Reves. Fifth Edition


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The lawyer should be more than ordinarily interested in Emery Reves' recent essay, "The Anatomy of Peace," for at least two reasons: 1. The praise the author heaps on law, at least the "legal order" as a civilizing agency should appeal to his professional pride; 2. The extensive list of responsible signatures appearing under an open letter to the public recently, urging everyone to read it and discuss it should challenge his interest as a citizen. Its extremely controversial character is attested to by two articles dealing with it carried in the American Bar Association Journal in very recent issues.

Most students of the subject have long recognized the evil effects flowing from nationalism run rampant, in the international area, however beneficial it may have been in earlier times. Reves brings to this subject both the creative thinking of a scientist (most of the time) and the zeal of a reformer, to give us an almost overwhelming argument in support of a "universal government." Briefly, he develops his thesis as follows.

At all times peace in the political realm has been accomplished only by bringing larger and larger groups of persons and of land areas under the rule of a single authoritative source of law. The peace resulting from this integration of conflicting groups has lasted only so long as the resulting hegemony did not come into extensive contact with some other hegemony. As soon as this happened, conflict again developed. Not only was this true of such countries as the British Isles, different portions of Europe and of the Western Hemisphere, but it was true in ancient times as well. At one time, developing large areas into nations resolved many conflicts. Now, however, because of continuous development in technology, there is constant contact and consequent friction between all nations in the world. This results in an anxiety in each nation to be "secure" from every other one. The very anxiety for security guarantees further wars.

In the economic realm nationalism engenders war in at
least two ways: 1. It sets out to make itself self-sufficient, which inevitably upsets the normal economic balances immeasurably. 2. Pressure for economic independence comes into direct conflict with the natural tendencies of "industrialism" (a force almost as powerful as nationalism) which continuously strives to be universal—the needs of industry know no boundaries either as to the raw products required or as to markets. So all measures in the international realm perpetuating existing nations and encouraging the creation of new nations help to guarantee continued war. Thus so-called "international law," and "collective security" are serious though subtle evils today. Likewise, efforts to encourage "self-determinism" of different races is an insidious evil because it only serves to fragmentize existing political units. In this Reves strongly reinforces Clarence Streit's thesis in his "Union Now."

In support of this thesis Reves brings to bear a gratifying insight into what is involved in human judgments. He also cites much historical data sustaining considerable portions of his thesis. He points out that the problem of world peace cannot even be analyzed until we free ourselves from all nationalisms. Typical reasoning begins with the assumption that some one nation is the center of the universe—in much the same way as did the ancient astronomers cling to the Ptolemaic theory of the physical universe (i.e., the earth the center thereof with all other planets revolving round it) for some fourteen hundred years after the Copernican theory (the modern description) was first suggested. The modern error of placing one nation at the center is just as fatal to arriving at the truth.

Further, Reves declares that though at one time it appeared that The Christian ethic might bring us out of this maelstrom of eternal conflict, that hope was completely shattered by our recent experience in Europe where peoples of all creeds under the Nazi regime at least acquiesced in the most brutalizing practices ever recorded in history. At most, religion has given an unstable veneer good only for fair weather.

So with very persuasive data, with unassailable logic (with some unfortunate exceptions), with remarkably perspicacious historical analyses, Reves marches irresistibly to the conclusion that the only thing that can possibly save the world from utter destruction by its own lethal weapons is universal sovereignty—a genuine world legal order.

The lawyer will be among the first to agree with Reves that the living and working together of humanity is possible only under law; that,
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"The day the first legal imposition of a compulsion was forced upon a community was the greatest day in history.

"That day, freedom was born."

