

which the idea of nationalism has upon the civilized world. The outbreak of the Great War was accompanied by a veritable flood of nationalistic literature. The cry of "Teuton versus Slav" resounded from one end of the earth to the other—at least in "popular" journalism. And as the war grew in extent, the number of "national" antagonisms also grew, to account for the new comers into the bloody arena. On the other hand, the International broke down like a house of cards, and the former internationalists were destroying each other for the defence, preservation or glory of their respective nations.

There seemed to be no denying the fact that Internationalism was dead, or at least in a state of coma from which it was not likely to awaken for a considerable time. Its enemies were jubilant, its erstwhile adherents apologetic. In this country particularly, former internationalists were crowding the nationalistic band—wagons provided by the popular drift.

A few months after the outbreak of the war Morris Hillquit, national chairman and international secretary of the Socialist Party of this country, declared in a public address:

"If there is anything the war can teach us, it is that when the National interest comes into conflict with any other, even class interest, it will be stronger. *National feeling stands for existence primarily, for the chance to earn a livelihood. It stands for everything we hold dear, as home, language, family and friends.* The workingman has a country as well as a class, even before he has a class."

And some time later, another prominent American Socialist publicly declared that the war had demonstrated Internationalism to have been merely an ideal, a dream of the Socialists, for which the basis of fact and reality was as yet wanting.

This weight of authority and popular verdict to the contrary notwithstanding, I venture to assert that the world is ripe for internationalism. More than that: That internationalism is in the ascendant—that it has in fact become indispensable and that the Great War has proven the bankruptcy of Nationalism as a material and spiritual factor in the life of humanity. We are in fact witnessing the passing of the nation as an historical factor.

In order that we may get the full meaning of the contemporary events upon which I base my conclusions, it is of importance that we pause for a moment to consider the history and real meaning of that concept and entity which we call "the nation."

To many people the idea or concept of the nation, like that of many others in the same field of thought as the state or the family, contains a mysterious element which cannot be defined or analyzed in ordinary language. To the student of history, however, there is nothing mysterious about the nation—just as there is nothing mysterious about the family or the state. The nation is primarily and ultimately an economic organization: the largest aggregation of people having a common, unified or coordinated economic interest. As is usual in such cases, the economic basis of the nation gives rise to an ideologic superstructure, ornamented with a fringe of mythological fables as to common origin, etc., etc. But to sober thinkers the nation has always been primarily and above all an economic entity—a sort of business organization. Hence the name *National Oekonomie* (national economy), by which the science of economics is still known in Germany. Hence, also, the title of "Wealth of Nations" given by Adam Smith to his great work which expounded the laws by which the then rising capitalist world lives and thrives. In this connection the opening paragraphs of that monumental work are very interesting. They read as follows:

"The annual labor of every nation is the fund which originally supplies it with all the necessities and conveniences of life which it annually consumes, and which consist always either in the immediate produce of that labor or in what is purchased with that produce from other nations.

According, therefore, as this produce, or what is purchased with it, bears a greater or smaller proportion to the number of those who are to consume it, the nation will be better or worse supplied with all the necessities and conveniences for which it has occasion."

Clearly, to Smith the nation is nothing but a large producing organization, a sort of extended family, consuming so much of