

Collective Security as an Approach to Peace

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The twentieth-century hope that international organizations might serve to prevent war, or, failing that, to defend states subjected to armed attack in defiance of organized efforts to maintain the peace, has been epitomized in the concept of collective security. The notion that an international agency purporting to pursue these objectives must establish and operate a collective security system has held a central place in orthodox thinking about international organization since World War I. This has not been regarded as the only means by which peace and order might be promoted; typically, a system of collective security has been conceived as operating in intimate connection with elaborate arrangements for facilitating the peaceful settlement of disputes, on the assumption that the two mechanisms will supplement and reinforce each other. Nevertheless, collective security has generally been regarded as indispensable. The idea that a peaceful and stable world order can be maintained without benefit of a collective security system has seemed to most persons concerned with international organization as far-fetched as the idea that a society can properly educate its children without operating a system of schools and colleges or care for its sick and wounded without hospitals and clinics. Thus, the failure of the League of Nations has frequently been attributed to the defectiveness of its collective security system, and the observation that the United Nations has not established and cannot be expected to establish a collective security system typically engenders the response that it must do so if it is to save the world from destruction.

Ostensible exceptions are to be found in the viewpoint of serious advocates of world government, who regard collective security as an inadequate substitute for the more fundamental transformation of the international system that they propose, and in the attitude of analysts who are committed, usually in the name of "political realism," to the position that the nature of international politics cannot effectively be altered and who therefore consider the effort to create a collective security system a useless and perhaps even a mischievous tampering with a system that reasonable men should simply accept. Even these exceptions are more apparent than real, for both sets of critics tend to share the assumption that it is normal for international organizations to be in the collective security business; in their eyes, no less than in those of devoted champions of international organization, collective security is associated with international organization as ham is with eggs.

All concerned have tended to regard collective security as a halfway house between the terminal points of international anarchy and world government. Rejecting the views that the former cannot be changed and that the latter can be attained in the foreseeable future, international organizationalists have conceived collective security as an alternative, far enough from anarchy to be useful and far enough from world government to be feasible. They have been divided among themselves as to whether it should be envisaged as a temporary expedient, contributing to the ultimate possibility of world government, or a permanent solution to the problem of world order, eliminating the ultimate necessity of world government. But, regardless of their differing expectations concerning the probab-

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ity that collective security will yield ideal results, they have been united in the belief that its requirements are less revolutionary than those posed by world government, and that it is therefore within the realm of possibility in an age dominated by the basic values of a multi-state system.

The achievement of orthodox status is very often fatal to the integrity of a concept. When it becomes popular and respectable to endorse the concept, men are strongly tempted to proclaim their belief in it whether or not they genuinely understand its meaning or fully accept its implications. If the tension between their urge to *believe in* it and their disinclination to *believe that* it is valid becomes too strong, they tend to resolve the difficulty by altering its meaning, packing into the terminological box a content that they can more readily accept.

Collective security has paid this familiar price for its incorporation into the orthodoxy of twentieth-century thought about international order. It began as a specialized concept, a technical term in the vocabulary of international relations. Collective security was the name given by the planners of a new world order after World War I to the system for maintenance of international peace that they intended as a replacement for the system commonly known as the balance of power. The new system as they envisaged it involved the establishment and operation of a complex scheme of national commitments and international mechanisms designed to prevent or suppress aggression by any state against any other state, by presenting to potential aggressors the credible threat and to potential victims of aggression the reliable promise of effective collective measures, ranging from diplomatic boycott through economic pressure to military sanctions, to enforce the peace. It was conceived as a systematic arrangement that should serve, with the highest degree of predictability that human contrivance could muster, to confront would-be aggressors, whoever they might be and wherever they might venture to strike, with an overwhelming collection of restraining power assembled by the mass of states in accordance with clear and firm obligations accepted and proclaimed in advance. In short, collective security was put forward as a particular and preferred method for keeping the peace; its advocates emphasized its differentiation from other methods, giving special attention to the argument that it was different from and superior to the system of competing alliances that was associated with the balance of power concept.