He also may agree with the public spirited citizens commending this book that "unless this extremely simple idea prevails, and unless by common struggle we are capable of new ways of thinking, mankind is doomed." We may even agree that there has been little of genuine law in the international realm in the past, as expressed in treaties and covenants between nations—that in the final analysis, at all critical periods, too many nations have considered themselves to be above so-called international law even and so not bound by anything in that realm. We may admit that little if any hope lies in our foreign offices (e.g., our own Department of State) because they are so completely oriented to the preservation of the status quo. Finally we may applaud Reves' denunciation of the self-styled "practical realist" who traditionally has insisted that a universal government just is not "practical," however desirable it may be. (Reeves is most caustic in his excoriation of this "realism.") Surely it is true that if our paramount aim is to achieve peace (without sacrificing other basic values) the primary question simply is "What means are necessary for that end?" If a genuine world government is necessary, the only practical program is to set about obtaining that means—or to abandon the end of world peace. Humanity is not served by being deceived on this point. But that brings us to the basic issue that Reves does not successfully resolve.

That issue, long existing among those most profoundly concerned with the problem of world peace, and the one brought into sharpest focus by this book is whether the only way to arrive at a world government essential to preserve peace, is by creating it by a single stroke of the pen. Reves insists that there is no other way. He feels this so strongly he finally concludes that, if such government cannot be created at once by peaceful means (and he is not at all optimistic about this) then the sooner some power unites the world into a single government by force—by a final cataclysmic struggle, atom bombs and all, the better off the world will be. To quote him directly:

"If we cannot attain to universalism and create union by common consent and democratic methods as a result of rational thinking—then rather than retard the process, let us precipitate unification by conquest. It serves no reasonable purpose to prolong the death throes of our decrepit institutions and to postpone inevitable events only to make the..."
changes more painful and more costly in blood and suffering. It would be better to have done with this operation as quickly as possible so that the fight for the reconquest of lost human liberties can start within the universal state without too much loss of time."

A cue to this conclusion is found in his statement that unifications achieved by conquest in the past clearly have been in the interest of civilization even though they caused great injury to the existing social, political and economic institutions. He refers particularly to the conquest of England by William the Conqueror.

The revolutionary character of this proposal from our point of view is well illustrated by the fact that, by this criterion, it would have been much better had Hitler conquered the entire world and put it under one government. Reves says much of the need for "reason and rational thinking" in wrestling with this problem. His ultimate conclusion that unification there must be at all costs, perhaps is unassailable logically, granted his major premises, but it may be thought a dry sterile logic that becomes highly irrational carried thus far (reminding one of much of Nazi logic).

Those opposing this ultimate conclusion may well suggest at least two possible alternatives: 1. A procedure of gradualism such as is proposed by Streit's "Union Now," in which a sufficient number of constitutional democracies form a nucleus for a world government with others being added as they see fit to submit to the governing constitution; 2. Another form of "gradualism" operating through the UN, by which means both the form and the instruments of a real universal government are gradually built up by developing and extending the agencies of the UN.

Of course, a major difference of opinion at this point is whether the UN can be utilized as a transitional device working toward effective world government. Reves answers the contention that it can be thus:

"It (league-councils) is not a first step. It is a continuation. A continuation of error, of a fatally bad and disastrous policy... No one knows when a universal legal order will be achieved and no doubt all who are striving toward that ideal would be perfectly satisfied with a modest "first step"—toward it. But the fact is that our governments have not even indicated an intention ever to take a first step in that direction."

Un fortunately, the intent of too many of those responsible for its creation has been that the UN preserve the national status
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quo. If it can serve no more constructive purpose it is not an instrument of peace. However, it is submitted that the UN contains the potentials for evolutionary growth into world government.

Even though the "token force" (army) being proposed for it should be too small effectively to oppose the armies of the larger nations, it will be as large relatively as the United States army in peace times—and the importance of the physical size of an army in an atomic age is highly problematical anyway.

We now have a second world court that can be geared to all developments occurring in the UN. A universal bill of rights and a genuine international criminal law are now developing apace. Certainly agencies to enforce the decrees of such Court may well be provided for with an army already being considered.

Even the legislative function may be developed piecemeal in conjunction with the relinquishing of sovereign authority over limited fields provided for by specific agreements, with legislative powers devolving on boards or commissions set up thereunder not to mention possible legislative growth of the UN itself. If this is accomplished in order to control the production and use of all fissionable materials, it will be a monumental and most heartening "first step."

