Unity and Divergence: Scandinavian Internationalism, 1914–1921[1]

KAREN GRAM-SKJOLDAGER AND ØYVIND TØNNESSON

Abstract

Scandinavia (Denmark, Norway and Sweden) is frequently seen as a democratic 'island of peace' in international politics and the three states are seen as ardent supporters of an 'international community' under the umbrella of the United Nations as well as its predecessor, the League of Nations. This article seeks to challenge this idealised, unitary conception of Scandinavian peace politics by exploring how different strands of internationalism, as transnational phenomena, developed from the outbreak of the First World War until the three states became members of the League. Initially, that development was more or less independent of official foreign policy. The article explains how and to what degree new internationalist ideas were eventually merged with traditional neutralist Scandinavian foreign policies.

Introduction

From the end of the nineteenth century Scandinavia gradually materialised as an island of peace in international politics. From the 1880s, strong liberal internationalist milieux developed in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, within which representatives of the popular peace movements, parliamentarians and eventually also members of government co-operated across national borders to promote a peaceful world order based on the international rule of law. Paradoxically, the First World War marked a decisive step forward in this development. During the war, Scandinavian internationalists moved to the forefront of international discussions on how to

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[1] The title is inspired by the title of the introduction to S. Shepard Jones, *The Scandinavian States and the League of Nations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1939): 'Unity and Divergency in Scandinavia'.

Contemporary European History, **17**, 3 (2008), pp. 301–324 © 2008 Cambridge University Press
doi:10.1017/S0960777308004505 Printed in the United Kingdom

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

secure a lasting peace. Scandinavian internationalist co-operation was intensified and institutionalised to a degree which was remarkable even by international standards.[2]

This particular peace-oriented Scandinavian *Sonderweg* around the time of the First World War corresponds well with, and has been a key component of, the prevailing international image of the Scandinavian countries as a particularly peace-loving bloc in international politics, characterised by peaceful regional coexistence and peace-promoting foreign policies.[3] However, this conception of Scandinavia is at least in part a political construction. This article argues that Scandinavian internationalism in the crucial years during and immediately after the First World War was actively promoted by contemporary Scandinavian politicians and peace advocates, who systematically left out the differences, conflicts and changes also characteristic of Scandinavian internationalism.[4]

This article thus aims to challenge the idealised unitary view of Scandinavian peace politics during and immediately after the First World War and to present a more comprehensive picture of Scandinavian internationalism. We hope to uncover how internationalist circles in Scandinavia contributed to, absorbed, responded to and articulated scepticism towards the new developments in internationalist thought during and immediately after the First World War, while identifying the main characteristics, limitations and potentials of Scandinavian internationalism in this period.

This period not only witnessed the emergence of Scandinavia as a high-profile international peace actor, but also saw the emergence of marked contrasts and divergences in Scandinavian internationalism that are essential to understanding the anatomy of Scandinavian internationalism and the position of the Scandinavian states within the League of Nations. The analysis is developed against the background of two key international developments, both of which had the double effect of strengthening Scandinavia as an actor in international peace activities and creating new political divergences and tensions within the Scandinavian peace bloc.

The first of these was the blossoming of a new, ambitious, liberal internationalist agenda, personified by the president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. This new strand of liberal internationalism replaced the Cobdenite internationalism of the pre-war period, which focused on free trade, international arbitration and neutrality

[2] Cf. Kjell Goldmann, *The Logic of Internationalism: Coercion and Accommodation* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1994), 2.

[3] For a recent interpretation of this kind, see Clive Archer and Pertti Joenniemi, eds., *The Nordic Peace* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003). 'Scandinavia' consists of Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Today 'Norden' denotes a broader group of Nordic countries including Finland and Iceland. Although the two concepts were used synonymously in the period under investigation (denoting Norway, Sweden and Denmark), this article uses the concept 'Scandinavia' in accordance with present terminology.

[4] Karen Gram-Skjoldager, 'Fred som national interesse? Dansk internationalisme inden Anden Verdenskrig', in Kristine Midtgaard and Lise H. Rasmussen, eds., *Omverdenen trænger sig på: Politik og ideer i det 20: århundredes historie* (Odense: Syddansk Univeristetsforlag, 2006), 125. This tendency to emphasise Scandinavian internationalist unity becomes particularly clear in an article by the Nobel Peace laureate Christian L. Lange, 'Préparation de la Société des Nations pendant la guerre', in Peter Munch, ed., *Les Origines et l'Œuvre de la Société des Nations* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1923).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

as a three-lane road to peace, with a new belief in efficient international organisation and collective security as means of maintaining and promoting peace – characteristics that have caused David Long to term it Hobbesian internationalism.[5] This new school of internationalism not only challenged the traditional neutral position of the Scandinavian countries but also the Scandinavian self-understanding as spearheads of peace. Different geopolitical positions, different traditions of foreign policy and different parliamentarian political patterns caused the internationalist elites of the three states to respond to this new challenge very differently.

Second, a new reformist socialist internationalism emerged, which turned away from socialist proletarian cosmopolitanism and directed its focus towards the nation-state as the central operational unit in the struggle against war. The emergence of a moderate socialist internationalism in Scandinavia not only strengthened political backing for Scandinavian peace work but also involved a broadening and differentiation of Scandinavian internationalist thought.

The article will apply a transnational approach inspired by Patricia Clavin's definition of a transnational community as a honeycomb structure, within which nation states play an important role, but which also encompasses institutions, individuals and ideas that interact with, transcend and challenge the nation-state.[6] This enables us to interpret Scandinavian developments from the pre-war period to the international system of the post-war era as pluralistic and ambiguous phenomena which evolved in the interaction between organisations, parliamentarians, cabinet ministers and government officials. The transnational approach is compatible with concepts frequently used in studies of Nordic co-operation after the Second World War. Amitai Etzioni, for instance, has used the term 'associational web' to describe the pattern of Nordic co-operation, while others have spoken of a Nordic 'cobweb of practical co-operation'.[7]

In this article, 'internationalism' is understood as the liberal-inspired belief that it is possible to establish a new and qualitatively different, legally regulated international system, based on sovereign states, in which peace and security will prevail, and that this can be achieved through the development of law, organisation, exchange and communication. The precise historical meanings of the term 'Scandinavian internationalists' varies throughout the article, however, depending on the context. Generally, it connotes actors who actively promoted

[5] David Long, 'J. A. Hobson and Idealism in International Relations', *Review of International* Studies, 17 (1991), 285–304. The term 'collective security' was not used by the Scandinavian internationalists during this period. In the source material the measures in question are labelled 'concerted action', 'international guarantees', 'international law enforcement' or 'international sanctions'. Still, it seems reasonable to include them in the broader concept of 'collective security', which was later depicted by E. H. Carr as typical of interwar utopianism: see his *The Twenty Years' Crisis: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: Palgrave, 2001), 8.

[6] Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 14, 4 (2005), 421–39, 438–9.

[7] Amitai Etzioni, *Political Unification: A Comparative Study of Leaders and Forces* (New York: Holt, 1965); Niels Andrén, 'Nordisk integration – synspunkter och problemställningar', *Internasjonal Politikk*, 19 (1966), 370–87, 384.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

internationalist ideas internationally. Until 1917 they were actors engaged, primarily on a non-official basis, in the international peace and labour movements. Later, the term also comprised Danish, Norwegian or Swedish government representatives engaged in intra-Scandinavian peace work, in the League of Nations or other international organisations.

This article is based on a broad range of published and unpublished source material. Published sources from the Nordic Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Central Organisation for a Durable Peace (CODP), as well as the social-democratic Peace Conference in Stockholm in 1917 and the League of Nations, are among the sources used. The archive of the Danish Foreign Ministry has been used to map out the intergovernmental discussions on peace, and in a few cases the article also draws on material from Christian. L. Lange's private archive and the archive of the Danish Social Democratic Party.

