Global steps towards human security

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Introduction
The rise of limited global and regional governance marks a recognition from within that the sovereign state system is inadequate for the satisfaction of what must be the fundamental aim of political activity: making people as secure as possible. Unravelling globalization is not the route to human security, however. Rather, as this paper tries to show, the promotion of more ‘rounded’ globalization, in which the universal ethic of human co-responsibility is able to take up the role it does in any open society, would enhance global solidarity and permit the advancement of human security.

Political integration as a route to human security
The notion that states are not the best means or arbiters of how to secure people has attracted much attention in recent years but recognition of this far predates the post-Cold War rise of the human security perspective. The folly and horror of the First World War prompted a number of polemical works advocating world government in place of the sovereign system of states. British socialists John Hobson and Leonard Woolf wrote books advocating world government as a means of retreating from endemic war and imperialism.

‘We are accustomed to regard the world as neatly divided into compartments called states […] But this vision of the world divided into isolated compartments is not a true reflection of facts as they exist in a large portion of the earth today’.

Woolf was a firm advocate of the League of Nations, which emerged after the Great War, whereas Hobson was highly dismissive of the organization as little more than a victors’ club for a war of which he did not approve. Woolf was more positive, considering the League to be furthering the trend established in nineteenth century international affairs, before the build up to world war, of international organizations assuming the political stewardship of certain functions from governments.

Woolf and Hobson were thus pioneers of two differing strands of political integration theory which were further developed, and partially applied, after the Second World War. Woolf’s work was a source of inspiration for Mitrany and the Functionalists, who favoured a gradualist, bottom-up approach towards world government in which ordinary people would rationally come to switch their

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loyalties from their states to international non-governmental bodies. These functional international organizations would then naturally grow and proliferate through the process of spillover. Hobson’s route to world government was more direct and ‘top down’: the immediate creation of supranational agencies assuming control from governments of certain, clearly defined political areas. World Federalism of this sort gained momentum with the failure of the League of Nations and the even greater horrors that unfolded in the Second World War. Churchill and Nehru both suggested this as a recipe for global peace but such advocacy for World Federalism receded as the Cold War reactivated the ‘national interest’ and economic recovery provided more ‘optimism’ amongst states that sovereignty had not died alongside the millions of casualties of World War Two. Churchill even backtracked on earlier support for Western European Federalism, leaving this venture to recent allies and adversaries across the English Channel.

Federalism has yet to happen in Western Europe, despite profound political integration for over half a century, with Churchill’s successors leading resistance to the sheer mention of the ‘F’ word in European Union (EU) policy. Federalist ventures for a United Arab Republic linking Egypt, Libya and Yemen and a Federation of the West Indies collapsed altogether within a few years of their inauguration in 1958. It has been apparent since then that there is little prospect of a surrender/pooling (depending on your political perspective) of government sovereignty to a global federal authority. The European integration experiment, in fact, recognized from the start that governmental and public support for a United States of Europe had quickly evaporated as the shadow of the Second World War lifted and the European Communities (EC) were modelled on a modified version of Functionalist theory.

Neo-functionalism was devised and embraced for the EC experiment for pragmatic rather than idealistic reasons. It was a halfway house between Functionalism and Federalism inspired by the fact that both theories appeared hopelessly utopian by the 1950s. Federalism on a limited regional scale had failed to get off the ground and the functional international organizations which inspired Functionalism remained limited in influence and still controlled by governments. Neo-functionalism embraced the concept of spillover but the EC’s founding fathers saw it as a means of directing integration from above towards a regional, sovereign end-point of a United States of Europe, at odds with Mitrany’s global, bottom-up and anti-sovereign vision of integration. By the 1990s, however, the continuation of integration without any real likelihood of a United States of Europe emerging from it, despite a revival of the direct approach to its achievement, prompted a new theoretical approach to explain what was happening. The Consociationalist theory of European integration contended that the states of the now restyled European Union would continue to merge economically and politically, not inspired by any holy grail of an idealized end-

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