In the half century that has elapsed since the concept of collective security gained prominence as the central feature of the Wilsonian scheme for reforming the international system, it has largely lost its clarity and specificity. New wine has been mixed with the old in the semantic bottle whose label has come to be prized for its own sake, diluting the flavor of the original vintage. Collective security has been appropriated as an honorific designation for virtually any and all multilateral activities that statesmen or scholars may regard, or wish to have regarded, as conducive to peace and order. In a particularly ironic twist of fate, the label has been applied to alliances, bilateral or multilateral, by their champions—in flagrant disregard of the fact that the notion of a collective security system was originally developed in reaction against and in the hope of providing a substitute for the traditional system of competing alliances. This is a case, *par excellence*, of the misappropriation of ideological funds; the Wilsonian curse is avoided and the Wilsonian blessing is invoked by the expedient of describing alliances (one's own—not those of one's rivals) as elements of a collective security arrangement. Various kinds of activity undertaken by the United Nations and by such regional agencies as the Organization of American States (OAS) for the purpose of controlling threats to the peace are treated as instances

of the collective security function. In the extreme case, collective security becomes simply a synonym for world peace, and the claim that a government believes in collective security is reduced to meaning that it fears and abhors war. Thus, a term that originally connoted a particular method for preserving world order—a means whose feasibility and appropriateness to the end could be studied and evaluated—has been converted into a catchall designation for a variety of means and even for the end itself.

The damage that this development has inflicted upon the intellectual integrity and the analytical usefulness of the concept of collective security inspires regret that the original formulators and elaborators of the concept did not give it a more prosaic and ideology-proof label—let us say, method No. 5. A means so designated would have been less likely to be confused with the end that it was alleged to promote, and it would hardly have been eligible for the process of sanctification that has robbed collective security of its concrete meaning while giving it a featured place in the orthodox creed of internationalism. Method No. 5 might have remained subject to pragmatic evaluation; finding it unacceptable or inapplicable, statesmen and scholars would not have felt impelled to declare it indispensable but would have thought it sensible to consider reverting to method No. 4 or going on to method No. 6, without apologizing for the abandonment of No. 5 or attempting to convince themselves or others that No. 4 or No. 6 was really method No. 5. To have labeled the Wilsonian scheme in such a way would have been to acknowledge the variety of methods that might be conceived and adopted by international agencies in the quest for order and to discourage the ideological fixation that has tended to restrict thought about international organization to the issue of whether and how it can effectuate collective security when the issue ought to be defined in more open terms: If collective security does not seem promising, what other methods for promoting international peace and security might be attempted?¹

But this is wishful thinking. We have to live with the vagueness and confusion that have grown up around the concept of collective security. I can only inform the reader that I use the term to refer to the particular type of system for the enforcement of peace that was contemplated but never fully established by the statesmen of the League era, while warning him that it is frequently used with such looseness and imprecision that analysis of the concept and evaluation of its merits as a formula for world order are fraught with peculiar difficulty.

THE THEORY OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY

Collective security depends less heavily than pacific settlement upon the precise accuracy of a set of assumptions about the nature and causes of war. By the same token, it purports to be applicable to a wider variety of belligerent situations, assuming that not all wars arise from the same type of causation. It is at once a second line of defense against the wars which pacific settlement should but does not prevent, and a supplementary defense, on the flanks of pacific settlement, against the wars which are not within the range of the latter; thus, it adds to the protective system of world peace the benefits of both defense in depth and defense in breadth.

¹ I have reiterated this point more elaborately in "The Collectivist Theme in International Relations," *International Journal*, Autumn, 1969, pp. 639-656. The foregoing analysis of the dilution of collective security is drawn in part from my article, "The United Nations and Collective Security," in Richard B. Gray, ed., *International Security Systems* (Itasca, Illinois: Peacock, 1969), pp. 108-126.

The necessary assumption of collective security is simply that wars are likely to occur and that they ought to be prevented. The conflicts may be the fruit of unreflective passion or of deliberate planning; they may represent efforts to settle disputes, effects of undefinably broad situations of hostility, or calculated means to realize ambitious designs of conquest. They may be launched by the irresponsible dictate of cynical autocrats or the democratic will of a chauvinistic people—although the champions of collective security have frequently evinced the conviction that most wars are likely to stem from the former type of initiative. The point is that the theory of collective security is not invalidated by the discovery that the causes, functional purposes, and initiatory mechanisms of war are varied.