The article is divided into three main sections. The first part deals with the period from 1914 to 1917, which saw the development of a range of competing and not always compatible Scandinavian ideas about peace after the war within different unofficial international settings such as the CODP, the Nordic Inter-Parliamentary Union and the International Socialist Movement. The second part investigates the efforts in 1917–18 to formulate a common, official Scandinavian position on the organisation of peace after the war. The third section deals with the period from 1919 to 1921, which witnessed Scandinavian acceptance of membership of the League of Nations and co-ordinated Scandinavian efforts to integrate the League in Scandinavian internationalist thought.

Scandinavian internationalist divergence: unofficial peace discussions, 1914–1917

From the last decades of the nineteenth century the Scandinavian states were, roughly speaking, divided into three main political 'camps': conservatives, liberals and social democrats. When war broke out only Sweden, the strongest of the three states in terms of both military and economic power, and with a population as big as the two other countries combined, had not yet introduced a parliamentary system of government. The change came in 1917 when the conservatives lost power to a majority coalition government of liberals and social democrats. In Norway and Denmark, where parliamentarian government had been introduced in 1884 and 1901 respectively, liberal governments were in power in 1914. In Norway, Venstre – the Liberal Left – was in office, while in Denmark it was Det radikale Venstre – the Radical Liberal Left – a social liberal party representing smallholders and academics and with a strong anti-militarist profile.

Since their founding years in the 1880s, Scandinavian peace organisations were dominated by liberal democrats, and Scandinavian liberal internationalism developed in close interaction with the parliamentary political settings and the formulation of national foreign policy aims. Contrary to the peace movements in the United Kingdom and the United States, where Quakers and other religious denominations

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

played an important part, the leading Scandinavian peace workers represented an internationalism that was first and foremost a foreign policy ideology. All three Scandinavian states were small states surrounded by great powers, and the aims of the international peace movement – neutrality, arbitration in international disputes, free trade and international disarmament – were promoted not only for moral and religious reasons, but also because they were seen as means of securing the survival of the three small countries.[8] During the war, when all the Scandinavian states pursued rather defensive national policies of neutrality, the liberal peace advocates, most of whom also belonged to the political establishment at home, engaged in more 'offensive' kinds of unofficial international discussions aimed at establishing a lasting peace after the war.

The institutional framework for these discussions was the Nordic Inter-Parliamentary Union (NIU), a regional branch of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), which was set up in 1907 as a common meeting place for peace advocates among the members of the three Scandinavian parliaments. Following the outbreak of war in 1914 it became significant as a discussion arena where parliamentarians, frequently assisted by scholars, discussed the conditions of a future international peace, free from the present-day foreign-policy concerns of governments. Through the pre-war activities of the IPU, Scandinavian peace activists belonged to a transnational network of internationalists from a range of European countries as well as countries outside Europe – most significantly the United States.[9] The politicians and diplomats who were to shape the foreign policies of the Scandinavian states and their involvement in the League of Nations were to a high degree personalities with a common commitment to that internationalist network.

The Norwegian Christian Lous Lange, secretary-general of the IPU since 1909, was an important organiser and liaison in the network.[10] In August 1914 he hastily moved the IPU office from Brussels, in occupied Belgium, to Kristiania (Oslo). During the following months he managed to sustain correspondence with the leading figures within the union and the national IPU groups. Even though all national groups expressed their intention to maintain their own and thereby the Union's existence, it was a common understanding that normal activity, such as committee work, international conferences and meetings of the executive committee, would

[8] See Martin Ceadel, *Semi-detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), and Charles Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice: Pacifism in America 1914–1941* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971). As Mats Rønning has shown, people of strong Christian faith were numerous also among pacifists in the Norwegian popular peace movement, but that movement was never really influential in the development and propagation of internationalist ideas; see Mats Rønning, 'Fredsfaar i gjentatt strid – historien om den folkelige fredsbevegelse i Norge før 1914', MA thesis, University of Oslo, 2005.

[9] The NIU was established primarily as a means of improving intra-Scandinavian relations after the break-up in 1905 of the Swedish–Norwegian union. On the history of the NIU, see Knud Larsen, 'Scandinavian Grass Roots: From Peace Movement to Nordic Council', *Scandinavian Journal of History,* 9 (1984), 183–200.

[10] See Øyvind Tønnesson, 'Christian Lous Lange (Peace 1921)', in Olav Njølstad, ed., *Norwegian Nobel Prize Laureates: From Bjørnson to Kydland* (Oslo: Norwegian Nobel Institute, 2006).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

have to stop when half the national groups belonged to countries at war with each other. At the same time there was a discussion among the IPU groups of the neutral countries as to whether or not they could organise consultations of their own. The question was first raised by the Swiss IPU group and subsequently forwarded to other groups by the secretary-general. The answer from the single most important of the 'neutral groups', that consisting of US senators and congressmen, was a clear 'no' and the Swiss initiative came to nothing, since the council of the NIU at a meeting on 15 November 1914 made US participation a condition of their own support.[11]

That particular NIU meeting was significant for three reasons. First, the NIU assumed an important international role as the only grouping of IPU members with open channels of information to national IPU branches in both neutral and belligerent countries. Second, the NIU was made a more important channel for information and consultations among Scandinavian parliamentarians. Annual NIU conferences during the war discussed not only international affairs, but also questions related, for instance, to economic co-operation among the three states and the harmonisation of social legislation. Combined with increased intergovernmental co-operation, the broadening of the scope of NIU discussions contributed to the general improvement in intra-Scandinavian relations.[12] Third, the NIU council made a decision of principle regarding their wartime internationalist agenda, which was subsequently distributed confidentially among the IPU groups. The Inter-Parliamentarians should avoid action that might be considered politically controversial among other IPU members. Mediation in the ongoing war was out of the question. Instead, members should concentrate on mobilising popular, and eventually government, support for establishing a foundation for a lasting peace after the war, based on the international rule of law. The nine members of the council, with the aid of Lange, outlined a peace programme based on the following principles: (i) a continuation of the Hague process, which should institutionalise peaceful and legal means of solving conflicts and include a permanent court of international justice; (ii) the introduction of effective limitations on armaments; (iii) institutionalised, democratic control over the foreign policies of all states; (iv) respect for the principle of national sovereignty; and (v) the general 'open door' principle ('la porte ouverte'), a principle of particular importance to Scandinavians depending on foreign trade.[13]

After the war, Lange concluded that the NIU decisions of 15 November 1914 had been very important for subsequent developments in the international peace movement. Their significance was not due to the content of the five points – they were all in line with pre-war IPU resolutions as well as contemporary statements from peace advocates outside Scandinavia. But the NIU, according to Lange, stressed the importance of concentrating on a limited number of vital reforms, and not

[11] Lange, 'Préparation', 8–13; IPU, *Rapport du Secrétaire général* (Kristiania: IPU, 1914).
[12] Reports from the Nordic Inter-Parliamentary Delegate Meetings 1914 (Kristiania), 1915 (Copenhagen), 1916 (Stockholm), 1917 (Kristiania).
[13] Lange, 'Préparation', 13; IPU, *Rapport du Secrétaire général* (Kristiania: IPU, 1915).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

wasting time and energy on a 'more or less academic discussion of an infinite chain of questions'.[14]

In autumn 1914 and increasingly throughout 1915, IPU members in several countries, including Scandinavia, got involved in various peace initiatives outside the union. For both practical and political reasons, most of those initiatives were taken nationally, with little international co-ordination apart from the secretary-general's pooling of information. One significant exception was the CODP, established at an international meeting in The Hague on 7–10 April 1915 of specially invited people. The invitations came from the Netherlands, where several Dutch peace organisations had set up the Nederlandsche Anti-Oorlog-Raad (NAOR – Dutch Anti-War Council). There were thirty who attended the meeting, coming from ten different countries – five at war and five that were neutral.[15] Sixteen were 'representatives' of the small European neutral states: Switzerland (four), Sweden (four), Norway (one) and the Netherlands (seven). Apart from parliamentarians, several held positions in international organisations – the Institute of International Law, the International Socialist Bureau, the Union of International Associations, the International Peace Bureau and the IPU.[16] The thirty persons concerned may easily be characterised as intellectuals rather than politicians; on the list of participants twelve bore the honorific 'doctor', and in his opening speech the chairman of the NAOR, H. C. Dresselhuys, described all the invitees as persons of 'high quality' – 'non comme représentants officiels des pays ou d'organisations, mais seulement comme femmes et hommes de savoir et de la science'.[17]

As they were intellectuals who were not to be held accountable by their respective states, and since the meeting was completely private, they were able to discuss freely and develop a common internationalist agenda without regard to power interests or other national considerations. However, they were themselves aware of the limitations of their position. At the opening it was emphasised that certain topics were strictly forbidden in the discussions, namely when the war should end and how and by whom the coming peace should be introduced.[18] In line with the resolution from the Scandinavians in the NIU five months earlier, the discussions were to be exclusively about the general principles of a new international order of peace and how popular and political support could be mobilised behind those principles.

