

THE NEW ROMAN EMPIRE

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IN the summer of 1936, there was set up as a public monument in the city of Addis Ababa a great bronze replica of that Roman wolf of the Capitoline that is alleged to have suckled Romulus and Remus. The sculpture took the place of one of a lion, the Lion of Judah, purporting to indicate the descent of the Ethiopian dynasty from an infant son of the Queen of Sheba, brought back by her from Jerusalem as a precious souvenir of her visit at the court of King Solomon. Little as the Abyssinian tribesmen may relish the exchange of beasts, the re-erecting of that bronze wolf amid the tropical mountains of East Africa symbolizes the claim to successful re-emergence of a Roman Empire, with its capital on the Seven Hills by the ancient Tiber and its victorious legions dominating far-off provinces. This purports to be an authentic revival, compared with which the Carolingian and Hohenstaufen régimes were the barbarian imposition of Frankish and German tribes, while the so-called "Empires" of modern Germany, Austria, and Britain are only more or less successful bits of copy-work by still other non-Roman peoples.

That the Imperial concept has tended to dominate recent Italian thought, is suggested by speeches of Mussolini and of the Italian King during the past two years:

(a) *Sept. 13, 1934.* Mussolini at Bari, Italy: "From this side of thirty centuries of history, we can look with supreme contempt on those doctrines which have come from people who did not even know how to write when we had already given birth to Caesar, Vergil, and Augustus."

(b) *June 16, 1935.* Mussolini at a parade of ex-Grenadiers at Rome: "As we stand amid the walls of the Palatine, the Colosseum, and other buildings of ancient Rome, the very stones around us are more eloquent than any speech. They tell us that when Rome was great she dominated the world with the force of her arms and the wisdom of her laws. Nothing prohibits us from believing that that which was the destiny of yesterday shall be the destiny of to-day."

(c) *August 17, 1935.* Mussolini, speaking to two divisions due to sail for East Africa: "We shall go forward until we achieve the Fascist Empire."

(d) *November 1, 1935.* King Vittorio Emanuele III, at the University of Rome: "In every hour of her glorious history, Rome has carried out her mission of civilization. To-day, Italy is following along that same path, more than ever united in a spontaneous effort of faith and will."

(e) *April 21, 1936.* Mussolini, celebrating at Rome the 2690th anniversary of the founding of the city by Romulus: "We shall carry with us, as always, the force, the justice, and the civilization of Rome."

(f) *May 5, 1936.* Mussolini, in a public proclamation: "I announce that the war is finished. . . . The result is our peace, a Roman peace."

(g) *May 9, 1936.* Mussolini, in a public address: "Italy has at last her Empire, a Fascist Empire of peace and civilization, in keeping with the traditions of Rome." That same day, by proclamation, the King of Italy assumed the title of Emperor, and that night the Fascist Grand Council adopted a resolution expressing the country's gratitude to Mussolini as "the founder of the Empire."

(h) *May 24, 1936.* Mussolini, to a review of picked troops from the young levies: "We are preparing the young armies of to-morrow to defend the Empire; and as they are animated by the Fascist spirit, they will be invincible."

A superficial comparison of the new Empire with the ancient one may lend some colour to these pretensions. Including Ethiopia, Italian Somaliland, Eritrea, Libya, and Italy proper, the realms of Vittorio Emanuele III total 1,360,000 square miles, with a population of approximately 54,000,000. At the death of Augustus, the Roman domain in Europe and Asia (but excluding Africa) also totalled about 1,300,000 square miles, with a population for the whole Empire placed conservatively at 54,000,000. Both Empires likewise are associated with triumphant dictators, the Caesar of the new order being one Benito Mussolini, who, like Augustus, finds his chief authority as commander-in-chief of the Empire's military forces, while preserving the semblance of constitutional government and laying great store by an honorific title—in this case "II Duce", rather than the "Princeps" of his ancient model.