However, the basic assumption about the problem of war is more precise in certain important respects. Collective security is a specialized instrument of international policy in the sense that it is intended only to forestall the arbitrary and aggressive use of force, not to provide enforcement mechanisms for the whole body of international law; it assumes that, so far as the problem of world order is concerned, the heart of the matter is the restraint of military action rather than the guarantee of respect for all legal obligations. Moreover, it assumes that this ideal may be realized, or at least approximated, by a reformation of international policy, without the institution of a revolution in the structure of the international system.

To some degree, collective security shares with pacific settlement the belief that governments, or the peoples who may be in a position to influence their governments, are amenable to moral appeals against the misuse of force, and it may also be described as a rationalistic approach to peace. But the rational appeal directed by collective security to potential belligerents is not so much a suggestion of a decent and sensible alternative to violence, which characterizes pacific settlement, as a threat of dire consequences if the warning against violence is imprudently ignored. The stock in trade of pacific settlement is investigation, conciliation, arbitration, and the like—equipment for inducing rational decision to follow a morally respectable course; the stock in trade of collective security is diplomatic, economic, and military sanctions—equipment for inducing rational decision to avoid threatened damage to the national self-interest. Pacific settlement assumes, at least for tactical purposes, the moral ambiguity of a situation of conflict: avoiding an initial judgment on the moral merits of the positions held by disputants, it applies pressure equally to the two parties to adopt positive moral attitudes conducive to an agreed solution. Collective security, on the other hand, assumes the moral clarity of a situation, the assignability of guilt for a threat to or breach of the peace. It focuses, in short, upon the concept of aggression, with its implication that the parties to a military encounter can be characterized as aggressor and victim. After the identification of the culpable party, collective security discards primary concern with the factor of international morality in favor of the principle of power. Whereas pacific settlement fails if it proves impossible to make states rationally calm enough to behave morally, collective security falls down if either of two assumptions proves invalid: that blame can be confidently assessed for international crises, and that states are rationally calculating enough to behave prudently.

Collective security may be described as resting upon the proposition that war can be prevented by the deterrent effect of overwhelming power upon states which are too rational to invite certain defeat. In this respect, it is fundamentally similar to a balance of power system involving defensive alliances. However, as we shall see, collective security has other essential aspects which are its distinguishing marks, and which validate the Wilsonian claim that collective security is basically different from the system of policy which it was explicitly designed to replace.

However simple the collective security approach may seem upon superficial acquaintance, the truth is that it assumes the satisfaction of an extraordinarily complex network of requirements. The first group of prerequisites includes those of a *subjective* character, related to the general acceptability of the responsibilities of collective security; the second group may be characterized as a category of *objective* requirements, related to the suitability of the global situation to the operation of collective security.

Subjective Requirements of Collective Security

In contrast to pacific settlement, which is mainly concerned to evoke peaceful attitudes from quarreling states, collective security depends upon a positive commitment to the value of world peace by the great mass of states. Its basic requirement is that the premise of the "indivisibility of peace" should be deeply established in the thinking of governments and peoples. Collective security rests upon the assumption that it is true, and that governments and peoples can be expected to recognize and act upon the truth, that the fabric of human society has become so tightly woven that a breach any where threatens disintegration everywhere. Unchecked aggression in one direction emboldens and helps to empower its perpetrator to penetrate in other directions, or, more abstractly, successful use of lawless force in one situation contributes to the undermining of respect for the principle of order in all situations. The geographical remoteness of aggression is irrelevant; Kant's prophetic insight that "The intercourse . . . which has been everywhere steadily increasing between the nations of the earth, has now extended so enormously that a violation of right in one part of the world is felt all over it,"² must be universally acknowledged. The world's thinking must undergo the transformation that was exemplified by British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, when he switched from sighing, in the fall of 1938, "How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here, because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing," to asserting, one year later, that "If, in spite of all, we find ourselves forced to embark upon a struggle . . . we shall not be fighting for the political future of a far-away city in a foreign land; we shall be fighting for the preservation of those principles, the destruction of which would involve the destruction of all possibility of peace and security for the peoples of the world."³ Collective security requires rejection of the isolationist ideal of localizing wars, in terms of both its possibility and its desirability, and recommends to all the classic advice proffered by Alfred Nemours, the representative of Haiti, in the League debate concerning Italian aggression against Ethiopia: "Great or small, strong or weak, near or far, white or coloured, let us never forget that one day we may be somebody's Ethiopia."⁴

