

'Federation of the World'

Forty-six nations will be represented in the fateful conference opening in San Francisco today. All are agreed upon the necessity of the objective it seeks: A world organization to establish and maintain a just and durable peace. Delegates from four of the forty-six spent six weeks at Dumbarton Oaks last year working out a formula for such an organization. Upon their proposals the attention of the present conference and peace-loving peoples is largely centered.

Agreement upon the necessity of the organization does not bring agreement upon methods, nor even upon principles. Here in the United States, where the Dumbarton Oaks proposals probably have been given widest study, there are sharp conflicts between individual and group opinions. Within the week, for example, a manifesto signed by "51 religious leaders of various denominations" declared the Dumbarton Oaks plan, in its present setting and unamended, is "almost certain to prove a mere camouflage for the continuation of imperialist policies and the exercise of arbitrary power by the Big Three for the domination of other nations." Other groups have approved the same plan as a satisfactory foundation upon which to found a world federation for peace and justice.

The Bretton Woods program, also to be considered at San Francisco, likewise is under brisk fire in this country. Doubtless there are similar cleavages of opinion abroad.

So the march to an objective sought by all the peoples represented must be made through disputations about methods and perhaps over attempted "road blocks" manned by perfectly well-meaning folk who feel that the world will be lost unless their own recommendations are accepted.

If history teaches anything, they who dream of a perfect achievement at San Francisco imagine a vain thing. But if the delegates and their respective governments accept historic teachings, they will stay on this job until they accomplish something genuinely worthwhile. They know the dreadful cost of failure. They know the causes of the failure after World War I. They know how sincerely their peoples crave peace and international justice. They have common interests to serve, common grounds on which to build. They must not come out empty-handed.