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NEED GERMANY SURVIVE ?

NEED GERMANY SURVIVE?

by

JULIUS BRAUNTHAL

with an Introduction by

HAROLD J. LASKI

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VICTOR GOLLANCZ LTD
1943

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To
FRIEDRICH ADLER

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BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

I know thy works, that thou are neither cold, or hot. I would
thou wert cold, or hot. But because thou art lukewarm, and
neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth.

Revelation of St. John.

Oh, cease ! must hate and death return ?
Cease ! must men kill and die ?
Cease ! drain not its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past,
Oh, might it die or rest at last !

Shelley, *Hellas*.

. . . Let the axe
Strike at the root, the poison tree will fall ;
And where its venom'd exhalations spread
Ruin, and death, and woe, where millions lay
Quenching the serpent's famine, and their bones
Bleaching unburied in the putrid blast,
A garden shall arise, in loveliness
Surpassing fabled Eden.

Shelley, *Queen Mab*.

PREFACE

THIS BOOK was inspired by a letter from an English friend, now serving with the Forces. He is about thirty, an ardent Socialist, with an open mind and a warm heart—the best type of serious English youth. Ten years ago he stayed with me in Vienna for a few months: he knows German, has studied German literature and politics a little and has watched with passionate interest the struggle between Fascism and Democracy in Germany. That there are two Germanys has always been obvious to him. Now he has written me about his doubts and qualms. Perhaps, he questions, there is indeed no “other Germany”; perhaps, apart from some exaggerations, Vansittart and Rowse and Butler are right; perhaps our concept of Socialist internationalism was a colossal fallacy—need Germany survive? . . . I was startled by my friend’s letter. He appeared to me as being overwhelmed with fathomless pessimism, bewildered by the immensity of things. Would the peace not be lost if such a mood should sweep the mind and heart of the peoples? In my young friend I have always respected British youth. Thus I felt that I owed him an explanation of my views. This small book is the reply to my friend’s embarrassing letter.

It states the case of Germany once more. It states the case of Europe as well. In pleading for the German people “not guilty”, I feel myself free from any national prejudice. I am Jewish by birth, Austrian by nationality, German by language, English by elective affinity, a “citizen of the world” by faith. Montaigne’s confession: “I esteeme all men as my countrymen; and as kindly embrace a Polonian as a Frenchman, postponing this natural bond to universal and common”—has been an article of my creed all my life. I feel myself deeply indebted to the cultural heritage of many a nation. I have received from British, French, Belgian, Italian, Czech, Dutch and Polish people only generous hospitality and warm-hearted kindness. My personal experience and those of my friends at German hands have not engendered particularly tender feelings for the guilty.

Yet I feel the German problem is more complex than is suggested by Lord Vansittart and Mr. Rohan D’O. Butler. Nor am I able to derive from an examination of the German character

any facts that would explain the cataclysm of our time. But its diagnosis is a matter of life and death for our civilisation. National hatred is a specious guide for the maze of problems with which our generation is confronted. I reject national hatred, not only, as Victor Gollancz, because it is the very negation of Christianity and Socialism, but primarily because it is in its implications at this historical juncture sheer suicide of humanity.

In investigating the nature of the contemporary crisis, of which Germany is only a part, I have to offer no particularly original views. All that I have attempted is to examine the significance of the war in its relation to the revolutionary processes of transformation which human society has been undergoing for a quarter of a century. I also have to discuss the problem of international Socialism, as an idea and institution, which does not escape the devastating processes of hatred which this war has bred.

In the re-examination of Socialist internationalism I have been particularly inspired by the thought and deeds of Dr. Friedrich Adler, who kept alive the flame of Socialist internationalism in the darkness of the last war, and who had devoted his life to making its ideal a living reality. I venture, in deepest thankfulness and humility, to dedicate to him this humble study.

Many books have been sources of inspiration. I am especially indebted to two books: Professor E. H. Carr's *Conditions of Peace* and G. D. H. Cole's *Europe, Russia and the Future*. I also wish to record my gratitude to two most generous friends: Mr. Victor Gollancz, for having encouraged me to write this book, and Professor Harold J. Laski, for reading it and writing the Introduction.

J. B.

London, September 1942.

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INTRODUCTION

NO DANGER is so great as that which surrounds the effort to explain great historical events in simple terms. It is perhaps inevitable that there should be a craving for simplicity in the presence of a profound crisis. Men are eager to understand, and they have rarely the time or the patience to plough their way through the complex factors which explain the situation in which they find themselves. They want someone or something that they can praise or blame; they want the process to be capable of summary in a single sentence. The results of the Reformation or the French Revolution must be "good" or "bad"; an attempt to state them in all their formidable complexity seems rather to darken counsel than to illuminate. Our Luther, our Napoleon, our Lincoln, must be all of a piece; the thesis that a great man is never simple, above all that a great statesman is one thing at one time and one thing at another is dismissed irritably as an attempt to avoid the obligation to judge.