In requiring conviction of the indivisibility of peace, collective security demands what is essentially a factual agreement; it then imposes a related normative requirement: loyalty to the world community. The system will work only if the peoples of the world identify their particular interests so closely with the general interest of mankind that they go beyond mere recognition of interdependence to a feeling of involvement in the destiny of all nations. The responsibilities of participation in a collective security system are too onerous to be borne by any but a people actuated by genuine sympathy for any and all vic-

² *Perpetual Peace*, p. 21.

³ Cited in Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (New York Harper, 1953), p. 499.

⁴ Cited in F.P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations Volume II* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 653.

tims of aggression, and loyalty to the values of a global system of law and order. The operation of a collective security system must always be precarious unless the conviction that what is good for world peace is necessarily good for the nation is deeply engrained in governments and peoples.

This fundamental commitment does not require that what Arnold Wolfers characterized as milieu goals be considered superior to national interests, but that they be conceived as national interests of the highest order. Dedicated service to the larger international system is to be acknowledged as the indispensable means for safeguarding the most vital interests of one's own state. In this faith, the leaders of states and their constituents must be prepared to subordinate to the requirements of the collective security system their apparent and immediate national interests—to incur economic loss and run the risk of war, even in situations when national interests do not seem to be involved, or when this policy seems to conflict with national interests or to undermine established national policies. This means that states must renounce both pacifism and the right to use war as an instrument of national policy, while standing ready to resort to force for the fulfillment of their international obligations. As Arnold J. Toynbee has put it: “We have got to give up war for all the purposes for which sovereign communities have fought since war has been in existence, but we have still got to be willing to accept the risks and the losses of war for a purpose for which hitherto people have never thought of fighting.”⁵ It means that states must abandon as illusions any convictions they may have traditionally held that they are peculiarly safe against aggression, overcome the temptation to regard any specific conflict as immaterial to or even favorable to their interests, and dedicate themselves to the performance of duties which may upset the equilibrium of their national life and disrupt relationships which they have laboriously constructed. All this theoretically takes place within a system which assumes the maintenance of the basic multi-state character of international society, and demands not that national loyalties be abandoned, but that they merely be harmonized by the enlightened conception that national interests are identifiable with the global interest. What it really requires is that a state adopt this conception once and for all, and thereafter act on the assumption that it is valid, despite contrary appearance that may arise from time to time.

Collective security is a design for providing the certainty of collective action to frustrate aggression—for giving to the potential victim the reassuring knowledge, and conveying to the potential law-breaker the deterring conviction, that the resources of the community will be mobilized against any abuse of national power. This ideal permits no *ifs* or *buts*. If it merely encourages states to hope for collective support in case they are victims of attack, it must fail to stimulate the revisions of state behavior at which it aims and upon which its ultimate success depends; if the hope which it encourages should prove illusory, it stands convicted of contributing to the downfall of states whose security it purported to safeguard. If it merely warns potential aggressors that they may encounter concerted resistance, it fails to achieve full effectiveness in its basic function, that of discouraging resort to violence, and if its warning should be revealed as a bluff, it stimulates the contempt for international order which it is intended to eradicate. The theory of collective security is replete with absolutes, of which none is more basic than the requirement of certainty.

In accordance with this essential of the collective security system, the states which constitute the system must be willing to accept commitments which involve the sacrifice

⁵ Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Future of the League of Nations*, p. 14. Cf. Werner Levi, *Fundamentals of World Organization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1950), p.77.

of their freedom of action or inaction in the most crucial of future situations. They must say in advance what they will do; they must agree to dispense with *ad hoc* national judgments, and bind themselves to a pattern of action from which they will not be at liberty to deviate. This pattern may be prescribed, at least in part, by the explicit terms of a multilateral treaty. It may, additionally or alternatively, be determined by the decision of an international agency. What is essential, in either case, is that the states upon which the operation of collective security depends should clearly renounce the right to withhold their support from a collective undertaking against whatever aggressions may arise.

