

FEDERALISM AND FREE WORLD ORDER



With this we begin a substantial condensation of Governor Rockefeller's three Godkin Lectures at Harvard University on The Future of Federalism. We start with the third, given Feb. 9, for its topic is of most immediate interest to our readers. The first two make no less a contribution to the domestic side of federalism, and will appear in later issues.—Editors.

I DEDICATE THIS final lecture to one basic proposition. It is this:

The federal idea, which our Founding Fathers applied in their historic act of political creation in the 18th Century, can be applied in this 20th Century in the larger context of the world of free nations—if we will but match our forefathers in courage and vision.

The first historic instance secured freedom and order to this new nation. The second can decisively serve to guard freedom and to promote order in a free world.

Sweeping as this assertion may be, I believe it to be anything but an academic proposition. Quite the contrary: it is a matter of cold political realism.

For the realities before us—the erosion of world order and the peril to world freedom—present challenges of a size and greatness never before known.

They cannot be met by defensive devices, mere tactical maneuvers, or the most cunningly contrived improvisation.

Political creation, not improvisation, is the order of the day. And anything less than a grand design—a major idea and a lofty sense of purpose—is too puny for the time in which we live. * * *

Of all times in our history, this would be the most inconceivable in which to dismiss or to disparage any truly creative

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political concept as too bold or too large to meet the challenges of the hour.

The essence of the global crisis of this mid-20th Century is the urgent need and quest, in the world of free nations, for the answer to this question; how can free men guard and foster freedom, diversity and progress within a framework of order and unity?

The free world, in short, is grappling with precisely the political equation—the elements of order and the factors of freedom—whose balancing has been the supreme political achievement of our nation's history.

Since World War II, we have obviously looked beyond the purely national horizon of this attainment to our new role in the world.

In this role, we have done much to recognize our military responsibility in the cause of freedom. We have also done much to employ our economic power as an essential source of strength and progress for all free nations.

But we have failed to face up to the fundamental political problem—the creation of a free world structure of order and unity.

New Political Framework Needed

What we must do is to provide that political leadership essential to build a framework within which the basic and urgent aspirations of free men and free nations can be realized.

And we can begin this historic task by recognizing the political relevance of the federal idea to the destiny of the free world as a whole.

This, I believe, quickly becomes clear from a review of the deterioration of the structures for political order in the world.

Let us look at a few plain facts.

First: No nation today can defend its freedom, or fulfill the needs and aspirations of its own people, from within its own borders or through its own resources alone.

Military defense, economic growth, rising living standards, widening opportunities for individual fulfillment—all these prime essentials of modern life for free men require the joint and cooperative action of many sovereignties.

Nation-State Is Obsolescent

And so the nation-state, standing alone, threatens, in many ways, to seem as anachronistic as the Greek city-state eventually became in ancient times.

Second: The old patterns and formulas of international order have been shattered.

The European empires, whatever their iniquities, did provide frameworks within which diverse and distant peoples could live and work together. Today, virtually all these structures have disintegrated — leaving an historic political vacuum.

Third: The U.N., repository of so much hope, has not been able—nor can it be able—to shape a new world order which events now so compellingly command.

The structure of the U.N. is such that it could function effectively only as there is essential agreement on purpose and procedure, among the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The Communist bloc has dedicated itself to the manipulation of the U.N.'s democratic processes, so astutely and determinedly, as largely to frustrate its intended power and role.

As a result, the U.N. lacks the strength to master or control the forces that it confronts.

The enduring value of the U.N. is three-fold: As the universal symbol of humanity's hopes for peace, as a forum for voicing and hearing all the divisions and basic conflicts that imperil these hopes, and as a channel for daily communication between nations.

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Fourth: The ultimate challenge of Communist imperialism is its promise to fill the political vacuum in world order created by the collapse of old empires and the failure of anything else to take their place. Such a vacuum is as abhorrent to politics as to nature. And Communism offers a design—a cruel design—for world order.

It seeks to create the illusion that a Communist world order will be more secure, more rational, and more geared to the realities of modern life, science and technology than any other structure, past or present.

This Communist new order is based on a *false* federalism whose pattern may be found in the Soviet Union itself.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has outward signs of a federalist structure—as its very name implies.

