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The Committee to Frame a World Constitution: PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF A WORLD CONSTITUTION

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PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF A WORLD CONSTITUTION. By *The Committee to Frame a World Constitution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1948. Pp. xi, 91. \$2.

Beginning their work late in 1945, the Committee completed the draft here presented in the fall of 1947. The eleven framers and signatories of the draft, headed by Robert M. Hutchins of the University of Chicago, are scholars from American and Canadian universities, representing five different national backgrounds. Although previous publication has been made, in a confidential edition and through several periodicals, the present volume is the first edition made accessible to the general public, supplemented by explanatory material and a record of the committee's work. The draft itself contemplates a federal world state. An ingenious electoral system places the selection of executive and legislative officers in a Federal Convention elected directly by the people of the world and assures adequate representation in these and other federal offices to the various regions of the world. Extensive authority is given to the chief executive, sometimes at the expense of the legislature, and a federal judiciary is provided for the enforcement of the federal constitution and statutes, with express authority to declare statutes invalid. One of the most unique provisions of the draft is the creation of the office of "Tribune of the People," whose function it is to defend the civil and economic rights of individuals and groups, as guaranteed by the constitution, against violation by the World Republic or any of its component units. Continued jurisdiction of these component units, the present sovereign

states, in domestic matters, is contemplated by a reservation to them, much like the Tenth Amendment, of all authority not granted to the federal government. Control and use of the federal armed forces and regulation of domestic militia are vested in a separate chamber, chosen by the legislature and the judiciary. In the accompanying Summary Report, the committee states its recognition that civil and political rights cannot be divorced from economic rights, and its dissatisfaction with a world government designed merely to achieve collective security. It is acknowledged that this effort will be greeted with much scepticism from those who feel that no agreement on a world government can be had in the foreseeable future. It is the purpose of the framers, however, by presenting a well-considered outline for such a government, to remove discussion from the field of idle speculation, and to inspire consideration by public opinion and responsible governments which may result in a hastening of the world state; "for a shape of things to come, provided it has a consistency of its own, has a power of attraction on the things to come." The problem of Russian cooperation, essential to the success of any such plan, is discussed optimistically in one of the several appendices dealing with the background of the committee's work.