

and more, even more, whether the whole Fire Department will attend the fire at all or leave it to range unrestricted. Who ever heard of a Police Department in which each of five members reserves to himself the right to say whether he will take part in repressing crime or, more, whether the whole Police Department will stand aside and allow crime to be committed with impunity. The Great Powers, as well as the small Powers, must be prepared to adventure some capital in this great movement to insure against war. They must be prepared to expend a little of their freedom to run their own affairs to suit themselves. They, as well as the small Powers, must be prepared to accept in such vital matters as these, when the welfare of mankind, and perhaps when the continuation of civilization as we know it, is at stake, to accept third-party judgment, to be guided by the public conscience of the world, and not by their own unrestricted decision. Where success depends on the contribution of all, all must contribute in due proportion. What the Great Powers are attempting to do under this Charter is to have their cake and eat it, too.

ORIGIN OF VETO

Let me remind my colleagues that the veto power was insisted upon by the Five Great Powers in San Francisco, and that it was forced upon the remainder—the marriage of the veto to the Charter was a shotgun wedding. If this matter has been left to the free and untrammelled vote of the delegates to that Conference, it would unquestionably have been defeated, and I venture to add that, were this matter put to the vote of men and women in the street throughout the world, then, indeed, the veto would be blown away in a gale of indignant repudiation. The veto power as it at present exists is not consonant with any law of logic or of morality. At its best it is a stop-gap, an attempt to meet a situation which all agree must be met in some appropriate way. As such it was accepted, and as such it may well be all that we can achieve at the present time. But all will agree that it cannot possibly last indefinitely. It is, in essence, an application of the false and pagan principle that might is right. It is a negation in the international field of those principles of equitable democracy which are so dear to such a large section of mankind. It is an assertion of the indefensible principle that the Great Powers, who admittedly comprise such a large proportion of the world's population, and who admittedly have at their disposal an overwhelmingly predominant proportion of the material resources and the physical force of the world, are at the same time necessarily the repositories of all the wisdom, all the determination, all the devotion that this great cause of peace demands.

WHAT TO DO

It is proper now to ask what, then, can be done about this situation. I do not pretend to know. The Great Powers are obviously not at present convinced of the inequity and the dangers of the veto provision as they exist to-day—indeed, they, or some of them, are convinced of the dangers of any other course. And, by a most remarkable provision in the Charter, insisted upon by the Five Great Powers against widespread opposition, it has been made quite impossible to amend the Charter without the consent of each one of the Five Great Powers. Is it too much to say that by this remarkable provision, combined with the veto, this infant organization has been brought into the world with its hands manacled and its feet fettered.