Of the Scandinavians present at the Hague meeting, Lange, himself a historian working on his dissertation, later published under the title *L'Histoire de*

[14] Lange, 'Préparation', 14. The decisions from the NIU council were strictly confidential and not included in the annual reports from the NIU delegates' meetings of 1914 or 1915.

[15] Countries at war present: Germany, Austria, Hungary, Belgium and the United Kingdom; neutrals present: United States, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. Cf. Christian L. Lange, *Centralorganisationen för varaktig fred: Dess arbete och hittilsvarande resultat* (Lund: Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1917), 5.

[16] Réunion Internationale, La Haye, 7–10 Avril 1915 – 'Liste des Membres': Norwegian National Library (NNL), C. L. Lange's personal archive (CL), Ms. fol. 2521:75.

[17] Ibid., 'Compte-Rendu', 3.

[18] Ibid., 4–5.

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l'Internationalisme,[19] was the most active in the discussions. It seems clear that he played a dominant role in the making of the five-point Minimum Programme for a Durable Peace that resulted from the meeting. Later, he wrote an elaborate comment on the programme in French, English and German that (with the consent of other key CODP figures) was distributed internationally by the new organisation. Lange's influence was in no small part due to the fact that his political views were generally acceptable to most European and US internationalists and, not least, that his command of foreign languages was exceptionally good.[20]

The first point of the Minimum Programme concerned the principle of national self-determination; the second, free trade or equal terms of trade in colonies, protectorates or spheres of influence; the third, institutionalisation of an international legal order; the fourth, arms reduction and freedom of the seas; the fifth point concerned the introduction of democratic control of foreign policy and a ban on secret international treaties.[21] National self-determination was to become a core principle behind several of President Wilson's fourteen points of 8 January 1918. In a world in which colonial empires still mattered and in which multinational states were common, that principle was highly controversial. But when the Minimum Programme was made known to Scandinavians in summer 1915, it caused little discussion. The third point of the programme, however, which pointed towards the establishment of a league or society of nations, included a principle that was new to organised liberal internationalism: the principle of 'collective security'. The point introduced this idea as follows:

> The States shall bind themselves to take concerted action, diplomatic, economic or military, in case any State should resort to military measures instead of submitting the dispute to judicial decision or to the mediation of the Council of Investigation and Conciliation.[22]

The idea that an international legal order would have to be enforced in the last resort had not previously been a matter of serious discussion by the IPU or other international peace organisations, and certainly not among Scandinavians, who were based in a foreign political tradition centred on the concept of neutrality. However, at the Hague meeting it seems to have been accepted without objections. Apart from Lange, who notes rather incidentally that the question of international sanctions was 'extremely difficult', no Scandinavian was quoted in the minutes from the session concerning the third point.[23] But there were no Danes among the intellectuals assembled at The Hague. Things would look different when Lange and the four Swedes presented the Minimum Programme to a broader audience in Scandinavia.

From summer 1915 the CODP had an international office in The Hague, in addition to an executive committee of fourteen, an international council of about

[19] Kristiania, 1919.
[20] 'Compte-Rendu'; Organisation Centrale pour une Paix Durable, *'Pour une Paix durable', Commentaire du programme-minimum* (The Hague: CODP, 1915); Lange, 'Préparation', 15–19.
[21] Central Organisation for a Durable Peace, *Minimum-Program*, The Hague, April 1915.
[22] Ibid.
[23] 'Compte-Rendu'.

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230, and several national 'committees for a durable peace'.[24] The national committees were to carry out propaganda – and hopefully create a consensus of international public opinion in favour of the programme well before the end of the war. The Dutch initiators also wanted to organise a big international congress, and those present at meeting at The Hague partly agreed, against the advice of Lange. But attempts to this effect became stranded on practical and political grounds. International travel was generally difficult and – more importantly – it was difficult to avoid a congress being regarded as biased by representatives from the belligerent countries without draining it of political substance. Probably the most significant results of the work of the CODP came from nine study commissions designed to discuss problems related to the minimum programme. Commission reports and a large number of papers and articles collected by the commissions were published in four volumes in 1916–18.[25]

There were three Scandinavians on the executive committee, and there were Scandinavians in all the study commissions. Lange chaired a commission in charge of discussing how the Hague conferences should be developed into a permanent international institution; his fellow Norwegian historian, Halvdan Koht, who was later to become his country's foreign minister, ran a commission in charge of 'the problem of nationalities'; a former Swedish finance minister, Baron Theodor Adelswärd, presided over a commission that discussed the principle of non-annexation and referenda; and, finally, a Danish university professor, L. V. Birch, led discussions on the principles of international free trade. There was, however, a marked difference in the support for the CODP between the three Scandinavian states. When the secretariat in The Hague, with the assistance of Lange and others, asked prominent members of the peace movement to accept a position on the executive committee, it was easy to get a 'yes' from Norway and Sweden, but much harder to find a willing Dane, the relatively unknown K. M. Klausen finally being chosen as their representative. The Swedes and Norwegians founded active national committees. By November 1917, 1,074 organisations and almost 110,000 individuals in Sweden had signed a manifesto based on the Minimum Programme. In Norway, about the same number of organisations and 378 of 674 local councils signed up.[26] In Denmark, no national committee was established and the Minimum Programme attracted little support among traditional peace workers. This marked difference owed itself to a fundamental difference in liberal internationalist thinking between the internationalist elite in Denmark on the one hand and those in the other two Scandinavian states on the other.

Since the turn of the twentieth century radical liberals had gained dominance over the Danish internationalist agenda with an anti-militaristic internationalist ideology which regarded neutrality as a morally superior principle of non-violence in international politics and viewed education and democratisation as the primary means

[24] Lange, *Centralorganisationen*, 45–55. The 'International Council' was not really a working council, but primarily a list of more or less prominent persons from more than thirty countries who lent their names to the cause.

[25] Lange, 'Préparation', 20.

[26] Lange, *Centralorganisationen*, 16.

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of creating a lasting peace.[27] The maintenance of an international legal order was, they believed, to be based on the common international interest; it should not have to be enforced.[28] From this point of view, the Minimum Programme with its provisions for a system of collective security was highly problematic. The president of the Danish Peace Association (Dansk Fredsforening), Niels Petersen, first made this point clear in 1916 in his comments on the Minimum Programme in a report to the CODP.[29] After Petersen had repeated his argument at the meeting of the NIU in 1916,[30] it was presented as the official Danish position by the radical Danish minister of defence, Peter Munch, at the NIU meeting of 1917. This position was maintained by the Danish government throughout the war. The Danish view on collective security was based on a general argument as well as one that focused specifically on the position of small states within a system of collective security. The general argument consisted of two components. First, there was an anti-militaristic claim that the presence of military power – even when intended for enforcing international law – would in itself create conflicts in the international system. Second, a domestic analogy contended that law enforcement would have to await the establishment of a rule of law, as had been the case in domestic politics. The point of the small-state argument was that participation in sanctions would involve much greater risk for small states than for great powers, and as a matter of consequence it would be unwise of the small states to promote this idea.