Moreover, the renunciation of national decision-making capacity necessarily includes surrender of discretionary competence to resort to forcible action in the absence of international authorization. Collective security can tolerate the maintenance of a carefully restricted right of self-defense, to be exercised within the bounds of international supervision, but it is a fundamental requirement of a full-fledged system that an international authority should be the master of all situations involving the use of coercive instruments. Basically, the state must abdicate its traditional control over the elements of national power, accepting the responsibility to act or to refrain from acting in accordance with the stipulations of a multilateral agreement and the dictates of an international agency. Thus, the state exposes itself to obligations determined by the community for dealing with situations which may be created by the action and policy of other states.

It is very clear that the acceptance of this kind of commitment is a drastic if not a revolutionary act for a national state. It involves a relinquishment of sovereignty in the most crucial area of policy; "To all intents and purposes a state's right of disposal of its military potential is the most sensitive segment of national sovereignty, and that part which traditionally is impervious to foreign decision or control."⁶ For constitutional democracies, it implies a transfer of power to make vital decisions which is likely to collide with established concepts of the distribution of governmental functions and powers, and a rigidification of national policy which is difficult to reconcile with the democratic principle that the people have an inalienable right to change their minds through the continuous operation of the mechanism of majority rule. It requires democratic statesmen, as democrats, to follow policies which their people may not approve in the circumstances, and, as statesmen, to abjure the exercise of the most cherished virtue of statesmanship, that of demonstrating empirical wisdom by making sound decisions in the light of the unique characteristics of a given situation. Thus, the good politician is required to betray the democratic ideal of doing what the people want, the shrewd politician is required to violate his vote-getting instincts, and the wise statesman is required to follow the rule book in a manner befitting an automaton. Finally, it means that governments and peoples must develop an unprecedented degree of confidence in the judgment and good will of foreigners, for the discretionary authority which is subtracted from the competence of the democratic majority and the national leadership is added to that of an international organization. Indeed, it is ultimately transferred to unidentifiable foreign states—those whose policy may be so obtuse that they provoke aggression against themselves, and those whose policy may be so cynical that they deliberately resort to aggression.

The essential commitments of a collective security system necessitate the willingness of nations to fight for the status quo. Collective security is not inherently an attempt to per-

⁶ Karl Loewenstein, "Sovereignty and International Co-operation," *American Journal of International Law*, April 1954, p. 235.

petuate an existing state of affairs; it is entirely compatible with a system of peaceful change, and such a system is in fact absolutely necessary for producing the kind of status quo and the kind of attitudes toward the status quo that are required if the ideal of collective security is to be realized. But at any given moment, the function of collective security is to combat assaults upon the currently legitimate pattern of national rights, and the responsibility of participating peoples is to cooperate in that enterprise without regard to any underlying sympathies they may have for claims of frustrated justice that may be enunciated by the assailants. As a general proposition, peace through justice must be the watchword of collective security. However, its provisional rule of action can hardly be any other than peace *over* justice, and the member states of the system must be prepared to go to war to preserve the system which keeps the peace, even though this involves injury to innocent people and the squelching of valid objections to the moral legitimacy of the legally established state of things.

A basic requirement of collective security is that it function impartially. It is a design for preserving the integrity of the anonymous victim of attack by the anonymous aggressor; it is no respecter of states, but an instrument to be directed against any aggressor, on behalf of any violated state. This description points to one of the significant differences between a balance of power system and a collective security system: in the former, collaborative activity is directed against *undue power*, as such, while in the latter it is turned against *aggressive policy*, whether that policy be pursued by a giant which threatens to grow to earth-shaking proportions or by a pygmy which has scant prospect of becoming a major factor in world politics.⁷

