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This is not a product of Dominion status but of the hard facts of geography and world politics. Adoption of the Statute would clear up doubts about our power of extra-territorial legislation, which is needed, for instance, for the control of convoys between here and Australia; but there remains the knotty question whether we should need further an Imperial Statute to remove certain constitutional disabilities in dealing with other matters connected with merchant shipping.

Professor Wood discusses what Dominion sovereignty amounts to in political practice, in a harder world than that in which the Commonwealth relationship was conceived and brought to birth. How far is the sovereignty of a small state an illusion against the hard facts of preponderant military and economic power? In New Zealand, where we have at least our share of loose thinking, a little more tough grappling with these realities would not be amiss. After an examination of past events, Professor Wood is prepared to argue that the structure of the Commonwealth, involving as it does the concepts of independence and co-operation, "has done more than any other device of which we have knowledge to preserve both the dignity and the genuine freedom of small nations in our turbulent modern world."

Because he deals in futures, Professor Lipson's contribution on a foreign policy for New Zealand inevitably most invites criticism. Among much good analysis there peeps out something of what many who experienced it at the end of the last war may be inclined to call the liberal illusion—the belief that peace is a matter of "creating in all countries an overwhelming public sentiment in favour of supra-national authority." The illusion lies in underestimating the influence of economic and social conditions in the formation and working of public sentiment. That is the most essential field for effort.

Peace for the next generation, as Professor Lipson says, depends mainly on the continued co-operation of Britain, America, the U.S.S.R. and China. But we are not helping to achieve this by basing the whole argument, as he does, on the assumption that Britain and America "will definitely cling together." Co-operation will not be automatic; it will be maintained only by patient effort on both sides. Nor is it necessarily a sound basis in itself. It could conceivably take a form that would arouse increasing opposition and once more split the world into conflicting groups. It is also possible that the triumph of certain forces in America would force Britain and the U.S.S.R. into an opposition bloc. Britain and America are not invariable constants, but the product of the varying play of forces within them.

The unity of the three main Powers on which so much depends, can be achieved only by the ascendancy of the more progressive forces in the capitalist countries; it can exist only on terms that could include a free and progressive China. Post-war conditions are likely to be favourable to a liberal working of capitalism as a basis for such co-operation. But this will not be the beginning of eternal peace; it will rather provide a period in which we shall have a chance to work out, more peacefully than has for long seemed possible, the social and economic conflicts whose solution is the basis of international peace. In that period, small progressive nations have a real part to play.



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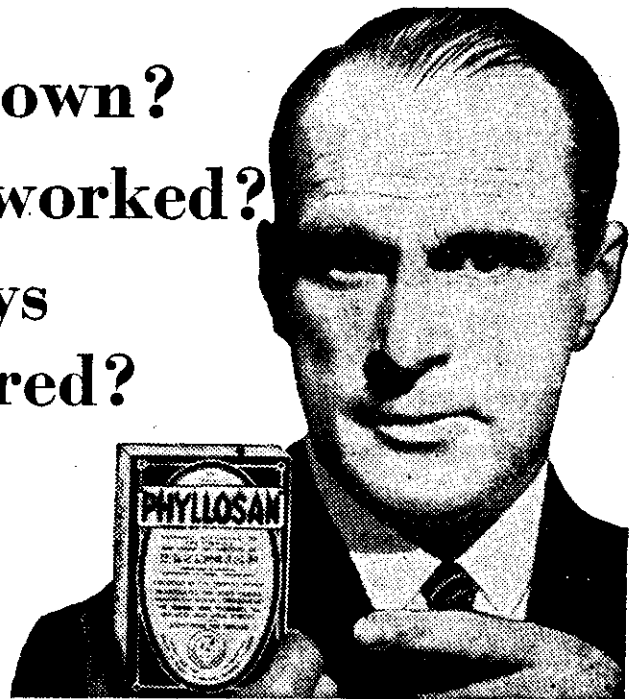
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