The Danish position in the NIU prompted Lange to develop his argument in favour of international sanctions. For Lange, accepting the principle of international sanctions was essentially a question of accepting the realities of international politics. 'Basically', he commented in the NIU in 1916, 'this [the Danish standpoint] is the old Quaker standpoint. Its weakness is its neglect of the actual state of international affairs.' To him, power politics would have to be accepted as a fact of international life. In his opinion an international legal order would have to be enforced – if necessary by military means. He did not, however, speak in favour of a strong international police force, let alone 'world government'. What he envisioned was a system of collective security based on sovereign states that was strictly limited, at least initially: 'I would ask for international action only against a state that refuses to submit a dispute to an international council of investigation and conciliation.'[31]

At the NIU delegates' meeting in June 1917, Lange developed his argument in favour of international sanctions, with considerable backing from the Norwegian and Swedish Inter-Parliamentary groups. The speech he gave was delivered on

[27] Gram-Skjoldager, 'Fred som national interesse', 130–3. Cf. also Martin Ceadel's definition of 'Radical pacific-ism' in his *Thinking about Peace and War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 114–18.

[28] Dansk Fredsforening, 'International Sanctions', in G. Lowes Dickinson, *Problems of the International Settlement* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1918). The report was first published in 1916 by the CODP.

[29] Organisation Centrale pour une Paix Durable, *Recueil de Rapports sur les différents points du programme-minimum*, II (The Hague: CODP, 1916), 8–13.

[30] Det nordiska interparlamentariska förbundets åttonde delegerademöte, Stockholm, August 1916, (Stockholm: Det nordiska interparlamentariska förbundets, 1916), 19–22.

[31] Christian L. Lange, 'Garantier for folkeretten', in NIU, ed., *Det Nordiska Interparlamentariska Förbundets Åttonde Delegerademöte* (Stockholm: NIU, 1916), 115–16.

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behalf of a committee appointed by the Norwegian Inter-Parliamentary Group a few months earlier. The committee had discussed what the position of Norway should be if, at the end of the war, a proposition aimed at establishing an association of states to secure world peace by the potential use of force was put forward by one or more great powers. The committee majority concluded that Norway should regard such a proposition positively. One reason was 'a matter of opportunism'. It would be in Norway's own interest to take part in international negotiations as early as possible. Therefore the Norwegian government should support the idea in order to increase the chances of being accepted as a party to negotiations. From correspondence with groups and individuals in the IPU and CODP networks, as well as personal conversations with leading government officials in European great powers, Lange knew that questions of military security would be of vital importance in the coming discussions of a peace settlement. Participation, not isolation and alienation, should be the strategy of small states in order to obtain some measure of political influence. In other words, the difference between Lange and his peers on the one hand and the Danish internationalists on the other was also rooted in different views on whether the national interest of small states was best safeguarded by active international engagement or by keeping a remote position with respect to all potential battlegrounds in international politics. Taking into consideration the different geostrategic positions of the two countries, with Denmark practically situated on the battlefield and Norway at a safe distance, it is understandable that Norwegian and Danish internationalists held different views as to whether decoupling from international politics or participation and engagement should be the leading principles of small-state policy.

Lange's support of international sanctions was also rooted in an increasingly critical stance on neutrality as a political ideal: 'From a purely moral–political point of view it is questionable whether a policy of neutrality in all circumstances may be regarded as acceptable.'[32] Thus he confirmed in principle the general, international wartime development towards a new kind of internationalism in the peace movement, based on international diplomatic, economic and, if necessary, military solidarity. In Scandinavia, this transition materialised as a nationally defined difference between Danish internationalists who defended the old concept on the one hand and Swedish and Norwegian 'new internationalists' on the other.

These national positions were never clear-cut. Even though the liberal and conservative parties in Denmark supported Danish neutrality, they had never bought into the principled view of neutrality characteristic of the radical strand of internationalism. During the war Niels Neergaard, the liberal leader of the Danish Inter-Parliamentary Group, together with other liberal politicians, expressed some sympathy towards the concept of collective security.[33] Conversely, the conservative

[32] NIU, *Det niende nordiske interparlamentariske delegeretmøte* (Kristiania: NIU, 1917), Part II, 1–17, 10.

[33] NIU, *Det niende nordiske interparlamentariske delegeretmøte*, Vol. II, *Forhandlinger ang: spørsmaalet om forholdsregler til sikring av verdensfreden* (Kristiania, 1917), 76–7; Peter Munch, *Erindringer 1914–1918: Under den første Verdenskrig* (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 1967), 274–88; Records of meeting

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Francis Hagerup from the Norwegian foreign ministry sided with the Danish radicals in their rejection of any ideas of international sanctions.[34]

As central actors in the IPU discussions later obtained official political roles, this core difference materialised again in late 1917 and early 1918, when Scandinavian internationalist co-operation moved to the intergovernmental level. Before examining how this difference affected official Scandinavian co-operation, a different, truly transnational, strand of internationalism in Scandinavia must first be examined. During the war the labour movement, which was to become dominant in Scandinavian politics, made headway and entered the national centres of power in both Denmark and Sweden, where the social-democratic parties became part of the parliamentary basis of their national governments. This was not the case in Norway, however. The Norwegian Labour Party, which had strong factions of revolutionary socialists, came under their control in 1918. As it strongly opposed the existing social order, doubted the legitimacy of the national parliamentary democracy and believed in 'proletarian internationalism', the Norwegian Labour Party was not accepted as the political partner of any other party. It also became less influential in the Scandinavian labour movement. Both in terms of ideology and national political position it deviated from the main line of development in Scandinavia. As part of their integration into the national political sphere during the war, the social democrats had abolished socialist proletarian cosmopolitanism and developed a new social-democratic peace ideology which included a new and positive view of the state. In this process, socialist and liberal versions of internationalism were made compatible and political consensus about peace politics broadened.

In parallel with the activities of liberal internationalist circles, Scandinavian social democrats entered into co-ordinated discussions of the peace question immediately after the outbreak of war. Despite social-democratic representation in the NIU and the CODP, however, Scandinavian social democrats carried out their own peace discussions outside these liberally inspired institutional settings. Like many liberal internationalists, the Scandinavian social democrats viewed the neutral countries (and the Scandinavian countries in particular) as the international breeding ground for peace.[35] The socialist perception of the international workers' movement as an international guarantor of peace had suffered a fatal blow with the opening of hostilities and the social-democratic votes for war credits in the belligerent countries. Against this backdrop it became a main concern of the social democrats of the neutral states to make an effort to bring the war to an end. Thus when the joint consultative committee of the three Scandinavian social-democratic parties addressed

of the three Scandinavian committees in Copenhagen, May 1918: National Archives, Copenhagen (NAC), Danish Foreign Ministry (DFM), 11.B.22.

[34] Minutes from the meeting of the Scandinavian committees, 30 Nov. 1918: CL, NNL, Ms. fol. 2521:30.