The two world wars our generation has known are remarkable examples of the passion for, and the danger of, this excessive simplification. It is almost inevitable that war should breed hate; and the purveyors of hate vary from the lamentably ignorant to the learnedly sophisticated. Twice in our lifetime the German people has been marched to the domination of the world; it was no doubt inevitable that, at different levels of knowledge, its attempt at domination should be represented as the expression of something exceptional in the German national character which must be rooted out if the world, in the future, is to be safe from German aggression. This representation assumes the most varied forms. At its most ignorant, it argues that the evil which Hitlerism imposes is something the responsibility for which is traceable to a mysterious quality to be found in all Germans, so that with the group which so curiously calls itself the "Fight for Freedom" Movement, the German Social Democratic Party, most of whose leaders Hitler has killed or imprisoned or exiled, and thousands of whose members have passed through his concentration camps, can be depicted as a secret instrument of German aggression. We are given elaborate

accounts of the pedigree of Fascism in its German form. Sometimes it is traceable to Kant; sometimes Hegel or Fichte is its author. Sometimes German aggression is the child of Prussian historiography. Sometimes it is provided with economic origins, and we are bidden to see its parent in the apt pupil of Alexander Hamilton, Friedrich List, while my late and learned friend the French historian Charles Andler wrote a large treatise to prove that Karl Marx was a hidden author of pan-Germanism. A careful student of the anthologies which are now so popular would find it difficult not to suspect that any German writer who ever praised his own people was not a secret agent of the vast historic conspiracy of the German race in the unfolding of which Hitlerism is the ugliest act.

I yield to no one in my conviction that Hitlerism is the enemy of mankind, and that its overwhelming destruction is essential to the safety and progress of civilisation. But I am glad that my friend Mr. Julius Braunthal has had the courage to strike the trenchant blow this book strikes at the nonsense which seeks to make the German national character the vital factor in the emergence of Hitlerism. It cannot be said too often that we do not know enough, in any objective way, to speak of national character with confidence as a fixed body of habits independent of the environment in which it operates. What we know is national behaviour; and the more we observe it in action, the more we note the judgments made about it, the less we shall be tempted, I suggest, to the vast generalisations which are so fashionable at the present time. We should do well to remember the change, in our own epoch, of the 'national character' of the French and the Russians. We ought to take account of the American as he appeared in one age to Mrs. Trollope and Miss Martineau, to Lord Bryce in the next. Our own judgment of our national character has not often been shared by eminent Irishmen, and it is not often that it has excited enthusiasm among eminent Indians in the last forty years unless the royal prerogative has been responsible for their eminence.

I am sure, therefore, that Mr. Braunthal is right in at least the general outline of his diagnosis of the German problem. I am sure, too, that there could be no more tragic error than the one which seeks to base our post-war policy upon the assumption of a guilty German nation. I am particularly glad that he has drawn attention to the statement of the British Labour Party on the Peace Treaty of 1919. It is a grim thought that its prophecies should have been so precisely realised. But it will be even more grim if, after a second world-cataclysm, socialists, above all people, are persuaded once again to acquiesce in a peace which

does not deal with those roots of war the nature of which they have never ceased to emphasise since the founding of the First International eighty years ago. We must destroy Nazism; but we must not, out of hatred and revenge, build a new Germany in which there fester the wounds which make men capable of trusting their fate to men like Hitler. We are entitled to safeguards against German aggression; but if we seek those through humiliation of Germany, as the present agony begins to fade, we shall be condemning a third generation to their death. Before we permit our minds and hearts to think in those terms, we ought, I suggest, to bear in mind that Mr. Amery saw nothing to blame in Japanese aggression against China, that Mr. Chamberlain had little concern over the fate of Czechoslovakia, that Lord Halifax was a great admirer of Fascist Italy, and that even Mr. Churchill had no real insight, until too late, into the nature of the Spanish Civil War.

Pressure to hate in wartime is always more popular than a plea for understanding. There are ominous signs, even in the British Labour Movement, that the pressure to hate is gaining ground. It is the easiest outlet for crude emotion, and it requires less energy of mind. It can command funds; it can organise; it will always obtain a cheap and ready applause. If Mr. Braunthal's book persuades those who are tempted by its shrill vehemence to think a second time before they yield to it, he will have deserved well of the nation which has given him refuge, for he will have helped to create that mood of imaginative reflection without the full influence of which we who seek to defend the future of civilisation may find ourselves accomplices in its destruction.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

CHAPTER ONE
CAUSES OF THE CATAclysm

... But the eternal world
Contains at once the evil and the cure.