A slightly closer scrutiny will, however, reveal a genuine disparity in extent between the New Roman Empire and the Old. Two-thirds of the area assigned to the Fascist Empire consists of African desert in Libya, Somaliland, and Eritrea, sparsely populated with intractable natives, and in general so infertile that

only 50,000 Italians have settled in the whole vast tract. One of the most recent acquisitions, conceded by Premier Laval of France in the Rome Agreement of January 1935, is a section of the Sahara Desert equal in area to Italy itself, but containing (according to Mussolini's own ironic estimate) exactly 62 natives. If one were further to exclude the 350,000 square miles of Ethiopia, recently conquered and dubiously held, the Empire would shrink to Italy and some Mediterranean islands, an effective area little more than half the size of France—and even this area is two-thirds mountainous or very hilly, is poor in mineral resources, and is impoverished in soil by three thousand years of continuous agriculture. By comparison, the ancient Roman Empire was an imposing domain of consistently fertile territory, lying wholly within the north temperate zone, and peopled almost entirely by European races or their near kindred.

Statistics of area and population provide, however, a very superficial standard for comparison between the old and the new. A lion and a young crocodile may be comparable in bulk, and yet be profoundly different in all other respects. For any real comprehension of resemblances and differences, we shall need to go back and analyse the fundamental nature of the historic Roman Empire, for only thus can we judge the character and achievements of its alleged successor.

In our survey of the ancient Empire, we shall need to consider three successive and overlapping phases, spread over a period of several centuries: (i) the phase of military conquest, down to about 50 B. C.; (ii) the phase of administrative centralization and legal integration, under Julius, Augustus, and their successors; and (iii) the phase of philosophical homogenization, through which all mankind was felt to form a single Great Society, a society that in time was translated from secular into religious terms and became at last the Church Universal.

Rome had already conquered most of her ultimate domain before the Republic gave way to the autocracy of the Caesars. In fact, from a military point of view, republican Rome was a far more formidable power than Caesarean Rome, and lost much of its pristine virility in the savage blood-letting of the civil wars of the half-century preceding the accession of Augustus. The far-flung Empire, the *Imperium Romanum*, was the creation of the Romans while they were still a democracy, albeit an aristocratic one.

The factors entering into that conquest were largely threefold; viz.: martial strength, historical good luck, and a genius for law and administration.

The Italic races (Latin, Sabine, Oscan, Umbrian, and their kindred), who shared the peninsula with the Etruscans and the colonial Greeks, were apparently an Indo-European race of unusual virility and stamina. Lacking the intellectual brilliance of the Greek blend of Hellenic and Pelasgic peoples, they were nevertheless endowed with a political grasp denied to the other ancient races. As soldiers, they were seldom brilliant in tactics or strategy, and showed little of the *élan* of the Greek or the Carthaginian at his best; but under attack they stood like granite. Their affinities were with Cromwell's Ironsides or with Wellington's British squares at Waterloo; and even defeat seemed only to harden their resolution. Their would-be conqueror, Pyrrhus, found that his army, with its presumably irresistible force, had at last met with an immovable object; and Hannibal, for all his overwhelming superiority as a general, wore himself away against the rugged resistance of the Roman character.

This resolute race, during the early centuries of the Republic, was supported directly by intensive agriculture on the unhand-selled fertility of the Italian soil. They were at once a community of farmers and a community of soldiers. From the military point of view, it was significant that the chief legislative assembly of the early Republic, the *Comitia Centuriata*, was really a muster-parade of the whole military population, drawn up in their military divisions and standing soldierly at attention while they voted, unit by unit.

To phrase it in another way, the voting assembly of the Roman people was the nation in arms. Their chief magistrates were the commanders of that army, and the government had throughout its course a conspicuously military orientation.

An incidental evidence of Rome's dogged determination in war (and a matter of surprise to many of her early contemporaries) was the decision, from the siege of Veii (about 400 B. C.) onward, to keep an army in the field all the year round if necessary, instead of making war a seasonal pastime, like modern rugby, with an inter-tribal schedule planned for the close of harvest every year. Equally resolute and decisive was their practice of building permanent military highways and planting out garrisons and colonies at points of great strategic importance. With other ancient peoples, war had tended to be spasmodic and fitful, but the Romans, with dour thoroughness, made it a primary activity of the state. War became their chief national industry.