The demands imposed by the principle of anonymity upon the states which form a collective security system provide further indications of the distinction between the new and the old régimes for the management of international relations. If collective security is to operate impartially, governments and peoples must exhibit a fundamental flexibility of policy and sentiment. France must be as ready to defend Germany as Belgium against aggression, and Britain must be equally willing to join in collective sanctions against the United States or the Soviet Union. In short, collective security recognizes no traditional friendships and no inveterate enmities, and permits no alliances *with* or alliances *against*. It is true that a balance of power system, in the long run, requires similar changes of partners and redefinitions of villains, but in the short run, such a system operates through the basic mechanism of alliances. For the purposes of collective security, an alliance is either superfluous—since every state is already committed to the defense of every other state—or it is incompatible with the system—since it implies that its members will defend each other but not outsiders, and raises doubt that they will join in international sanctions as readily against one of their number as against other states. The principle of alliance tends to inject into international relations a concept of the advance identification of friends and enemies that is alien to the basic proposition of collective security: whoever commits aggression is everybody's enemy; whoever resists aggression is everybody's friend. Membership in a collective security system involves alliance with nobody in particular but with everybody in general.

All of this adds up to the fundamental subjective requirement that all states be willing to entrust their destinies to collective security. Confidence is the quintessential condition of the success of the system: states must be prepared to rely upon its effectiveness and

⁷ Cf. Wright, *Problems of Stability and Progress in International Relations*, p. 355.

impartiality. If they are so prepared, they are likely to behave in such a way as to maximize the probability that this confidence will prove justified. If they are not, they are almost certain to resort to policies which undermine the system and make it unworthy of the confidence which they decline to bestow upon it. The familiar dilemma of circularity appears here: collective security cannot work unless the policies of states are inspired by confidence in the system, but it requires an extraordinary act of political faith for states to repose confidence in the system without previous demonstration that collective security works. States are, in effect, urged to assume the applicability of the notion of self-fulfilling prophecy, if they act as if the system will work, it will do so—otherwise it will fail. The stakes are high in the world of power politics, and states do not lightly undertake such experiments in the critical field of national security.

This analysis of the subjective requirements of collective security proves nothing if not that the realization of the ideal first institutionally espoused by the League makes singularly stringent demands upon the human beings of the twentieth century. It calls for a moral transformation of political man. It offends the most pacific and the most bellicose of men; it challenges neutralism and isolationism as well as militarism and imperialism; it clashes with the views of the most conservative supporters of national sovereignty and the most liberal proponents of democratic control of foreign policy; it demands alike the dissolution of ancient national hatreds and the willingness to abandon traditional national friendships. Indeed, the question inexorably arises whether the demands imposed upon the human mind and will by collective security are in truth less rigorous than those imposed by the ideal of world government. Is collective security really a halfway house? If human beings were fully prepared to meet the subjective requirements of collective security, would they be already prepared for world government?

Objective Requirements of Collective Security

The prerequisites thus far discussed have to do with the human situation. Collective security also depends upon the satisfaction of a number of basic conditions in the external sphere—in the power situation, the legal situation, and the organizational situation.

The ideal setting for a collective security system is a world characterized by a considerable diffusion of power. The most favorable situation would be one in which all states commanded approximately equal resources, and the least favorable, one marked by the concentration of effective power in a very few major states. The existence of several, great powers of roughly equal strength is essential to collective security.

Given a power configuration meeting this minimal requirement, a collective security system next demands substantial universality of membership. It might be argued that potential aggressors might just as well be omitted, since they presumably will dishonor both the negative obligations and the positive responsibilities incumbent upon members, or that they might better be left out, since their absence will facilitate the planning and initiation of collective measures to restrain their misbehavior. This is a plausible view, even though it ignores the value for an organized community of having lawless elements clearly subject to the legal regime—surely, criminals are the last persons who ought to be formally exempted from the bonds of the law. The basic objection to this position is that it misses the point that collective security knows no “probable aggressor” but assumes that *any* state may become an aggressor. In a sense, this is an expression of the *abstractness* which is a leading characteristic of collective security; for better or for worse, collective security is not an expedient for dealing with a concrete threat to world peace, but a design

for a system of world order. In another sense, however, this is an implication of the *generality* of collective security. The system is intended to provide security for every state against the particular threat which arouses its national anxiety, and if every potential aggressor, every state which is or might become the source of the misgivings of another state, were excluded, the system would have very sparse membership indeed.