But here, as elsewhere, the Communists have merely taken our words, our forms, our very symbols of man's hopes and aspirations and have corrupted them to mislead and to deceive in their quest for world domination. * * *

Instead of a shared sovereignty flowing from the people, instead of the dynamic interplay of competitive political parties, free economic enterprise and voluntary social effort, all matters political, economic and social are met, of course, by the iron rule of one party from Moscow.

Fifth: It is a tragic fact that the free world today offers no secure structure of international order within which the basic aspirations of free men may be realized—and the safety and rights of free nations guarded.

The rush of events has ironically compounded the problem. Just as the nation-state is becoming less and less competent to perform its international political tasks, the number of such states has been increasing with a speed unmatched in history. * * *

People after people—passionately and understandably eager to set their own destinies—inevitably have turned to the nation-state, so ill-equipped, standing alone, to meet the 20th Century's great challenge. * * *

Almost all these nations suffer acutely from lack of political leadership trained for the most elementary tasks of governing.

And with passionate ardor, all of these nations seek to achieve, in a few swift years, an economic transformation

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that older Western nations spent centuries to obtain and that can never come without securing true political stability.

Such is the size of the matters before us. All these problems are exacerbated by the astuteness and implacability of Communist conspiracy, with its tireless genius for crisis.

The historic choice, fast rushing upon us, is no less than this: either the free nations of the world will take the lead in adapting the federal concept to their relations, or one by one, we may be driven into the retreat of the perilous isolationsm—political, economic, and intellectual—so ardently sought by Soviet policy, a policy of divide and conquer.

These are the facts of life that free men must face.

They constitute a challenge that would essentially be just as profound and urgent if there were no Communist menace to torment free peoples anywhere on earth.

This challenge is: how can free nations design a political structure for the free world in which free men can enjoy a life that will respect the dignity of the individual,

—allow them to work out their own destiny and realize their national aspirations,

—enhance their opportunities for progress, and join with their neighbors in a society secure from violence and assault?



This is the question that today tests and summons all our political creativity, imagination and courage.

I believe, as I have said, the answer to the historic problems the free world confronts can be found in the federal idea.

I am not speaking of panaceas or slogans, nor of fanciful blueprints or meticulous (and meaningless) charts. I am speaking of a direction in which free men can begin to think, to act and—in

in case of the U.S. particularly—to lead.

As we have faced some of the urgent challenges of the period since World War II, we have taken some important and well-known actions in the military, economic and political fields. Many of these steps meant major breaks with the traditions of the past.

Yet they all have been, at best, only fragmentary, and partial efforts, generally sparked by sudden and isolated crises.

Creative Energy Blunted

They have not been integral parts of a coherent structure of international order, conceived and created to forestall crises. * * *

Obviously, the need is for more cohesive political unity to govern the common defense.

The truths and needs thus so clear in military and political spheres are equally plain and urgent in *economic* affairs.

In Europe, the Common Market has been a concept fostered and propagated by the U. S. for more than a decade. Now that it is here and prospering, we must define our relationship to the old world in view of this new economic power.

Ancient fears of growing foreign competition will make this, in all probability, the major issue of national debate for the current year.

Even with these and other steps, however, it has been impossible to create the framework of order needed to unleash the creative possibilities of free enterprise as an economic catalyst in the free world.

Let me dwell on this matter—with great emphasis.

Here—with this blunting and stifling of the creative energy of free enterprise—we pay one of the heaviest prices for our failure to achieve a structure for international order.

Our fragmentary approach has not given free enterprise capitalism a chance to serve the needs of the people of the free world as it has in the U.S.

Here, a free enterprise capitalism within a federal system has produced the world's highest standard of living with the widest distribution of income.

Yet for the industrial nations of the free world to share the benefits of this system in any meaningful sense requires, above all, an international climate of political stability.

We should recognize more clearly that the private sector is of crucial importance to the process of successful economic development in democratic societies,

There is developing nations, not yet able to generate internally sufficient investment funds for economic expansion, suffer from the absence of a free world political structure which would encourage the free flow of such funds along with the technical knowledge and management skills that accompany them.

There is urgent need to harness the unparalleled resources of free enterprise public services—as in agriculture, education to the task of meeting human needs and aspirations throughout the free world.