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evitable. Sheer good fortune often accounts for their weathering the storm. In the infancy of the Roman state, the superior military strength of the Etruscans might easily have eliminated the Romans entirely; but the power of Etruria was paralyzed, beyond all expectation, by the shattering attacks of the Gauls in the north and of the Samnites in Campania, while the Greeks of Syracuse broke the Etruscan ascendancy on the sea. Again, Rome's allies, the Latins and the Hernicans, broke the force of the assaults from Volscians and Aequians, and these in their turn were weakened by the impact of fierce tribes beyond them again.

But most important of all was the strong serious character of the Romans, and their absorption in problems of administration and law. With a strong grip on realities, they bound individual communities directly to Rome, while suppressing all other affiliations that might lead to a combination of disaffected peoples against the imperial government. Municipal patriotism was encouraged, with local self-government on the Roman model, but all other loyalties,—tribal, provincial, or regional—had to give way to allegiance to the city-state of Rome. Insistence on uniformity of justice and equality before the law helped likewise to consolidate the conquests of the legions. The annual despatch of prefects, representing the praetors, imposed even-handed justice throughout all regions controlled by Rome, and built up an enduring confidence in her institutions.

This is not to imply that the expansion of Rome was a thoroughly pleasant and perfectly moral process, in the course of which her representatives were models of temperance and honesty. While most of her wars down to the final defeat of Hannibal were fought for her own ultimate safety, and even at times to preserve her very life, there was a subsequent weakening and coarsening of the national character, and the pitiless exploitation of subject populations by corrupt governors, rapacious banking houses and commercial profiteers was a standing disgrace for the next century and a half. Yet the balance, as between good and evil, seems ultimately and definitely to be on the positive side. Transalpine Gaul, for example, had been from time immemorial a vast wooded wilderness peopled by tribes that warred constantly amongst themselves and against periodic invaders from beyond the Rhine. Julius Caesar, at the cost of one million dead in ten years, reduced the region to an orderly provincial area which for centuries to come would enjoy peace, law, and civilized development. Ghastly as the initial suffering had been, the loss of life was probably saved many times over during the civilized epoch that followed, and the general level of life was raised immensely.

Consideration of the legal and administrative gains incidental to the period of conquest brings us naturally to a more careful examination of the way in which the fortuitous unity of conquest became an organic unity based on law and administration. It was no accident that hundreds of ancient states, great and small, became merged in a Great State, which was itself neither nationalist nor imperialist (in the modern sense), but a collective system of human-kind.

In this respect, it is easy to over-estimate the part played by armies and generals. More significant, perhaps, from the human point of view, is the steady, continuous development of Roman Law from the Twelve Tables of the 5th century B. C. down to Justinian's *Corpus Juris* in the 6th century A.D. For in this evolution, in spite of internal dissension and external pressure, the national character, in response to the need created by the success of Roman arms, produced for the first time in human history a jurisprudence which transcended purely national bounds and so made possible the ideal of a super-national state. This is a peculiarly Roman glory. It is remarkable that the Romans, who were inferior to the Greeks in every other department of thought, were incomparably superior to them in the field of jurisprudence. It almost seems as if the force of circumstances had focussed upon this one subject all of the intellectual gifts of this particular branch of the Indo-European family, for law was the one native intellectual pursuit of the Roman noble. An aristocracy that looked to government as a natural field for activity directed all its higher education towards this task, and in maturity regarded the practice of law as a daily duty. The only historical parallel, and it falls far short of the Roman original, is the way in which generations of young English aristocrats, looking forward to political life as a natural occupation, have been trained for the House of Commons in the debates of the Oxford Union.

Roman law was not the product of legislation, however, but the creation of ten centuries of practising lawyers, the evolving tradition of a learned class. In the upshot, it substituted the rule of rational equity throughout the ancient world for a shifting medley of tribal customs and often illogical taboos. Fundamental human institutions—the family, private property, and the sanctity of contracts—were convincingly set forth as inherent in the nature of mankind everywhere. Thus Roman jurisprudence, by its profound superiority to all other ancient law, Oriental or Occidental, became a pervasive cement, giving cohesion to the whole vast Empire, and making possible the idea of a super-national state, based on reasoned justice and the fundamental nature of man.