[35] Circular letter to the social democratic parties in Germany, France, Britain, Russia, Austria, Serbia, Turkey and Belgium and the executive committee of the international bureau regarding a conference for the social democratic parties of the neutral countries in Copenhagen, 11 Nov. 1914: Library and Archive of the Danish Workers Movement (LADWM), Archive of the Danish Social Democratic Party (ADSDP), box 518, folder 2.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the question of peace in November 1914 and announced a peace conference of the neutral social-democratic parties in December of the same year, it was with the triple aim of ensuring that the socialist movement was still seen as an active promoter of peace, strengthening public opinion in favour of ending the war and urging the neutral governments to explore the possibilities for mediating between the contending parties.[36]

In contrast to the theoretical and principled deliberations of the CODP and the NIU, the Scandinavian social-democratic committee scarcely discussed the nature of a future peace. A circular letter of 11 November 1914 that informed other social-democratic parties of the Scandinavian peace initiative merely stated that mediation should be aimed at a peace settlement 'in which no border revisions were made without recognition of the right of national self determination, the limitations of armament and mandatory international arbitration'.[37]

The contents of the circular letter were in accordance with established principles within the Second International. The International Socialist Congress that met in Copenhagen in 1910 had stressed precisely these three points.[38] Like the 1910 conference, however, the circular note of 1914 lacked any reflections on the status of the peace programme in relation to general socialist theory. This was due to the ideological split within the Second International. From an orthodox Marxist viewpoint, permanent peace was a post-revolutionary category, and the peace strategies of the 1910 programme could only be regarded as short-term strategies which would delay, but not prevent, war. In the growing reformist part of the International, however, a new and positive view of the state as a framework for improving and safeguarding working-class rights and interests had developed, which also involved a new, positive evaluation of the regulation of interstate relations mentioned in the 1910 and 1914 peace programmes. During the war this reformist wing of the International, to which the Danish and Swedish social-democratic parties belonged, substituted the international proletariat with the nation-state as the operational unit in the struggle against militarism and war, and developed a coherent, curative peace programme based on the regulation of interstate relations and the gradual economic and political transformation of the existing states.[39] The split between the two factions therefore widened during the war, and proved to be impossible to bridge.

A programme along these lines was part of a second Scandinavian social-democratic peace initiative that was launched in spring 1917. The 1914 peace initiative had failed due to hostility from practically all European sister parties, but the Russian Revolution in spring 1917 had inspired hope among the Scandinavian social

[36] Thorvald Stauning to Camille Huysmans, 31 Dec. 1914: LADWM, ADSDP, box 518, folder 2.
[37] Circular letter, 11 Nov. 1914.
[38] Georges Haupt, *Socialism and the Great War: The Collapse of the Second International* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 27.
[39] Friedhelm Boll, 'Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie zwischen Resignation und Revolution. Zur Friedensstrategie 1890–1919', in Wolfgang Huber and Johannes Schwerdtfeger, eds., *Friedens Gewalt Sozialismus: Studien zur Geschichte der sozialistischen Arbeiterbewegung* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1976), 179–281.

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democrats that under the new circumstances created by the revolution they were in a position where they could launch a peace offensive. A Scandinavian committee called a conference in Stockholm in summer 1917, headed by the leader of the strong Swedish social-democratic party, Hjalmar Branting, and organised in co-operation with the Dutch social-democratic party. The idea behind the conference was to bring together socialist representatives of the countries at war and of different ideological strands within the International and let them present their views on the war and the preconditions for peace.[40] Although this initiative proved to be in vain, the committee drafted a comprehensive social-democratic peace programme in the wake of a preliminary conference held in Stockholm in May 1917.

This social-democratic internationalism was distinct from classic liberal internationalism, as it assumed that the basic precondition for creating permanent peace was the improvement of social conditions for the working class, carried out nationally and guaranteed internationally. The Stockholm programme contained a range of provisions for social reforms of the states and the establishment of an international organisation which could facilitate these reforms. Nonetheless, this new conception still contained some of the key principles of liberal internationalism. International arbitration, disarmament and free trade, as well as the principles of national self-determination, democratic control over foreign policy and the establishment of a League of Nations with the authority to enforce compliance with international law through international sanctions were all issues included in the programme of the neutral social-democratic parties.[41]

However, as Lange pointed out after the war, the programme had an idealistic and radical character that distinguished it from most other internationalist projects of the wartime era.[42] For instance, and in marked opposition to the moderate peace programme of the CODP, it demanded the obligatory settlement of all international disputes by arbitration, absolute disarmament and free trade, as opposed to the more limited demand for an open-door policy. What Lange failed to acknowledge, however, was that, viewed against the background of revolutionary Marxism, the neutral social-democratic parties had undergone an ideological development of a remarkable kind and scale. It was by no means insignificant that the national integration of the social-democratic parties in Denmark and Sweden, in marked opposition to the social-democratic parties of the belligerent powers, had caused them to actively engage in peace efforts and to adopt a peace ideology based on and aimed at securing the survival of the existing states. Norway, however, stood out in this context. Due to the revolutionary, partly syndicalist, ideology of the Norwegian labour party, only a few marginal members of that party were engaged in

[40] Social Democratic Union of Denmark to the executive committee of the Internationalist Socialist Bureau, 2 April 1917: LADWM, ADSDP, box 528, folder 7; Jay M. Winter, *Socialism and the Challenge of War: Ideas and Politics in Britain 1912–18* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), 244

[41] Comité organisateur de la conférence socialiste internationale de Stockholm, 'Un avant-projet de programme de paix: Manifeste avec mémoire explicatif des délégués des pays neutres aux partis adherents à la conference générale', Uppsala, 1917.

[42] Lange, 'Préparation', 42–3.

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the Scandinavian social-democratic peace efforts. Thus Norwegians held a position within the labour movement not very different from that of Danes among the liberal internationalists.

Scandinavian intergovernmental co-operation, 1917–1918

The annual meeting of the Nordic Inter-Parliamentary Union in June 1917 marked an important step forward in the direction of intergovernmental internationalist co-operation in the region. The question of international sanctions was an important item on the agenda, and the participating parliamentarians passed a resolution in accordance with a resolution of the 1916 meeting urging the Scandinavian governments to open preliminary discussions with the other neutral states 'on the position to be taken on questions relating to an international legal organisation aimed at the prevention of war which are likely to be raised after the war'.[43] This time, the three Scandinavian governments responded favourably to the request; in November 1917 it was decided at a meeting of the Scandinavian prime ministers and foreign ministers in Kristiania to set up study committees in co-operation with the inter-parliamentary groups so as to prepare the initiative suggested by the parliamentarians.[44]

Unlike the social-democratic Stockholm initiative a few months earlier, this initiative does not seem to having been inspired by the political upheaval in Russia. The Bolshevik takeover in November had a strong influence on parts of the Scandinavian labour movement, the Norwegian Labour Party in particular. There is, however, little evidence that worries about a possible revolutionary wave from the east influenced decisions among the political establishment of the Scandinavian states. For parliamentarians and governments alike, liberal internationalism was primarily a foreign policy ideology suited to safeguard the security and interests of the small Scandinavian states, and their main concern was to secure a role for the Scandinavian and other neutral small states in a post-war settlement.

With the setting up of the committees, members of the private transnational peace networks entered the realm of official foreign policy and joined government officials and prominent members of government in the development of an official Scandinavian peace programme. The Norwegian committee was comprised of Lange, shipbroker and former liberal parliamentarian Joachim Grieg and the former Conservative prime minister Francis C. Hagerup, an expert on international law and Norwegian envoy to Stockholm who had also been involved in inter-parliamentary activities. All three of them had been on the Norwegian delegation to the Hague Conference in 1907. The Swedish committee consisted of Oscar Ewerlöf from the Swedish foreign ministry, the liberal Theodor Adelswärd, who was the spokesman of the Swedish inter-parliamentary group, and Baron Marks von Würtemberg, a legal expert with a strong interest and involvement in foreign policy and international law. The Danish committee consisted of Niels Neergaard, a member of the liberal

[43] *Det niende nordiske interparlamentariske delegeretmøte*, II, 82.
[44] Knud Larsen, *Forsvar og Folkeforbund* (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlaget, 1976), 193.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

party and chairman of the Danish inter-parliamentarian group, Herluf Zahle, head of department in the foreign ministry, and Georg Cohn, the ministry's expert on international law.[45] In autumn 1918 Hjalmar Branting from Sweden, Johan Ludwig Mowinkel from Norway and Munch from Denmark entered the committees.[46] The bringing together of Scandinavian parliamentarians, members of government and government officials with a special interest in or knowledge of internationalist issues marked a decisive leap forward in the 'Scandinavianisation' and democratisation of the foreign policies of the three Scandinavian countries and a significant uprating of the peace cause in their foreign policies.

