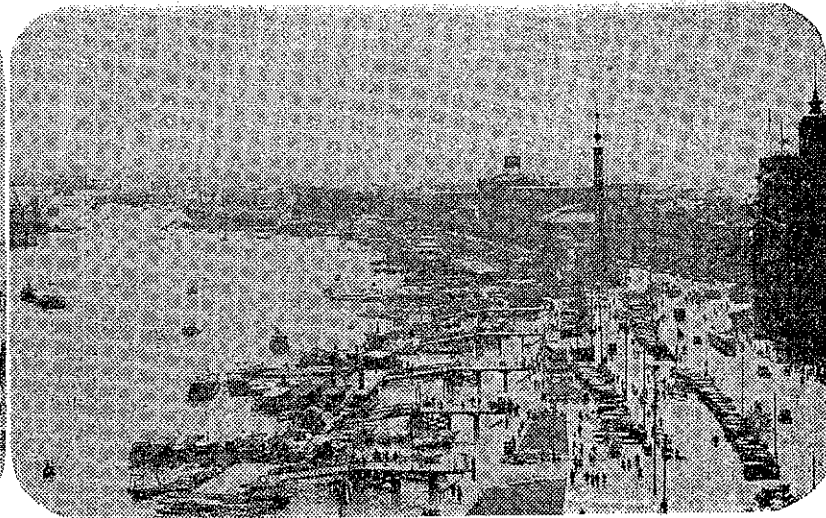


Can the League of Nations Save



SHANGHAI?

AS the topic of the League of Nations in the Far East is a rather involved one, I would remind you of one very important fact: that neither Soviet Russia nor the United States of America is a member of the League of Nations. The League has suffered greatly in the past from this notable weakness, and its present task in the Far East is rendered all the more difficult because both Soviet Russia and the United States of America have vast interests in China. It would be folly for the League of Nations to act except in co-operation with the United States, and the extent of that co-operation must necessarily limit the action which the League Council may from time to time wish to take. Fortunately the United States Government has given the League Council every assistance, but there have necessarily been delays and difficulties.

Right at the outset, the Japanese Government objected to American participation in the meetings of the League Council, but the Council over-ruled this objection, and an American representative has since joined the League Council in its deliberations. The League of Nations has, therefore, been put to the test in a part of the world where many difficulties exist that would not be found to the same extent in Europe.

Every student of international affairs must admit that war between any two great countries must vitally affect the whole world. This is obviously so in any dispute affecting China, which has been the subject of economic exploitation for many years by the great Powers, all of which have important interests to preserve. There is scarcely a country in the world which will not feel acutely the repercussions of an armed conflict on a large scale in the Far East.

It must be remembered also that the League of Nations is purely a post-War creation, and has been built upon the determination of the peoples of the world to endeavour to prevent war. The foundation of the League is the sacredness of treaty obligations; in other words, the

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belief of the peoples of the world that the nations will carry out their solemn public promises and agreements. The League can only function satisfactorily with the support of the great majority of the peoples of the world. It is a new machine, and will need many tests and alterations before it can work swiftly and successfully. One can at least claim this for the League of Nations, that whatever its imperfections, it stands for world-wide co-operation, as against war and the international anarchy that war brings. It is, therefore, to be expected that the men in control of this new machine will not adventure it rashly where it may be destroyed, but will prefer when in doubt to act prudently and cautiously, not advancing except where the course is clear.

WHAT, then, are the obligations of the Chinese and Japanese Governments in this crisis? Both are signatories of the Kellogg Treaty for the outlawry of war, and have solemnly agreed that the settlement or solution of all disputes and conflicts, of whatever kind they may be, between them, shall never be sought except by peaceful means. In 1928, years after the formation of the League of Nations, the Kellogg Treaty for the Renunciation of War, which is called also the Pact of Paris, was ratified by all the States of the world. [A printed card setting out the terms of the Treaty is posted up in every post office throughout New Zealand.] It is one of the shortest treaties in existence, and there can be no doubt about its plain meaning. It supplements the Covenant of the League of Nations and is binding at the present moment between Japan and China. Clause 1 reads as follows: "The high contracting parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations to others." Both (Concluded on page 23.)