

Peaslee: A Permanent United Nations

Anthony Palasz

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/mulr>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Anthony Palasz, *Peaslee: A Permanent United Nations*, 27 Marq. L. Rev. 169 (1943).

Available at: <http://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/mulr/vol27/iss3/12>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Marquette Law Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Marquette Law Review by an authorized administrator of Marquette Law Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact megan.obrien@marquette.edu.

This material is based on one year's war experience of cities since Pearl Harbor. It contains reliable information on existing federal wartime statutes and a summary of pending legislation that will affect municipalities.

Old and recent court decisions are cited on many issues of law, especially relating to the powers and limitations of power of federal and state and local governments, particularly in reference to the dual sovereignty of the United States and the several states. The book is well-planned and indexed and should be a handy ready reference for every city and county attorney in the land. It should be of great assistance to the federal officials, military and civil, whose positions require contact with city authorities; it should have a wide appeal to the bar, public officials and the public generally.

It is beyond the province of this review to enumerate or discuss the many subjects and questions covered in the book, but we can state unreservedly that any lawyer, either serving the public or in private practice, faced with a legal problem involving wartime activities of municipalities will find this book to be of invaluable aid.

OMAR T. McMAHON.*

A Permanent United Nations—Amos Peaslee. G. P. Putnams and Son, N. Y., 1942. Pp. 146. \$2.50.

One of the most discussed questions today, that of a permanent united nations, is the topic of Mr. Amos Peaslee's new book. The author is neither pessimistic nor optimistic but he does present one of the best arguments in favor of a permanent world government that has been seen recently.

Mr. Peaslee, who is a recognized authority on international law and who has been an American representative at many international conferences including the one at Versailles, first makes an historical review of the various methods employed by nations to formulate international policy, beginning with the Treaty of Westphalia up to the latest Pan American conferences and, most recently, the Atlantic Charter. He points out rather emphatically that the failure in the past, and the possible collapse in the future, lies in the absence of a *real world government*—self-sustaining and powerful enough to enforce its laws. Mere treaties, mere contracts are not enough; it must be government.

The author outlines a suggested form of government. It should be democratic in form, he says, and should consist of a legislature, a judiciary and an executive office. Although Mr. Peaslee speaks against

*Assistant City Attorney, Milwaukee.

representation based on blocs or groups of nations such as the Balkan states, the slavic states or the English speaking countries, he does not make himself quite clear, it seems, as to the basis of representation he would himself favor. This is perhaps the weakest point in his argument for the practicability of his plan. Further, the author suggests a World Court with jurisdiction confirmed to international disputes and an executive office with police power to enforce court judgments and legislative acts. The punishment for a gross violation of international law by any nation should be the loss of nationality: just as a criminal is deprived of citizenship so should a criminal nation be deprived of nationality. The argument, however analogically correct, remains nevertheless doubtful since the duration of the penalty and the definition of gross violation of international law remain far too obscure. Finally, the basis for the entire government should be a written constitution with a specific bill of rights for the individual nations.

No author could attempt to write this kind of book without exposing himself to much adverse, if not severe, criticism. But Mr. Peaslee, it is reiterated, is no optimist. He is no "quack" doctor treating international diseases with a "cure-all" patent medicine. He expects nations to be slow and even reluctant to accept a superstructural world government. But he insists, and quite reasonably so, that now if ever, after the errors of the past, with the myth of isolationism destroyed and with the interdependence of nations admitted almost as axiomatic, the nations of the world are ready to make this last step.

ANTHONY PALASZ.