

THE MANAGEMENT OF SMALL STATES WHICH ARE UNABLE TO MANAGE THEMSELVES

In the issue of *The Outlook* for June 18 there was a quotation from a letter of an Anti-Imperialist correspondent, who, in speaking of Egypt and the Philippines, stated that the proper course to pursue was to protect countries of this nature by international agreement, the writer citing in support of his theory the way in which many small powers had their territories guaranteed by international agreement.

The trouble is in the confusion of ideas which results in trying to apply the same principle to two totally different classes of cases. A State like Switzerland or Holland differs only in size from the greatest of civilized nations, and in everything except size stands at least on a level with them. Such a State is absolutely competent to preserve order within its own bounds, to execute substantial justice, and to secure the rights of foreigners. All that is necessary, therefore, is to guarantee it against aggression; and when the great Powers have thus guaranteed it, all covenanting to protect it from the aggression of any one of their own number, their duty is done and the needs of the situation completely met. In such a State the people themselves guarantee stability, order, liberty, and protection for the rights of others. There is not the slightest need of interfering with them, of seeking to develop them, of protecting them from themselves. The needs of civilization and humanity are sufficiently met by protecting them from outside aggression.

There is no analogy at all with what occurs in a community unable to keep elementary order, or to secure elementary justice within its own borders, and unable or unwilling to do justice to foreign nations. The very worst thing from the standpoint of humanity which can happen to such a community may be to guarantee it against outside aggression. The condition of Algiers under French rule is infinitely better than its condition before the French came to Algiers, or than the condition of Morocco at this moment. The condition of Turkestan under Russia has very greatly

improved. The condition of the Sudan at present, as compared with the condition of the Sudan under Mahdist rule, is the most striking example of all. In the same way, Panama has benefited immeasurably from every standpoint by the presence of Americans on the Isthmus. Any arrangement which had guaranteed Algiers against the French, or Turkestan against the Russians, or the Sudan against the English, or Panama against the Americans, would have been an arrangement against the interests of humanity and civilization, and against the interests of the natives of the countries themselves.

Moreover, if there must be interference for the sake of the country itself, to promote its growth in order and civilization, actual experience has shown that such interference can only come efficiently by one nation, and not by many. Untried theorists, or even practical men who are influenced by national jealousy and are untaught by the lessons of history, have a curious fondness for trying a system of joint interference or joint control. Americans forget, for instance, that we have actually tried this system and found it completely wanting, in the case of Samoa. We made an arrangement with England and Germany by which there was a joint protectorate over Samoa. The system worked wretchedly. It resulted badly for the natives; it was a fruitful source of bickering among the three Powers. Then we abandoned the system, each Power took its own sphere, and since then we have gotten along admirably; the only trouble in connection with Samoa which arose during my entire administration as President came because we were not able to grant the earnest request of the natives; that we should take real and complete possession of our part of the islands and really regulate the government instead of leaving it so much in the hands of the native chiefs.

In the case of the Philippines, there were just two things that we could do which would have been worse than leaving them under Spanish rule. One of these would have been to turn the islands adrift to manage themselves. The second would have been to try to manage them by a joint arrangement of various Powers. Any

such arrangement in the case of as rich and valuable islands as the Philippines would very possibly have led to war between the great Powers. It would have certainly led to jealousy, bickerings, and intrigue among them, would have held the islands back, would have prevented any development along the lines of progress and civilization, and would have insured an endless succession of devastating little civil wars.

When all that is necessary as regards a small State is to protect it from external aggression, then the great Powers can with advantage join to guarantee its integrity. When anything more is necessary to try to develop the people and civilization, to put down disorder, to stop civil war and secure justice, then a combination of Powers offers the worst possible way of securing the object sought to be achieved. Indeed, under such circumstances it is probably better for the State concerned to be under the control of a single Power, even though this Power has not high ideals, rather than under the control of three or four Powers which may possess high ideals but which are put into such an impossible situation that they are certain to be riven asunder by jealousy, distrust, and intrigue, and to do damage rather than good to the people whom they are supposed to protect.

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