SHELLEY, *Queen Mab*.

FOUR TO five million people in Europe and as many in Asia and Africa have already been killed in this war. No fewer have been maimed. Half of the world's population is starving; hundreds of flourishing cities have been laid in ruins, and there is still no end in sight to the terrible havoc. Humanity is engulfed in the greatest catastrophe of its history.

What are the causes of the cataclysm? Who is guilty of this unparalleled crime?

The common answer to this question is: firstly, Hitler; secondly, the Nazis; thirdly, the German people. In the last resort, so the argument runs, it is "the Germans" who are responsible for this war. Hitler would never have come to power had the German people not willed it, and if they had refused to support the war, he could never have prosecuted it with such terrific force. The truth is, it is asserted, that the Germans are a nation of warriors, aiming at world domination. They are as willing to toil, to fight and to die for this end under the leadership of Hitler as they willingly toiled, fought and died for this end under the leadership of Wilhelm and Bismarck. National Socialism is, thus, but the expression of the innate German spirit.

According to this theory, the earth would be a lovely garden if "the Germans" were not "butcher birds", greedy for power and prey. Consequently, it will not be enough to overthrow Hitler and wipe out Hitlerism; the Germans as a nation must be reduced to impotence.

This popular view of the world's disaster is clear, impressive and simple.

But assuming, for the moment, that this view is false, and that Hitlerism is no more than a symptom of the disease which has corrupted not only the body of Germany but the body of the whole of modern society; can the disease really be cured by cutting out the Nazi ulcer if the poison which caused it be left to spread and flourish?

All cures depend on the right diagnosis; and painstaking search is needed to discover the germ of the world's sickness that has infested the social organism of our civilisation.

Let us try, as best we can, to determine the chief feature of the contemporary disturbance. If we look more closely at our troubled world, one fact at least emerges clearly. This war was obviously not caused entirely by the failure of the three masons who quarrelled with Hitler on the scaffolding of a Viennese building, years before the First World War, to push him over and break his neck. Of course, Hitler and his gang are guilty of starting the war. But "we must remember", as Macaulay once observed, "how small a proportion the good or evil effected by a single statesman can bear to the good or evil of a great social system". For it would, indeed, be fantastic to pretend that none of the events of recent years would have happened if Hitler had met an inglorious end years ago in the gutter of a lonely Viennese street.

Few sensible people would deny that the world was in a state of appalling social, economic and international tension which had nearly reached breaking point; otherwise it would be impossible to explain Hitler's usurpation of a power greater than that wielded by any of the mighty hunters of mankind, from Nimrod to Napoleon. Hitler may really be the foxiest demagogue that ever trod the earth; he may be a political genius, as many of his admirers say—a Caesar of daring and ambition, a Hercules of energy and ingenuity—though I personally think of him, in Swinburne's words (about Napoleon), as "the one most poisonous worm that soiled the world". Yet whatever Hitler the man may be, there is a fantastic discrepancy between his personality as such and the power which he exercised when he juggled with the globe at his pleasure and then pushed it into the abyss. In this enlightened century of ours, Hitler's success in assuming a power of such proportions can, I submit, only be explained by the existence of a tension in the social atmosphere which was bound to break somehow, if not necessarily into war. This war could perhaps have been avoided. But even if the foreign policy of the Western Powers had been far-sighted enough to prevent Nazi Germany's rearmament and Hitler's consequent aggressive operations in the Rhineland and in Austria, the tension in the post-Armistice world and the destruction it threatened could not have been eliminated by those means alone.

Hitler's personality is certainly of remarkable interest for psychologists and students of political strategy and propaganda; but in itself it affords no clue to the dynamics of the present upheaval. A century ago, O'Brien, the Chartist leader, said of the Napoleonic wars: "Fools, indeed, imagine that Pitt or Buonaparte caused it, or that it was the work of Cabinets or of a few individuals in power. . . . Rulers and Cabinets have no power beyond that

which society gives them." If this was true of Napoleon and Pitt, it seems to me to be even more true of Hitler.

The phenomenon of National Socialism, with Hitler as its incarnate spirit, cannot be understood if we regard it as a particularly German growth, revealing the German mind and reflecting whatever is most typical in German tradition. National Socialism is simply the German brand of Fascism, and Fascism is in its essence neither German, nor Italian, nor Japanese, but an international phenomenon. Otherwise, how are we to explain the rapid spread of Fascism all over the world?