Reinforcing this centripetal influence of Roman law was the unifying of administration, especially through the far-seeing provisions of Julius Caesar and of Augustus. Julius, for instance, after breaking the selfish and disorderly power of the Senate, passed a Local Government Act for all Italy, providing in detail both for local self-government throughout all the municipalities and for the clearly defined association of each with the central government at Rome. This municipal system, providing for healthy local development without at the same time sacrificing the ultimate authority of the State in major issues, has been described as second only to Roman law among the great achievements of Roman genius.

With Augustus, during a tireless and ever-sagacious reign of nearly half a century, we find systematic effectiveness introduced into every phase of imperial administration. For the spasmodic efficiency of annually elected amateurs (even down to the humblest office) there is substituted a permanent civil service, offering to any man of unusual talent a career of life-long distinction. The determining force of the new order was personal loyalty to Augustus himself, who spared no pains to foster in his subordinates a genuine code of professional honour and devotion to duty. Thus arose the Whitehall of Ancient Rome, which, though it ultimately perished of dry rot, yet gave the world two centuries of the best government it has ever known, a lucid interval of peace, justice, and plenty between the blood-stained sterility of ancient wars and the bloody destruction and chaos of the Dark Ages. The modern orator, with little regard for the facts, often vilifies the life and morals of the Graeco-Roman world of the time of Jesus and St. Paul in order to magnify the achievement of Christianity. Actually the period from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius was one of the few really great epochs in human history, and probably the only epoch, prior to modern times, when an infant faith would have had any real prospect of living and spreading throughout the world.

The one issue on which the early Christians ran foul of the Roman State was an issue which was central in principle to the survival of the Empire, viz. the deification of the Emperor. Unlike the Semites, who set a great gulf between God and man, the Greeks had long regarded their greatest men, the benefactors of the race, as "godlike" and "saviours of men". With Alexander, this conception, reinforced by the King-worship of the Egyptians and Persians, resulted in the deification of the monarch in his life-time and in his being universally worshipped as an expression of real gratitude for peace and good government. This was the device which Julius and Augustus borrowed to provide their vast domains

with a centre of personal loyalty and attachment. Just as the British King-Emperor in our own day is a living symbol of unity for all parts of the Commonwealth and Empire, personifying by a political fiction the State's ultimate source of authority, honour, and justice, so the Roman rulers found in emperor-worship a serious principle of consolidation.

From legal and administrative unity, the Empire passed on to a conception of the entire ancient world as a single world-state, ruled in harmony with a law of nature before which all men were equal as members of the common brotherhood of humankind. Limited loyalties to a city-state, a tribe, or a nation gave place to a belief in one universal society. So, too, throughout the Graeco-Roman world there had been a general religious movement towards a fusion of cults and a belief in a single God of the Universe, and this reinforced the growth of an Empire to which the great spirits of godlike men, the emperors, were sent by "the eternal and immortal Providence of the Universe" to be "saviours of the community of the human race".

From the third century A. D. onward, there is a further change. Constant war between brief incompetent aspirants to the throne, the oppressions of a corrupt and ruthless bureaucracy, and an army that grew constantly more ruthless and irresponsible, destroyed the voluntary social will that had once given its grateful support to the imperial government. Religious motives—a passionate diversion of loyalty to the worship of Mithras, of Isis, of Cybele, or of Jesus—became the only way of hope. And we have the prospect of an Empire on the verge of dissolution seeking to survive by allying itself with the Church. Even thus, so far as Western Europe was concerned, the political fabric of Empire perished, and by the end of the 5th century A.D. there remained no emperor, no capital, no administration. There did survive, however, a society, a community unified by a common religious faith, the Christian Church with a position of primacy assigned to the Bishop of Rome.

It would be possible to trace the concept of Empire for another thousand years, during which the ecclesiastical society of the Western Church, as, for example, under Gregory VII, laid more and more specific claim to universal rule. Political powers might emerge, such as the Frankish Empire of Charlemagne or the German Empire (*das alte heilige roemische Reich*) of Otto and his successors; but it was not until the 14th century that the papal claim to universal authority was successfully challenged by the emergence of our modern nationalism in the time of Boniface VIII. Since then the world has witnessed the anarchic growth of

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nationalistic states, nourished by commercial and industrial developments that have made possible far vaster populations than in ancient times, but at a price of far greater economic interdependence. In the recurring cycles of historical development we are thus still back at a stage anterior to that Great Society which we call the Roman Empire.