U. S. Must Take Leadership

All these, then, are some of the reasons—economic, military, political—pressing us to lead vigorously toward the true building of a new world order.

It urgently requires, I believe, that the U. S. take the leadership among all free peoples to make the underlying concepts and aspirations of national sovereignty truly meaningful through the federal approach.

How does the federal idea evolve and apply in the future immediately before us

All the problems we face have this in common: we can solve not one of them in isolation.

And in their basic nature these problems are strikingly similar to those faced by the original 13 American colonies—problems of security and of trade, of growth and of order, and above all, the human aspirations of the free individual.

I have long felt that the road toward the unity of free nations lay through regional confederations—in the Western Hemisphere and in the Atlantic community, perhaps eventually in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Such work toward regional unities is, in fact, steadily progressing. The Common Market in Europe is an outstand-

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Hopes Rockefeller Will Concentrate on Atlantic Area

EVER SINCE THE COLD WAR began, three very different American Presidents representing both our political parties have adhered to the same basic purpose in world affairs—to defend freedom, by containing Soviet power, while doing our best to avoid total nuclear war.

Our persistence in this stance, and the consensus supporting it, suggest that no responsible American leader really can do much to change it. The rightists' current characterization of the posture as a "no-win policy" is simply an expression of frustration. And yet it has undeniably become uncomfortable.

In the first years of our unaccustomed world leadership, the U. S. was able to advance some bold and positive proposals within the context of the containment strategy—notably the Marshall Plan and the creation of NATO. More recently, we have permitted our unavoidably defensive attitude to become too negative and confining to inspire our hopes. As the problem of reaching accommodations with the Russians has proved increasingly intractable, and as the "balance of terror" has hardened, we have fallen into a kind of paralysis.

Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York is the first major political figure to address himself directly and courageously to the task of restoring the dynamism of American foreign policy. He has done so in the recent Godkin lectures at Harvard by urging that the U. S. take the lead in "recognizing the political relevance of the federal idea to the destiny of the free world as a whole." If he now makes this the central theme of his presumed ambitions for the presidency, as seems

ing example. Such developments are hopeful and may prove historic.

But events in the world are moving with such swiftness—and the danger to the free world is so great—that I increasingly believe that our advances toward unity must extend to action *between* regions as well as *within* them.

Regional Concept Not Enough

I was wholeheartedly committed to the battle at the San Francisco Conference for inclusion of Article 51 in the U. N. Charter to permit regional arrangements within the U. N. framework.

likely, Governor Rockefeller will contribute enormously to the democratic dialogue

Governor Rockefeller tends to a somewhat extravagant position in suggesting that "the federal idea" may be applicable among all free nations. He questions whether regional federations are adequate to the need in "a world in which all distances are shriveled, all great perils universal, and the great globe itself is hardly more than a neighborhood. . ."

It seems to me Governor Rockefeller expects too much in suggesting that a sufficient sense of community can be developed among all free peoples to sustain anything like an all-embracing federation. As he spells out his ideas, I hope he will concentrate on the more realistic possibilities of federal union among the Atlantic democracies, where the process of organic growth of common values is far advanced.

Perhaps the sense of community among the nations of North America and Western Europe already is deep enough and rich enough to permit "the federal idea" to strike roots. A valid argument can be made, at least, that an attempt to provide a supranational structure for the Atlantic community might result in building a trellis upon which the growth could be trained and nourished. In any event, this is the area where Governor Rockefeller's insight and imagination can have real and immediate political relevance. By focusing his thinking here, he can give this nation genuine and constructive leadership—and perhaps a sorely needed new momentum—wherever his own political career may carry him—Barry Brown in *The Providence Journal*, March 21.

And I certainly do not now abandon my belief in the value and importance of regional arrangements among free nations.

But I have come to the conviction that events are driving us rapidly beyond even the limits of regional concepts—to the logic of applying the federal idea wherever possible, among free nations however distant, however seemingly strong in themselves.

For the force and value of the federal idea are not limited to the small, newer, weaker nations. The need is just as great for the most traditionally powerful. * * *

What our common danger—and our common aspirations—imperatively require, then, is a common commitment to some basic principles and purposes.