The shift in internationalist discussions at the intergovernmental level caused Scandinavian internationalist activities to take a narrow and divisive form. The Scandinavian committees entered the peace discussion at an inopportune time. With the US entry into the war in April 1917, the centre of internationalist activities had moved to the Western great powers, and neutral internationalist activities were reduced to a small-state phenomenon. At the same time the new prospect of the liberal internationalist programme actually being realised as part of the peace settlement imposed severe limitations on the discussions of a peace policy carried out by the Scandinavian governments. Neutral governments could hardly deal with issues which had direct implications for the peace settlement. Thus issues such as national self-determination, democratic control over foreign policies and free trade, which had been central elements of all three strands of Scandinavian internationalism, were not touched upon after the Scandinavian governments entered into the peace discussions. The Danish foreign ministry in particular was keen on keeping the negotiations strictly apolitical and also opposed suggestions by the Swedish foreign ministry and the Norwegian prime minister, Gunnar Knudsen, to include the question of disarmament in the negotiations.[47]

At the same time the Danish government stood by its staunch opposition to the idea of collective security. Due to the differences in opinion regarding this point, the Scandinavian foreign ministers had not decided on any particular mandate for the work of the Scandinavian committees at the meeting in November 1917. The differences on the question of collective security were noted again at the first meeting of the three Scandinavian committees in Copenhagen in May 1918. Against this backdrop, the three committees decided to limit discussions to the lowest common denominator: an international legal organisation in accordance with the preparations of the Hague conferences.[48] However, the disagreement erupted again at the meeting of the Nordic ministers on 26–28 June, when Knudsen suggested

[45] Record of the meetings of the three Scandinavian committees in Copenhagen, May 1918: NAC, DFM, 11. B.22.

[46] Danish FM to Danish legations in Kristiania and Stockholm 4 Feb. 1918 and Danish FM to the Danish Inter-Parliamentary Group 19 Feb. 1918, *Nordisk Samarbejde til Forberedelse af Konference af Neutrale Stater 1918*, I, NAC, DFM 11.B.22.

[47] Record of the meeting of the Nordic ministers in Copenhagen 26–28 June 1918, NAC, DFM, 5.F.27b.

[48] Records of the meeting of the three Scandinavian committees in Copenhagen, May 1918, NAC, DFM 11.B.22.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

that the discussions should include the question of a League of Nations based on the principle of international sanctions. The records of the meeting reveal that the Danish foreign minister, Erik Scavenius, turned down that suggestion: 'The idea of a "League of Nations" was undoubtedly a beautiful world ideal, but the Foreign Minister was highly sceptical as to whether this was really in the true interest of the smaller states . . . [He] was of the opinion that it was altogether doubtful whether a coercive institution like this would not in itself carry the seeds of a future war.'[49]

Co-operation between the three countries was also impaired by the position of the Swedish government. Although they represented a coalition of liberals and social democrats, the Swedish foreign minister and members of the Swedish committee did not speak strongly in favour of any internationalist programme. Rather, they continued the policy of the previous conservative government, which had worked actively to safeguard the military, commercial and economic rights of the neutral states through concerted neutral action. They viewed the convention of a neutral conference as paramount and considered it a question of secondary importance as to which internationalist programme was presented as the basis of discussion at the conference. Instead they focused on mobilising Switzerland, the Netherlands and Spain in favour of a neutral conference. These initiatives were met with suspicion by the Norwegian representatives, who were still wary of any perceived or real Swedish attempts at a lead position for themselves in international politics, but under a Scandinavian label, and from Denmark, where concerns were raised that this neutral activism might unnecessarily provoke the great powers.[50]

The Scandinavian division of roles was indicative of Scandinavian internationalist co-operation until the Second World War. Norway was the highly principled internationalist, Denmark the passive and adaptive Scandinavian, and Sweden the activist player in more traditional power politics. These differences are by no means surprising. Rather, they mirror the fundamentally different challenges which the three countries, for geographical and economic reasons, met in their overall relations with the outside world, and which became particularly pronounced during the First World War. The strategic position of Denmark as one of Germany's small neighbours, controlling the strait to the Baltic Sea, was extremely exposed, and extensive Danish commerce with both of the two belligerent blocs demanded international discretion. Military threats to Norway were much less intense due to Norway's remote position. In terms of commercial interests, however, its situation was as difficult, or even worse, than that of Denmark. Sweden was, as mentioned above, the strongest of the three countries, but as it was bordered by Finland, at the time a part of Russia, the main threat to its territorial integrity lay in the east. Although foreign political co-ordination took place, in the main each of the three governments carried out

[49] Record of the meeting of the Scandinavian ministers in Copenhagen, 26–28 June 1918, NAC, DFM 5.F.27b.

[50] See the records of the meetings of the Scandinavian ministers 1916–18, NAC, DFM 5.F.21, 5.F.22b, 5.F.24a and 5.F.27b.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

their own national foreign policies, aimed at maintaining neutrality while securing their commercial interests.

As a result of the international strains and the intra-Scandinavian differences, official Scandinavian internationalist discussions did not move significantly beyond the preparatory work for the third Hague Peace Conference. When the war ended and the other neutral states proved uninterested in a neutral conference, a Scandinavian internationalist programme was presented in the form of a 'Draft Convention Regarding an International Legal Order'. It consisted of three main points: a permanent organisation of the Hague Conferences, the international conferences for peace and international law; the obligation of states to settle international disputes peacefully through either international arbitration or mediation; and a permanent international court of justice.[51]

Viewed from the perspective of the victorious powers, the Scandinavian draft treaty must have seemed an inappropriate and outdated proposal. When it was presented in January 1919, the Western powers had already engaged in the much more far-reaching plans for the League of Nations. And viewed from the perspective of Lange and the other ambitious private peace entrepreneurs who had attempted to make the neutral Scandinavian countries spearheads of the transition towards this new peace system, the draft treaty was proof of the fact that the closely knit Scandinavian internationalist network was not always to their advantage, as they risked being tied to narrow and pragmatic political compromises which they could not fully support. However, the Scandinavian treaty proposal may also be evaluated more positively. The formulation and publication of a common position in international politics based on liberal principles was by no means unimportant at a time when revolutionary socialist forces and conservative reaction were gaining strength in Europe. The Scandinavian internationalist programme expressed a community of values and ideals with the Western powers. In committing the Scandinavian states to work for the promotion of liberal principles after the war, it also served as a stepping stone for Scandinavian membership of the League of Nations.

Moreover, the draft convention was also ascribed tactical importance, at least by the Danish government, as a platform for articulating discontent with the international disregard for the small neutral states in the creation of the new international legal organisation.[52] When Erik Scavenius met the Swedish envoy to Copenhagen the day after the draft convention had been published, he stated that it had been presented to the belligerent powers 'to indicate that the neutral countries ought to be shown consideration and that they demand to be ranked equally with the Great Powers within the "League of Nations". A kind of demonstration to mark that Norden apparently is not going to be consulted before the actual decision about the "League of Nations" is made.'[53] Judging from the final negotiations of the three committees

[51] 'Udkast til konvention vedrørende en international retsordning', published as appendix I in *Foreløbig Beretning angaaende den til Undersøgelse af Spørgsmaal vedrørende Varetagelsen af de neutrale Staters Interesser ved og efter Krigens Slutning nedsatte danske Komites Virksomhed* (Copenhagen, 1919).

[52] Danish Foreign Ministry to the Danish legation, Stockholm 20 Jan. 1919, NAC, DFM 11.B.22.

