

## I.

The organization of the world's ninety-odd states into various systems of competing and overlapping regional associations has now been a fact of international relations for over ten years. It cannot be said that as a fact it has gone unnoticed. On the contrary, regionalism has given rise to a floodtide of literature bitterly critical of the development or determined to justify it as a necessity for world security and a support for a sagging UN structure.<sup>1</sup>

Among the voices critical of the advent of regional organizations and regional programs of action for economic development, military security, trade liberalization, and the protection of human rights a number of substrains can be isolated. The committed universalist tends to argue that economic welfare, like collective security, is indivisible and he adds that economic unions and common markets distort the logic of a universal division of labor and therefore are not in the long run conducive to production and trade increases. Advocates of global peace and order maintain that emphasis on extra-UN regional political and military organizations downgrades the

role of the UN, evades its obligations and potentialities, and recommitments the world to the very balance of power-cum-alliances system which collective security was to obviate. Still other critics maintain that regional military planning is made both impossible and obsolete because it involves the participating states in conflicting and irreconcilable policy commitments and because the advent of ICBM's renders such measures pointless.<sup>2</sup>

Arguments derived from a monistic theme of international law and morality dominate among the critics of regionalism: they deplore the fact that departures from the universal focus of organization are almost uniformly justified by virtue of Article 51 of the Charter, the massive escape clause in the global scheme of obligations. The defenders of the pattern, however, derive most of their support from the day-to-day preoccupations of national policy. Directly and indirectly they invoke the necessities of the cold war—either in the role of participants or as would-be abstainers—as justifying economic and military arrangements removed from UN control, while maintaining simultaneously that such steps actually tend to strengthen a global struc-

ERNST B. HAAS, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of California (Berkeley), is engaged in research on the integrative impact of international organizations, most recently under grants from the Social Science Research Council and the Rockefeller Foundation. He spent 1955-1956 in field research in western Europe. An

<sup>1</sup> See Norman J. Padelford, "A Selected Bibliography on Regionalism and Regional Arrangements," *International Organization*, November 1956 (Vol. 10, No. 4).

<sup>2</sup> For a comprehensive critique of the assumptions underlying regionalism see Edgar S. Furniss, Jr., "A Re-examination of Regional Arrangements," *Journal of International Affairs*, 1955 (Vol. 9, No. 2). Economic regionalism is sharply challenged by Gunnar Myrdal, *An International Theory of Regional Development* (New York, N. Y., 1956).