In any event, a workable system of collective security can hardly afford the exclusion or abstention of a major power. It is particularly damaging to have an important commercial and naval power on the outside, for the danger of its refusal to cooperate and to acquiesce in the infringement of its normal rights is sufficient to render improbable the effective application of economic sanctions to an aggressor. The doctrine of collective security relies heavily upon the proposition that nonmilitary measures will normally be adequate to stifle aggression—its military commitments are acceptable only because of the presumption that they will rarely be invoked—but economic sanctions are peculiarly dependent upon universal application for their efficacy.

Balance of power theory has never been able to present a satisfactory resolution of the problem of simultaneously maximizing the effectiveness and the symmetry of deterrence. If it stresses the maintenance of equilibrium between A and B, it maximizes symmetry but minimizes effectiveness; A and B are equally protected against attack by each other, but neither is well protected, for either may prove willing to attack when the odds are even. If, on the other hand, it opts for disequilibrium, it maximizes effectiveness but minimizes symmetry; the stronger A is quite secure against attack by the weaker B, but the latter is at the mercy of the former. The ideal must be to combine the superior deterrent effect of disequilibrium with the mutuality of protection afforded by equilibrium. How can A and B be simultaneously more powerful than each other? Collective security offers a theoretical solution to this problem. It opts uncompromisingly for preponderance as the more effective deterrent principle, and provides for symmetry of deterrence by promising that the preponderance of power, being at the disposal of the community rather than in the hands of a single state or coalition, will be available to any state for defensive purposes but to no state for aggressive purposes. Thus, collective security purports to establish a portable preponderance, ready to be shifted to the defense of any victim of aggression and capable of making any such victim superior to its adversary. Ideally, collective security makes preponderance safe for the world by harnessing it to the purposes of a community intent upon guaranteeing the security of all its members.

This analysis, stressing the assumption that it is possible to create such an imbalance of power in favor of the upholders of world order that aggression will be prevented by the certainty of defeat or defeated by the minimal efforts of collective forces, indicates the basic importance for a collective security system of the objective conditions of power diffusion and organizational comprehensiveness. This assumption may be invalidated by the inadequate diffusion of power. If the power configuration is such that no state commands more than, say, ten percent of the world's strength, the possibility is open for collective security to mobilize up to ninety percent against any state, a very comfortable margin of superiority. If, however, one state controls a very substantial portion of global power resources, forty-five percent, for instance, the collective matching of its strength is doubtful and the massing of overwhelming power against it is manifestly impossible. The importance of universality is also clarified by this analysis; as a collective security system approaches all inclusiveness, the possibility of its disposing of sufficient resources to out-class any aggressor grows; as it moves in the opposite direction, that possibility is correspondingly diminished.

The point is that collective security is not a design for organizing coalition warfare in the twentieth-century sense, but a plan for organizing international police action in an unprecedented sense. Its aim is not to sponsor the winning team in a free-for-all, but to eliminate international brawls by forcing aggressive states to forfeit their matches before being decisively beaten. It purports to require of participating states not that they should consent to compulsory involvement in major wars, but that they should accept obligatory service in a system for preventing major wars, and it can expect to retain their loyal support only if it succeeds in reducing, rather than increasing, their exposure to the perils of military involvement. All this is dependent upon the existence of a power situation and the achievement of an organizational situation making the massive overpowering of potential aggressors a feasible objective. The first essential of a police force is that its power should be so considerable, and that of its possible opponents so negligible, that any contest will be virtually won before it has begun; otherwise, its function will be that of conducting warfare, no matter how it may be described.

The intrinsic disadvantages of a collective security force are so great that its margin of superiority is always smaller than any purely objective standard of measurement would reveal. Since it confronts an anonymous aggressor, its capacity for formulating advance plans of action is severely limited. Since it is by definition a coalition force, its strength is very likely to be less than that of the sum of its parts. Its value depends heavily upon its ability to act quickly, so as to forestall threatened aggression, and yet its very inability to concentrate on plans for defeating a specific enemy and its complex structure militate against promptness in the effective mobilization of its potential strength. Collective security can command little confidence if it promises to become effective only after an aggressor has ravaged a country. Given the nature of modern war, a military campaign cannot be organized overnight, and the power of an aggressive state is maximized by preparatory measures. The collaborative force required for the implementation of collective security must be overwhelmingly preponderant in theory if it is to be even somewhat preponderant in practice.