[53] Ibid.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

in November 1918, the Norwegian and Swedish representatives did not share these Danish concerns. While the Danish representatives and Munch in particular voiced discontent that the draft convention did not unconditionally assert the principles of the legal equality of states and mandatory international arbitration, the Swedish and Norwegian representatives viewed it as an attempt at constructing a practically feasible international legal framework.[54] This difference of opinion with Denmark, and the Danish Radical Party in particular, defending an ideal small-state position with a focus on the legal equality of states and the establishment of an unconditional international legal order, and with Norway and Sweden accepting as a matter of fact the preliminary right of the great powers to set the terms for international co-operation, was an enduring feature of Scandinavian internationalism. However, when the plans for the League of Nations were introduced, Scandinavian internationalist disputes ended and the Scandinavian internationalist elites united in criticism of the new international organisation.

Scandinavian unity: the Scandinavian states and the League of Nations, 1919–1921

The draft covenant for the League of Nations, which was presented on 14 February 1919, was an immense disappointment to Scandinavian internationalists. The exclusion of the vanquished powers, the vague and limited provisions for disarmament and the legal settlement of international disputes, the dominant position of the great powers within the League, and the fact that the new organisation would have to safeguard the settlement of Versailles, with its harsh peace conditions, through a system of collective security all ran counter to the ideals of the Scandinavian internationalists. Scandinavian internationalist activities entered a new phase characterised by the formal accession of the Scandinavian states to the League in 1920 and Scandinavian co-operation on amendments to the covenant. These amendments, which were put forward from 1919 to 1921, ran along two lines: developing the League in the direction of a universal legal organisation, and strengthening the independence and influence of small states within the organisation.[55] Although the principled differences among Scandinavian internationalist elites still existed and found expression in different levels of importance being attached to different aspects of this policy, they were now subordinated to this common doctrine.

Despite the fact that the Scandinavian states faced an organisation over which they had had no influence, the three countries joined the League in March 1920. However, it seems that they were merely making a virtue of necessity. The argument for joining the League – which ran along the same lines in all three countries – essentially contended that there was no realistic alternative to League membership.

[54] Minutes from the meeting 26 November–1 December 1918, NNL, CL, Ms. fol. 2521:30; Larsen, *Forsvar*, 202–6.

[55] The Covenant for the League of Nations was discussed and evaluated at the Nordic interparliamentary meeting in September 1919, in *Det nordiska interparlamentariska förbundets elfte delegeredemöte, Stockholm, September 1919* (Stockhom: Nordiska Interparlamentariska Förbundets, 1919), 15–113.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Staying outside the League would only bring the small neutral states into a situation where they would have to comply with League decisions without any possibility of influencing them. This argument was coupled with a positive expectation that, despite its shortcomings, the League would become a platform for the promotion of peace and that League membership would enable the Scandinavian states to pursue their internationalist goals more actively and efficiently than previously.[56]

Opposition to League membership came from some political quarters. In Sweden the main bulk of opposition came from the political right, and in Norway it was primarily the revolutionary socialists who opposed accession to the League. Their arguments were, however, quite similar. They both objected to what they considered a new alliance of the Western powers and they both claimed that League membership was incompatible with the principles of national self-determination and neutrality. The revolutionary socialists further claimed that the League was a reactionary construction that inhibited the immediate and absolute disarmament that was generally desired among all nations after the war.[57]

In this context Denmark stood out as the only Scandinavian country that joined the League with unanimous political support. In view of the strong Danish opposition to the idea of collective security and the fact that Denmark was the Scandinavian country most immediately threatened by Germany's exclusion from the League, this position seems at first surprising. However, several factors may explain it. The Danish right did not sympathise with Germany but was oriented towards the Western powers; no left-wing socialists were members of parliament. After the German defeat in the war, the foreign political agenda in Denmark was focused almost solely on the German handover of North Schleswig to Denmark. The handover was part of the Versailles settlement and created a shared interest with the Allied powers in safeguarding the territorial status quo after the war and a strong, cross-party gratitude towards the allied powers. Finally, and most importantly, no one in the political establishment believed that the drawbacks of League membership could be avoided by staying outside it. Evidently the weakest of the three Scandinavian states was also the most prone to adapt to the new facts of international life.

The Scandinavian attempts at pushing through amendments to the covenant began before the Scandinavian countries had formally decided to join the League. The co-operation of the three states in this field started during the unofficial negotiations with the allied powers about the draft covenant at the Hotel Crillon in Paris on 20 and 21 March 1919. The disappointment and resentment created by the draft covenant in February 1919 caused the Scandinavian representatives to propose far-reaching amendments to the covenant, including provisions for permanent neutrality within the League and the obligatory settlement of all international disputes by arbitration.[58]

[56] *Betænkning angaaende Danmarks Tiltræden af Folkenes Forbund*, Rigsdagstidende (Official Journal of the Danish Parliament), 1919–20, Appendix A, cols. 5322–3; Nils Yngvar Bøe Lindgren, 'Norge og oprettelsen av Folkeforbundet', MA thesis, University of Oslo, 1993, 157–87; Erik Lönnroth, *Den svenska utrikespolitikens historia, Vol. 5: 1919–1939* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1959), 30–3.

[57] Lönnroth, *Den svenska utrikespolitikens historia*, 33–6.

[58] Larsen, *Forsvar og Folkeforbund*, 214–34.

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When these efforts proved unsuccessful – and particularly after the Scandinavian states had entered the League – the Scandinavian governments scaled back their ambitions significantly and moved towards proposals that seemed practically feasible. As Adelswärd put it at the Nordic inter-parliamentary meeting in 1920, 'Naturally, it is wisest not to act prematurely in regard to amendments or additions of a more or less political character which could trigger disputes within the League due to significant conflicting interests among its member states.'[59]

The Scandinavian proposals regarding amendments to the covenant were drawn up in the period from August 1919 to October 1920. Four amendments were proposed at the First Assembly: a provision ensuring that the assembly should meet annually; a clarification of the electoral conditions for the four non-permanent members of the Council; a change in Article 13 regarding international arbitration, to the effect that violations of international law should not only 'generally' but under all circumstances be the subject of international arbitration; and a proposal for a relaxation in the obligation under Article 16 to partake in economic sanctions.[60] Although technical in character, the first two proposals mirrored the ambition of the Scandinavian states to establish the authority of the Assembly vis-à-vis the Council (and thereby the position of the small states vis-à-vis the great powers), and the fourth proposal sought to create a possibility for future neutrality in the event of great power conflicts. The third proposal was a weakened attempt at strengthening the obligations of member states to settle international disputes by peaceful means. Although none of the Scandinavian proposals was integrated into the covenant, most of the Scandinavian wishes were accommodated. The first two proposals were incorporated into the League's rules of procedure at the first Assembly, and the fourth suggestion was in 1921 declared by the Assembly to be a constituting rule for the guidance of the League in relation to the application of Article 16.[61] This last declaration was of cardinal importance to radical internationalists in Denmark, who regarded it as an argument in favour of their interpretation of the covenant as a legal construction, which allowed continued Danish neutrality.[62]

When the proposals were discussed in the League's commission on amendments from 1920 to 1921,[63] the Scandinavian representative, Herluf Zahle, who was the Danish envoy to Stockholm, spoke strongly and successfully against more far-reaching amendments proposed by other states, and after 1921 the Scandinavian states let the question of amendments rest.[64] This scaling back of Scandinavian ambitions on amendments mirrored a change in the overall Scandinavian attitude towards the League of Nations. By 1921 the Scandinavian states had moved away from the initial

[59] *Aarbok for de nordiske interparlamentariske Grupper*, vol. II, 1920, 10.
[60] Larsen, *Forsvar og Folkeforbund*, 247.
[61] Ibid., 251; Shepard Jones, *Scandinavian States*, 218–19.
[62] See, e.g., Georg Cohn, *Neutralité et Societé des Nations* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1924).
[63] Fortroligt Rigsdagsmøde 3 Apr. 1919: Beretning om Forhandlingerne vedrørende Folkenes Forbund (Confidential meeting in the Danish Parliament 3 Apr. 1919: Report regarding the negotiations about the League of Nations): Library and Archive of the Danish Parliament, Copenhagen.
[64] See, e.g., the memorandum by P. Munch (probably April 1921): NAC, DFM, 11.B.30a.