From it all, our chief inheritance has been a dream of human unity. Rome's power passed, as all power has passed, but her vision of mankind prospering in universal peace has remained to haunt the hearts of many a generation even down to our own.

In the light of the foregoing survey, let us turn back to analyse the assumptions of the new Fascist Empire of Mussolini's Rome.

A comparison of the constituent populations gives us immediate pause. We know from ancient history that the original Indo-European stock which made Rome great in conquest and law was virtually wiped out by war and race suicide, and in its place came teeming progeny of Greek and Syrian slaves, who in turn were later mixed in North Italy with invading barbarians such as the Goths and Lombards. The statement of the historian Appian, dealing with the period of the Civil Wars, is well known:

The landlords used slaves as laborers and herdsmen, fearing that if they used free men these would be drawn into the army. The ownership of slaves itself brought great gain from the multitude of their children, who increased because they were exempt from military service. Thus the powerful ones became enormously rich and the race of slaves multiplied, while the Italian people dwindled in numbers and strength, being oppressed by penury, taxes, and service in the army.

The same author, dealing with the times of Tiberius Gracchus, records "the lamentations of the poor, saying that they were reduced to childlessness because they were unable in their poverty to rear children." During the Empire we have fairly full records of the old aristocracy, and are able to witness their calamitously swift decline. Of the forty-five famous old patrician families represented in the Senate in Caesar's day—such families as the Fabii, Aemilii, Claudii, Valerii, and the rest—only one single family, that of the Cornelii, is represented by posterity in the time of Hadrian, 150 years later.

Confirmation of this disappearance is found in statistics for stature in modern times. While the average stature of adult males today is 5'9" in Ireland, Scotland, and Scandinavia, 5'7" in England, and 5'6" in Germany, it drops in South Italy, Sardinia, and Sicily to the amazing low average of 5' 1½". Even Spain and

North Italy rank distinctly higher, with a common average of 5'4" for adult males. It is hard to identify the littlest men in all Europe, the swarthy dwarfs of Southern Italy, with the invincible legions of Republican Rome. (One ought, perhaps, in parenthesis, to emphasize the complementary fact that Italy during the past five centuries has been unsurpassed in her achievements in painting, sculpture, poetry, music, and science, i. e., precisely in the fields where Ancient Greece utterly eclipsed Ancient Rome.)

In the Great War of 1914-18, Italy had over five million men under arms, and Mussolini can now mobilize eight million by the stroke of a pen. Without minimizing, however, the past achievements and present potentialities of that army, one may be tempted to question its invincibility if pitted against a first class power such as France, let alone against that militant Titan, Hitler's Germany. Signor Mussolini has done much to train and arm his country and render it belligerent; but he is a long way from enjoying that uncontested primacy in war which was possessed by Old Rome.

As for the nascent Empire in Africa, heralded as a region into which Italy's teeming race, now multiplying with a net increase of half a million per annum, may expand and soon more than duplicate the population of the European Kingdom, it is very doubtful whether much will be accomplished beyond a hasty exploitation of natural resources.

Almost the whole African continent, amounting to ten million square miles, was divided a half century ago amongst imperially-minded European powers; but to-day, in all that vast area, there are only 3½ million Europeans. Two millions of these are in temperate South Africa, and another 1,200,000 along the temperate shores of the Mediterranean Sea. There are only 300,000 in all the rest of Africa. In other words, fifty years of experience have shown that Europeans cannot and will not settle in large numbers in the tropics, where the Italians have placed their hopes.

Germany in the 1880's secured three million square miles of African territory, and carried on intensive propaganda regarding her colonial mission and the opportunities for settlement that lay open before her people; but by January 1st, 1911, there were still only 15,891 Germans in the whole of Africa. In Kenya Colony, where Great Britain has for a generation been occupying an area much more suitable for white settlement than Ethopia, there are to-day only 12,000 Europeans. Italy herself has owned Eritrea for some sixty years, and has possessed in the northern part of that colony some 2,000 square miles of highlands comparable to the best of Abyssinia in altitude, climate, and soil; but by 1935 the number

of Italians who had sought by settlement in that fertile area to relieve the human congestion of Italy amounted to just 400 individuals—men, women and children! Hitler has been far more realistic in proposing to carve a Nazi Empire out of the living flanks of European Russia as an outlet for surplus German population. (It is, by the way, a paradox that Nazi Germany, whose population is actually declining to-day, should seek such relief at the expense of Soviet Russia which has a net increase of nearly two millions per annum; but a dictator must think out proposals to keep his subjects' minds off their own troubles.)