The situation envisaged by collective security is marked not only by the wide distribution of power among states and the possibility of the near-monopolization of power by the community, but also by the general reduction of power, as embodied in military instruments. That is to say, collective security is based upon the assumption of partial disarmament. In strict theoretical terms, the system might work as well at a high level of armament as at a low level, but the intrusion of the subjective factor makes it virtually essential that collective security have a substantially demilitarized world to work in. This is because collective security is fundamentally an attempt to mobilize the world's antiwar forces for the prevention of war by the threat to make war; the ambiguity of the system is underlined by the fact that it relies for its initiation upon recognition that the risk of war is intolerable, and for its operation upon willingness to accept the risk of war. Its army of pacifists is tentatively willing to use force only because it abhors the use of force. Being precariously founded upon this psychological and moral paradox, collective security requires a power situation that permits it to do its job with a minimum of military exertion. If every state is reduced to military weakness, no aggressor will be strong enough to make a catastrophic war out of an encounter with the community's forces, and no member of the enforcement team will be tempted to feel that its joining up has been a jump from the military frying pan into the military fire. Just as the peaceful citizen may be less inclined to volunteer as a policeman if potential criminals are

equipped with machine guns rather than mere fists, the willingness of peacefully inclined states to participate in the venture of collective security is dependent upon the magnitude of the military involvement prospectively required; they are prepared to serve as whistle-blowing and nightstick wielding policemen, but they reserve decision about becoming full-fledged soldiers.

At this point, we again encounter the troublesome problem of circularity. Collective security cannot work unless states disarm, but states will not disarm until collective security has clearly shown that it merits confidence. The maintenance of national military strength is an indication that states are unwilling to entrust their fate to a community agency, but their armament policy, born of lack of confidence in collective security, prevents the development of an effective collective security system.

Another significant objective requirement might be described as the universality of economic vulnerability. Collective security assumes that the states of the world are as interdependent for their strength as for their peace, and that its restraining function can be exercised in large part by the imposition of isolation, the organization of deprivation, without resort to collective measures of suppression. It envisages a world in which every state is not only susceptible to the impact of organized force, but also, vulnerable to the squeeze of organized boycott, and it accordingly regards economic sanctions as its first line of attack. It recognizes the vital importance of holding the military weapon in reserve, but it offers to its participating members the reassuring possibility that they may be able to discharge their responsibilities by the relatively painless and humane method of denying to aggressors the benefits of normal intercourse, rather than by running the risks involved in the resort to arms.

In summary, collective security assumes the existence of a world in which every state is so limited by the distribution of power, the reduction of military power levels by a disarmament program, and the lack of economic self-sufficiency, that any state which may develop aggressive inclinations can be held in check by methods which probably need not include the large-scale use of force. It assumes the possibility of securing the acceptance by states of theoretically formidable responsibilities for enforcing the peace, only because it assumes the improbability that it will be necessary to invoke the performance of the most drastic enforcement duties.

Finally, collective security requires the creation of a legal and structural apparatus capable of giving institutional expression to its basic principles. This involves the legal establishment of the prohibition of aggression, the commitment of states to collaborate in the suppression of aggression, and the endowment of an international organization with authority to determine when and against what state sanctions are to be initiated, to decide upon the nature of the inhibitory measures, to evoke the performance of duties to which states have committed themselves, and to plan and direct the joint action which it deems necessary for the implementation of collective security. The meaningfulness of the system is dependent upon the capacity of the organizational mechanism to exercise these vital functions without obstruction. In specific terms, this means that the decision to set the system into operation against a particular state must not be subject to the veto of an obstinate minority, and that no state can be permitted to nullify its commitment to act on behalf of the community by withholding its assent from a decision to call for the performance of that obligation. The elaboration of an adequate supervisory agency is no less important to collective security than the satisfaction of the subjective requirements and the realization of the prerequisite conditions in the global power situation . . .