

[July 1948]

We have every reason to be grateful to Polish and French scholars for having called this congress. They did so with the intention of ‹bringing forward› putting the influence of prudent people in the service of the quest for peace and security. It is that old problem which first occupied Plato so intensely: reason instead of the reign of atavistic instincts and passions. For the Greeks, rational thinking alone seemed to suffice for bringing about a more satisfactory state of all human relations. But we have had the painful experience of witnessing that rational thinking alone cannot, by any means, solve the problems of public life. The fruits of sharp-witted research and thought have often often brought mankind disaster. This research has led to inventions that, on one hand, largely liberated humans from hard physical labor. On the other hand, however, they became a means of enslavement and mass extermination of people. These inventions are also what, on the one hand, eases and enriches the lives of individuals, but on the other hand, has brought a pernicious restlessness and senseless bustle into their existence—sources of nervous degeneration, superficiality, and psychological dependence.

‹These inventions have also [led] to a formerly unknown centralization of economic and political power›

The tragedy of modern man—generally observed—lies herein: he has created for himself existential conditions that, due to his phylogenetic development, he is not equal to. Fear, hatred, and quarrelsomeness and greed, which served his self-preservation during the primitive stages, are threatening his existence under conditions for survival that he himself has brought about over the past couple of millenia, at a steadily and rapidly increasing speed. Under these changed existential conditions, his genetic psychological inheritance threatens him with rapid destruction.

‹Clear thinking can lead a person to a distinct realization of his situation. But he can only save himself if people's moral conduct towards one another fundamentally changes. He must learn to see in all people his own brothers and to act and feel accordingly. He must learn to experience their fears, pain, and weaknesses through compassion and to overcome as best as possible the dangerous features of his own genetic psychological inheritance. Can he progress far enough in this difficult art during the short span of time that this self-made destiny has left him?›

[ADft]

If one follows the events in politics among «nations» states in the newspapers, there seems to be no escape. The life-threatening part of man's genetic psychological inheritance then seems overwhelming and insurmountable, perdition, under the present technical conditions, unstoppable.

If, however, one observes the behavior of people «within a more restricted circle» within a tighter community, e. g., in a city, a less sinister picture is apparent. Here, too, the egoistic tendencies considerably outweigh the altruistic ones, yet far less than in international politics. Tradition and education have exerted a moderating influence on individuals. Direct violence is as good as prevented «by the state» by the police; «thus» a somewhat tolerable interaction among people «results.» is achieved. Institutions

«I do not want to try to analyze causally the brutish current conduct of states, which directly threatens the continued existence of civilized humanity. Only *one* reason will I»

«were formed» are formed, whose action conducive to survival benefits everyone. All of this would be impossible if these life-preserving social instincts of our genetic psychological inheritance did not determine human behavior to a substantial degree, in addition to purely egoistic instincts.

This is similar in the case of «populations of » individual states. Here, too, rivalry among individuals and groups is reduced to a tolerable degree and a level of organization is reached that secures the lives of the individuals to some extent.

Only in regards to relations among states do we have almost total anarchy. «Although there are» Conflicts, if they are deemed substantial enough, are decided by brute force, by wars; and unrestrained efforts to expand power continue unimpeded wherever physical opportunity presents itself.

This state of anarchy in the international landscape has brought unimaginable suffering and destruction to people and has repeatedly maimed the mental and material development of humans and their «organizational» institutions, at times «for» in limited periods and regions, even having totally obliterated them.

With «This state of» this anarchy, the developments of thousands of years could do nothing of value to change anything, except that through the influence of technical advances state structures would become more populous and extensive.

The power of the state over its citizens has been steadily growing over the last centuries, even in countries where this power has not degenerated into brutal tyranny. Its function of protecting the citizens against attacks by fellow citizens, also in the economic sphere, became increasingly complicated and extended through the centralization of production. Its protective function against attacks by foreign states requires an immense, ever-growing military apparatus

as well as an educational influence over the citizens in the event of war, whereby it unscrupulously takes advantage of the malleable mind of its youth and, through its effect on the adults, also maintains control over the mind-set of the citizenry. This is the case also in states not «dominated» characterized by fundamentally aggressive tendencies. Thus the state, or the nation, has become that modern idol to whose suggestive power almost all people succumb unconditionally.

Technological developments of recent years have now brought an entirely new «turn» military situation: the creation of terrible offensive weapons of mass destruction against which, according to present knowledge, there is no protection. The state is getting into the position of not being able to protect its territory and its citizens effectively anymore. The sole conceivable effective protection can only «be» come from a world organization which alone decides on those effective offensive weapons and their manufacture. This, however, presupposes the existence of a world government, which settles, on «the» a legal basis, those issues of contention that have previously led to wars. The range of action available to the individual states would thereby, on the whole, be limited to the function of domestic administration, while relations to other states «is» must be limited to such objectives as pose no threat to international security.

The present conduct by states does not, by any means, show that the political authorities have grasped the commanding pressure in «this» our situation. Making this situation «clear» understood to people everywhere on Earth is probably the most important societal function that has ever fallen to the lot of intellectuals. Are they going to be strong enough to overcome the bonds of their national upbringing, to the extent that they will be able to prepare their message to the nations in time for such a radical victory over firmly rooted national traditions?

Enormous effort is needed. If it fails, then the world government will be forced to establish itself soon on the ruins of most of today's humanity. May we «be granted» be spared from having to purchase the abolition of international anarchy at the price of such a self-inflicted world catastrophe.