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oppositional stance and taken a position in favour of safeguarding and strengthening the new international organisation – despite its perceived limitations and weaknesses. This smooth transition from staunch opposition to wholehearted support for the League mirrored the fundamental community of internationalist ideals that existed between the Scandinavian internationalist elites and leading circles within the League.

Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s the Scandinavian internationalist elites were actively engaged in the League's attempts to promote international disarmament, arbitration and conciliation, in the codification and development of international law and international intellectual co-operation, in the humanitarian work of the League and in the transformation of the League into a universal organisation, as well as the democratisation and streamlining of the League organisation.

The level and character of Scandinavian activities within the League changed over time in accordance with changes in the international political environment and the general fluctuations in the League's activities. Thus in the period from 1920 to 1923, when wartime antagonisms hampered international political progress, emphasis was on internal organisational matters. The détente of the mid-1920s and the high tide for international arbitration created by the Geneva Protocol and Locarno Treaty formed the basis for a Scandinavian offensive from 1924 to 1929 to promote the pacific settlement of international disputes. From 1930 attention was centred on the question of international disarmament and the pending international disarmament conference which convened in 1932 and adjourned in 1934.[65] Until the Abyssinian crisis dealt the League its fatal blow in 1935, Scandinavian League activities were consistently based on the belief that the question of disarmament should be kept at the forefront of the League's activities and that it was not in the interests of the Scandinavian states to take on further obligations to take part in international sanctions.[66] It was against this background of the Scandinavian attitude to the League that international observers in Geneva came to view the Scandinavian countries as an internationalist bloc from the beginning of the League's activities in 1920.[67]

Some of the wartime differences within the Scandinavian internationalist elites survived into the interwar period. While internationalist sections in the three countries agreed that no additional obligations to take part in international sanctions should be accepted, Danish radical liberal internationalists based this view on a principled, anti-militaristic faith which was not shared by the other internationalist elites. The Danish idea that a system of collective security in itself created conflict and hampered détente and disarmament was articulated on several occasions, most energetically in 1922–3 in connection with the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and in 1924–5 in connection with the Geneva Protocol.

Denmark's strong support for mandatory international arbitration and the Danish radical liberal belief that an international rule of law had to precede international law enforcement also manifested itself in an ambitious legalistic Danish policy within the

[65] This and the following paragraphs are also partly based on Gram-Skjoldager's Ph.D. thesis, Aarhus University (forthcoming).

[66] Shepard Jones, *Scandinavian States*, 220.

[67] Finn T. B. Friis, *De nordiske Lande og Folkeforbundet* (Graasten: Folkung, 1944), 42–3.

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League, which included the promotion of mandatory arbitration, the outlawry of war and the introduction of international legal principles declaring territorial expansion and the collection of war reparations to be unlawful.[68] Furthermore, Denmark also eagerly promoted what Munch denoted as 'intellectual disarmament'; together with the Norwegian historian and later foreign minister Halvdan Koht, he was deeply involved in furthering international intellectual co-operation and education aimed at bringing about international reconciliation and mutual understanding.[69] Sweden, the most highly industrialised Scandinavian country and at the same time a social-democratic stronghold, was the most eager to support the International Labour Organisation, which was set up to further the reformist socialist idea of promoting peace through the improvement of working-class conditions.[70] Thus the three strands of Scandinavian internationalism still existed, and the creation of new coercive international political structures was complemented by radical and social-democratic attempts to develop the intellectual and social basis for peace. However, these internationalist differences no longer created a negative dynamic that undermined and limited the possibilities for co-ordinated Scandinavian international action. After the League had been set up, a partially complementary structure developed in which the different ideological internationalist profiles of the three Scandinavian countries supplemented and mutually supported each other. In this sense, the divergence and differences in Scandinavian internationalism strengthened the international image of Scandinavia as an island of peace.

Conclusions

This article aimed to challenge the prevailing international image of Scandinavia as a consolidated, unitary 'island of peace' in international politics. It has sought to demonstrate this point by uncovering the ways in which internationalist circles in Scandinavia contributed to, responded to and articulated scepticism towards the new developments in internationalist thought during and immediately after the First World War. Thus this essay has attempted to map the main characteristics, potentials and limitations of Scandinavian internationalism and internationalist co-operation in that period.

Three phases can be distinguished, each of which was characterised by different forms of Scandinavian internationalist co-operation and different levels of ideological divergence. In the first three years of the war, from 1914 to 1917, Scandinavian internationalism was a wide, extrovert and pluralistic phenomenon, embedded in the broader, unofficial and semi-private transnational settings of the IPU, the CODP and the international labour movement. The splitting up of peace discussions in these different intellectual playgrounds and the theoretical character of the negotiations carried out there crystallised the fundamental ideological differences within Scandinavian internationalist circles.

[68] Cf. Shepard Jones, *Scandinavian States*.
[69] Friis, *De nordiske Lande*, 34–6.
[70] Ibid., 37–41.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In this process three different strands of Scandinavian internationalism developed, which became lasting features of the interwar period. First, a 'radical liberal' internationalism had come to dominate the internationalist agenda in Denmark before the war. This school of thought was based on the idea that a lasting peace could be created on the basis of common international interests, and focused on democratisation and education as means of promoting peace while sharing the classic Cobdenite faith in free trade, arbitration and neutrality as means of promoting peace. Second, a new liberal internationalism, articulated primarily by Lange, developed in accordance with mainstream liberal internationalism and was focused on strong international organisation and the enforcement of international law. Third was a social-democratic internationalism, based on the idea that the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the working class was a necessary condition for a lasting international peace, which had its stronghold in Stockholm. These three different schools of internationalism initially developed within different institutional settings and therefore only collided with each other on a few occasions.

In the period from 1917 to 1918, when the core of Scandinavian internationalist co-operation moved to the intergovernmental level, it took on a narrow, introverted and divisive form. This was in part due to the governments' need to safeguard the current neutral status of the Scandinavian countries during the war. The prospect of a peace settlement based on liberal principles prompted the Scandinavian governments to steer clear of a range of internationalist themes in order not to provoke any of the belligerent powers. The divergences between Norway and Denmark over the issue of international sanctions aggravated the situation. The result was an implosion of Scandinavian internationalist co-operation in which the Scandinavian study committees limited themselves to drafting a convention for an international legal organisation based on the narrow principles of the Hague process.

While Scandinavian intergovernmental co-operation during the war exposed the limitations and blurred the potentials of Scandinavian internationalist co-operation, the opposite was true for Scandinavian internationalist co-operation in the third phase, from 1919 to 1921. The setting up of the League of Nations caused the Scandinavian internationalists to unite in criticism of the League. While accepting League membership, they embarked on a two-pronged strategy of strengthening the League as a legal organisation and a framework for international disarmament, and strengthening the position within the League of the small states. The scaling back of ambitions and partial success on these two issues marked the gradual transformation of the Scandinavian internationalist elites into strong supporters of the League.

Internationalist differences still existed within the Scandinavian peace bloc, but the setting up of the League of Nations brought an end to the negative dynamics of the wartime era when the different ideologies and security policies undermined and limited the possibilities for co-ordinated Scandinavian internationalist action. Through the policy of amendments, the Scandinavian internationalists incorporated principled Danish scepticism towards international sanctions into a common Scandinavian stance and a positive and partially complementary structure developed in which the different ideological internationalist profiles and preferences of the three Scandinavian countries supplemented and mutually supported each other.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0960777308004505 Published online by Cambridge University Press