There are serious grounds, therefore, for believing that the new Fascist Empire, acquired by means that have been condemned by almost the whole civilized world, will, from the settlement point of view, be worth less than the acquisition of a single Mediterranean island such as Rhodes, or the draining of the Pomptine Marshes. Under the circumstances, it is hard to understand why Mussolini, who has the reputation of being a realist, still insists on entering every Italian wife in a "stork derby." His spectacular "March of the Fecund Mothers", staged at Rome last summer—a vehicular parade of the winning mothers with their progeny (the winner had twenty-four!)—is one of the most amazing of contemporary phenomena. In the course of the ceremony, broadcast throughout the country, he reiterated his plea for "fecundity in the most literal sense of that stark word".

But the most serious defect of the New Roman Empire remains to be considered.

The ancient Empire, although in its Caesarean phase it was created by an autocrat backed by an army, has commanded the admiration of twenty centuries, not because of its mere area, population, and military prowess, but because it was a collective system of the bulk of the civilized world, based on the rule of law. It was a merging of small states in the Great State, where, for the first time in history, that fundamental blood-brotherhood of mankind which had been discussed *in vacuo* by Greek philosophers was embodied in the practice of a universal system. It was not Roman warfare, but the Roman peace, that caught the imagination of mankind; not Roman rapine, but Roman justice; not Roman nationalism, but Roman universality.

The modern world has a comparable but still more difficult problem to solve. Self-conscious nationalism has fashioned, in Europe, Asia, and the Americas, scores of nation-states of varying sizes and varying degrees of civilization. Some, such as Switzerland, Holland, and Denmark, are small and relatively pacific.

Others, like Germany and Japan, are larger and aggressively belligerent. Some such as France, Britain, Czechoslovakia, or the United States, have democratic forms of government. Others, like Soviet Russia or Italy, are undisguised oligarchies. Bitter differences of ideology sunder nation from nation and class from class. Outrageous claims of national pride or sentimentality demand warlike courses in defiance of all other considerations. On a larger scale, we are back at the stage of cut-throat rivalry between city-states that preceded the ancient unification under Rome. Peace and international co-operation are fundamental to the survival of our complex industrial economies; yet nation after nation is risking world conflict and collapse in order to snatch by the sword the semblance of present advantage.

The ultimate hope of civilization is in world-unity, the reproduction on a vaster scale of the Great Society that was Rome. Yet how is that world order to be achieved?

Not, as I see it, through the conquest of the world by a single great nation. Two decades ago, ambitious dreams of *Weltmacht* for imperial Germany were at least a consistent deduction from the study of Rome's rise to power. But the forces involved to-day are too catastrophic and too evenly balanced; the sequel is too likely to be on a world scale, the sort of sterile and inconclusive blood-bath that has drowned contemporary Spain in horror. Nor is it certain that a conquering nation, if one did emerge, would impose the justice as well as the ruthlessness of Rome.

On the other hand, there is obviously no confidence to be placed in mere moral suasion and the sweet reasonableness of international love-feasts. These are pike in the carp-pond. Violent nations with real or imagined grievances are running wild in the world community, and will not be restrained by anything short of the police or a *posse comitatus*. Justice, whether in the city state or the world state, can be assured only by force,—force in effective reserve, and force, if need be, expressed in coercive action.

The alternative to chaos is a collective system, a world-order in which all states admit the existence of fundamental international and super-national laws to which they owe allegiance. Such a universal community would require the relinquishment on the part of each state of some of that absolute national sovereignty in whose name every crime is justified to-day. The police responsibility of the individual country should certainly be regulated in terms of its proximity to the outlaw state; but there should be no doubt whatever as to the non-neutrality of every citizen-state in the world society. To condone the acts of the international criminal,

or to lend him actual succor, should be considered as making one an accessory to the crime.