If the will to peace and to adopt programs designed to pacific relations remains "sovereign" in our minds and hearts long enough, it is at least possible that a practice under the UN will become established providing for the evolutionary growth of a real world government. Admittedly, a purposiveness, and a faith that we can achieve those purposes through such measures, stimulating something approaching a religious zeal, is imperative to success.

Perhaps, the greatest possibilities for realizing world peace without resort to unification by conquest, lies in the potentialities of the UN's Social and Economic Council, with the parallel created UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.) Reves admits that nationalism of itself is not the evil, but rather is only a convenient agency through which the animosities, the prejudices and the greeds of masses of people are able to express themselves in brute force. In effect he insists that these carnal passions cannot be modified in any degree, and that they can be harnessed only by imposing a legal order from above upon all of the conflicting groups equally. Certainly such full blown legal order would greatly simplify the problem. But that this is the only
possible procedure, the educator, whatever his field, must deny. The basic philosophy is that these dynamics of war can be modified in considerable measure independently of and in aid to the creation of a universal government. Reves repeatedly insists that we must be prepared to try new ideas. Yet he tells us that “... a council of sovereign units could prevent another war only if it could change human nature and make it act and re-act differently from the way it has been acting and reacting throughout the ages.” It is at this point that Reves’ whole case is weakest. His acute analysis degenerates into pure dogma. To hoist him by his own petard: a genuinely rational attempt to modify world prejudices by education has never been made. We shall have to try it thoroughly before anyone can say that it cannot be done.

One of the serious and most dangerous causes of war in the future will be the basically different theories as to what is the most desirable form of political and economic society. The adherents of every opposing system have acted as if their creed had been handed down from on high—the ultimate word as to what is good. There has been little choice between the disciples of democracy, socialism, Marxian communism, or fascism in this respect. They all irrationally assume that they are dealing in absolutes and that only they have the key opening the door to those absolutes. The fear each group possesses that the others intend to proselytize the world by sword as well as by word is the condition contributing most to a sense of insecurity. If UNESCO assumed responsibility for initiating a continuous study for the purpose of developing a genuine universal social science within the framework of which all the various forms of societies are justified—and are recognized as even a necessary part in the developing of civilization, and then help further in spreading such “gospel” throughout the cultures of the world, it would serve the dual purpose both of reducing the impulses to war and of greatly increasing the prospects for all nations to accept a genuine international government. (This program is vitally necessary whether we use it as a means to universal government, or as something to follow its formation.)

For example, if the molders of public opinion generally came to accept the premise that increasing civilization must be measured by the degree of progressive increase in knowledge of and control over both ourselves and our environment, in terms of the whole of humanity, and that, in great part, both this knowledge of and control over can be realized only on the basis of experiment, political insecurity would be liquidated. So experimenting with communism in Russia, capitalism in the
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United States, various forms of socialism in France and England, and any other political or economic form that did not provide a direct threat to these other forms, and had not been imposed from outside, would be accepted as a sine qua non to attaining the highest form of civilized institutions.

It may be doubted that the directors of UNESCO at present are considering any such program, though it clearly would be justified under the stated purposes of that organization.

Perhaps this approach is as revolutionary as that suggested by Reves. The modification in our existing cultures however, would not be a fractional part as revolutionary as was the Christian gospel upon the existing cultures when it burst upon the world. If it be objected that there is not "time," the answer is twofold: 1. We may easily have twenty-five to thirty years; 2. The entire world could be reeducated in this regard, if we bent all our efforts to that end, in that time.

So, if Reves' challenging essay succeeds in making people more conscious of the need for universal government; of the dangers inherent in nationalism in the present world; of the sophistries present in all bombasts about "sovereign integrity"; and if it strengthens the resolve of all persons that the UN shall be a positive force leading toward world government, it will be of incalculable service to humanity. And of course, if by some miracle, points of view stimulated by this book should finally result in the immediate creation of a world government by pacific means, its author would be one of the world's greatest benefactors. Failing that, however, if it should lead the people to assume that they must despair of ever substantially improving the conditions for world peace and for ultimately realizing real world government, short of its unification by force, the book will be responsible for an incalculable injury to humanity.

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