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Evatt: THE TASK OF NATIONS

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THE TASK OF NATIONS. By *Herbert V. Evatt*. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1949. Pp. 279. \$3.

Few, indeed, are so eminently qualified to describe the task of nations as Dr. Herbert V. Evatt, Australia's great statesman. From his first fiery speech at the San Francisco organizational conference Dr. Evatt has played a leading role in shaping the policies and destiny of the United Nations, having served on the Security Council, the Atomic Energy Commission, and more recently as President of the General Assembly. Before turning his attention exclusively to the problems of United Nations, Dr. Evatt served on the Federal High Court of Australia and the Commonwealth War Cabinet; at various times he acted as attorney general, minister of external affairs, and deputy prime minister of Australia.

This book supplements an earlier work entitled *The United Nations*, which was a revision of the Holmes Lectures delivered by Dr. Evatt at Harvard University

in 1947. Part of this book is devoted to reiteration. For example, he challenges again the dominance and prerogatives assumed by the "super-powers," and reasserts himself as a champion of the middle and smaller nations. Once more he attributes many of the shortcomings of the United Nations to the veto formula conceived at Yalta, and he advocates its abolition at least in the peaceful settlement of disputes, admitting that it may be justified when and if force is employed. But the greater part of the book is devoted to reporting the work and progress of the United Nations from the Paris session of the General Assembly in September, 1947, until the New York meeting in February, 1949. He outlines the attempts to deal with the situation in Greece, the difficulties created by four-power occupation of Germany, the Korean problem and the question of Italian colonies. Throughout, Dr. Evatt effuses a sincere and optimistic faith in the principles and purposes of the United Nations as he recounts its successes to date to meet the criticism of those who consider it inherently incapable of keeping the peace. In particular, he singles out the Palestine solution for detailed consideration in all its phases, in addition to recalling the effectiveness of intervention in Iran, in the Balkans, and in Indonesia. Considered by the author to be one of the greatest achievements thus far was the unanimous adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, described as a "landmark in world history comparable to Magna Charta and Bill of Rights in the history of the British Commonwealth." Concluding on an idealistic note, Dr. Evatt admonishes those who consider the next war to be inevitable and firmly maintains that "one world" is still possible within the framework of the United Nations.