—To all those traditions, laws and principles assuring personal freedom;

—To the need for larger unity to assure common defense;

—To the necessity of removing barriers to commerce;

—And ultimately to the gradual devising of political forms of unity.

I suggest to you that the federal experience within this nation is directly pertinent to all these great challenges before the world community.

Let me give you some specific examples :

—Just as no city or county or state within our Federal Union can live unto itself and meet its problems, so is it equally impossible for any nation— even the strongest nation—to secure its own freedom by its own resources.

—Just as the operation of our own national economy and social life is interdependent with a federal system of government, assuring freedom and order, so just as dramatically do the economic and social workings of a free economy in the world require movement toward a federal idea, bringing order to the chaos of nation-states.

—The very social and economic problems that require political action and leadership on the most close-to-home levels of local American government— problems of education, transportation, power resources, economic growth—are the *same* problems that challenge action by nations large and small in all regions of the earth.

—Just as the equalization principle within our own nation recognizes that an Arkansas or a Tennessee can meet its economic problems only within a larger political framework, so the same basic concept of federalism applies on the world scene to the economic problems of a Bolivia or a Burma.

—Just as the American federal system invites the larger and stronger states to take the lead in showing the nation new political paths, so should this nation as a whole, and all the more powerful free nations, assume a similar role of leadership in the world at large.

Four Proposals Urged

These, I think, are sufficient ways to suggest that the American experience with federalism has meaning for the world.

More specifically, I hope and urge: *First:* That we develop an understanding at home of the nature and character of the problems that we and the other free nations face—and the

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significance of the federal idea as a practical framework within which they can be solved.

Second: That leaders throughout the free world work to develop a consensus of purpose and bring forth positive suggestions and recommendations for practical application of the federal idea to the problems which we all face.

Third: That informal, intergovernmental consultations by the political leaders of free nations be undertaken to define agreed objectives and develop means to achieve them through application of the federal idea.

Fourth: That these consultations be supplemented by regional, and functional conferences to attack specific problems and launch explicit programs.

Vitality of the Federal Idea

Out of this, I would venture to prophesy that—sooner perhaps than we may realize and despite the enormity of the apparent difficulties—there will evolve the bases for a federal structure of the free world.

In this year of 1962, these may seem visionary concepts.

In the year 1787, similar doubts and fears surged up—and they, too, turned on such words as sovereignty, centralism, restriction.

To all who find cause for alarm or scorn in such sweeping concepts as these, I would commend a remembrance of some words written early in our nation's life.

"Hearken not," it was written, "to the voice which petulantly tells you that the form of government recommended for your adoption is a novelty in the political world; that it has never yet had a place in the theories of the wildest projectors; that it rashly attempts what it is impossible to accomplish. No, my countrymen, shut your ears against this unhallowed language."

These were the words of that dedicated Federalist, James Madison.

And the political formula he was defending, against widespread charges of brash and reckless innovation, was the Constitution of the United States.

In essence, the answer of Madison and the other Federalists to these cries

of scorn was this: There is no other way to bring order and to assure freedom on this continent.

I believe that the vitality of the federal idea is such that precisely the same statement is equally true today of the world of free peoples.

The words of Lord Bryce—spoken in the first Godkin lecture in 1904— never held greater meaning than **at** this moment in our history:

"All of you are at times fascinated by a dream of this country as it might be," he said.

"The citizen of the U. S. should keep ever before him the splendid vision of a great republic, not only prosperous, but pure and happy, and working only for the good of her people. No other country has had similar opportunities—such immunity from old evils, to start with.

"On the success of the U. S. in working free government wisely and well, more than upon that of any other country, the future of mankind depends."

And Lord Bryce concluded:

"May the generation that is now rising throw themselves into this glorious enterprise for the benefit of the entire world."



There is one final reason for seeing the U. S. in such a role, and it is deeper than all others, practical or philosophic.

It is the fact that our dominant commitment from our very birth as a nation has been to everlasting concern for the individual, his freedom and his dignity.

This is why we were born as a nation—not as an economic convenience or as an imperial adventure. * * *

We are bound as a people, in **the** deepest sense, to live by this commitment with boldness, a confidence, and **a** clarity of vision matching those who led this nation to life.

Note: Emphasis, when in italics, is by the author, but when in bold face type it has been added by us.—Editors.