The outlook for a world-order is now far darker and more dubious than it was ten years ago. The challenge of armed nationalism is to-day more ruthless and contemptuous than ever before. Yet to acquiesce in the triumph of international anarchy is to despair of the human race. In the long view of history, it is the truest realism to stand by the only ideal by which any moral future can be won for the world.

The ideal may never be realized in our time, and it is difficult to see what force comparable to the irresistible Julius can impose the unity we desire, what sagacity comparable to that of Augustus can frame the institutions under which the world state can develop peacefully and vigorously, and above all, what loyalty comparable to that given the person of the deified emperor can transcend all the passionate national loyalties to race, creed, language, and tradition. But while the problem is surpassingly difficult, the solution is imperative. We must answer the riddle of the Sphinx or be flung down the cliff to destruction,—we and our children and our children's children.

The most serious judgment upon the new Roman Empire is that it is flagrantly opposed to any such development of a world-order. In the most fundamental sense of the word, it is not an Empire at all, but a national state gone delirious—"spacious in the possession of dirt", but destitute of any sense of universal responsibility.

On the contrary Signor Mussolini, particularly in his article on "Fascism" in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* (1932), makes it perfectly clear that to a Fascist the only object of devotion is the Italian state and the Italian race. In the sacred cause of patriotism, no plan can be too unscrupulous, too barbaric. Zeal in the patriotic cause sanctifies the most abominable acts. There is no such thing as "common humanity"; there are only Fascist Italians and "lesser breeds without the law."

Democratic nations may be striving to bring in a world order, based on collective security, orderly disarmament, the abolition of war, and the assurance of international good faith. All of these ideals Signor Mussolini repudiates as weak and unworthy. War, he declares, is a magnificent necessity in human life, stimulating the heroic nature of heroic races. To suppress war is therefore irrational and absurd, an evil tampering with the wise dispensation of Providence by which superior races may flourish violently at the expense of the weak. To the Fascist, only carnivorous states are noble and deserve to endure; those who have outgrown the

sacro egoismo of predacious self-aggrandisement are *ipso facto* effete, and should be eaten alive by the carnivores.

Not to Julius and Augustus does this political philosophy go back, but rather to Machiavelli and his sinister blending of patriotic mysticism and barbaric realism. It is a libel on Ancient Rome when Mussolini revives the terminology of that august past to describe a modern state based on the ethics of the jungle. It may be, however, that, in a sense to which the Fascists are blind, their dictator has been profoundly right in erecting in bomb-swept Ethiopia not a symbol of Rome's civilizing mission, but a reproduction of the most primitive figure of Rome's savage dawn—the Capitoline Wolf.

If the foregoing indictment seems unduly severe, one may turn for corroboration to a book recently published by Marshal Emilio de Bono, the chief manager of Mussolini's Ethiopian War. In this volume, he reveals that three years before that war began he was entrusted with the task of making all preparations—building military roads to the frontiers of Abyssinia, recruiting and training fifty thousand Somali and Eritrean tribesmen, and bribing half the Ethiopian tribes to lay down their arms when the Italian advance began. The chief difficulty was to find an excuse for invasion, for the Emperor of Ethiopia was steadfast in refusing to give provocation. At last the Wal-wal event, an attack on Ethiopian troops by Italian native troops fifty miles within Ethiopian territory, was distorted into an intolerable piece of barbaric aggression on the part of the Ethiopians, and in the sacred name of civilization the Italians began their conquest. To their own nation and to the outer world the war-makers maintained a cynical insistence on their own innocence in the face of Ethiopian savagery. Now, however, when success has crowned their gangster performance, they brazenly publish the whole brutal story, even to their decision, after three months of inconclusive warfare, to launch a campaign of terror from the air. Hence the systematic bombing of Red Cross hospitals, of defenceless villages, and of peasant women working in the fields.

This is the sinister work of a contemporary nation, aggressive and contemptuously successful. Its bearing on the future of our world is obvious, and even we Canadians in our subarctic retreat cannot be indifferent to it. What our foreign policy should be, is to-day a matter of profound interest and concern. I think I have made clear my own belief that a world order, based on justice and police action, is vital and not impracticable; but whatever our policy may be, let us shape it with eyes fully opened to the hideous realities of the age in which we live.