We have, after all, witnessed the fact that Fascist ideas have, without any essential difference in philosophy, aims, methods, and even in phraseology, taken root in Italy, in Japan, in Austria, in Portugal, in Esthonia, in Greece, in Spain, as well as in Germany. The same gospel, with a similar ideology, has been preached in scores of tongues by the *Croix de Feu* in France, the *Lappo* movement in Finland, the *Rexist* movement in Belgium, the *Arrow Cross* in Hungary, the *Black Legion* and the *Silver Shirts* in the United States, the Danish Nazi Party, the *Iron Wolves* in Lithuania, the *Baltic Brotherhood* in Latvia, the *Greenshirts* in Egypt and the *Revisionists* in Palestine; and by Fascists in Holland, Croatia, Norway, Serbia, Sweden, Argentina, Brazil and South Africa.

The external characteristics of Fascism are, of course, coloured by the social anatomy of the different countries in which it has appeared, and by the tradition and temper of the people living under it; but the substance is always and everywhere the same.

Japan, for instance, is worlds apart from Germany geographically, culturally and in her traditions; nevertheless she has adopted a kind of Fascism, though she maintains the fiction of a Parliament just as Hitler maintains a token Reichstag. But in Japan too the popular parties were dissolved by the Prime Minister, Prince Konoye, in 1940, and there is, as in Germany, only a Government party, the official Imperial Rule Associations, whose programme was described by Vice-President General Ando as "the complete extermination from Japanese life of liberalism, individualism and other political doctrines originating from Anglo-American sources". In its essence, in its social and political structure, there is little difference between Japanese Fascism and the German variety, just as there was (and is) no substantial difference between Japanese and American capitalism or, to go even farther back, between Japanese and French feudalism. The Japanese sociologist Inazo Nitobé commented on the surprisingly wide dissemination of the feudal system over the medieval world. It spread out over Western Europe, Scandinavia, Russia, Persia

and Japan, just as in ancient times it spread across Egypt, Abyssinia, Madagascar and Mexico. "The (feudal) régime", he said, "that prevailed in France, Spain, England and Germany is so strikingly like that which existed in Japan, that a search for the differences rather than for the similarities might lead to some valuable discoveries regarding fundamental characteristics." * The same observation could be made, with still more force, about the capitalist and Fascist régimes. Japanese capitalism is basically like American capitalism (although the former still displays remarkable relics of feudalism), while Japanese Fascism and German Fascism are twin brothers. The rule of the military caste is less disguised in Japan than in Germany, but this is merely a difference in degree. Ideologically, Japanese Fascism is based on the same belief in the magical divinity of the State, the total insignificance of the individual, and the principle of leadership by a chosen *Führer*, endowed by Providence with charisma. It was, of course, unnecessary for Japan to evolve a new theory of feudalism (for the Fascist doctrine is indeed, in its deeper sense, a doctrine of neo-feudalism), because so much of her century-old feudalism, and even more of her feudal philosophy, were still alive. Notwithstanding the capitalist fabric of her economy and the Fascist structure of her society, Japan remains a theocracy with an Emperor who is both *Führer* and incarnate God. However, although Japanese Fascism is different from the German and Spanish kinds, none the less it is Fascism in its pith and marrow, in its political and economic structure, and also in its superstructure.

Since the social phenomenon of Fascism has spread all over the world, preached by yellow and brown-skinned peoples as well as by white men, it must be obvious that the German type of Fascism, called National Socialism, cannot be a specifically German development, arising from the inherited or traditional characteristics of the German race. If it is true that German history, German political thought and "the innate docility, wickedness and lust for power of the German people" are the springs of Fascism, how are we to account for the fact that the same phenomena have risen on the soil of nations with a different history, different political traditions, a different temper and a different outlook?

National Socialism has also been interpreted as the offspring of Protestantism—the national and religious force which defeated the Hellenic–Latin universalism of the Catholic Church. This theory, however, makes no attempt to explain the emergence of the same ideology in Shintoist and Buddhist Japan, in Mohammedan Egypt, in Hebrew Palestine, or in countries in which Catholicism itself still holds the field, such as Italy, Spain and

* Inazo Nitobé, *Lectures on Japan*.

France. Fascism is no more specifically Protestant than it is specifically German.

It is unnecessary to repeat that the form and structure of Fascism in different countries are determined by the same factors which have determined the character of nations: cultural and historical traditions, the scale of economic and social development, the general rhythm of life. Fascist States differ correspondingly in efficiency and in the degree of their power. Obviously, German Fascism, based on the enormous war potential of the Reich, is necessarily more efficient than, say, the Spanish type; similarly Japanese Fascism is more efficient than Italian Fascism. Yet these variations in power, efficiency and national character are smaller in extent than the similarities in ideology and social organisation which characterise every Fascist society.

It follows from this observation that fundamentally similar economic, social and political circumstances which have produced Fascism in Italy and Germany, must have produced Fascism in Japan, Spain and elsewhere. Since Fascism is a world-wide phenomenon, it must obviously have been produced by the same basic causes operating on a world-wide scale.

Fascism itself would, therefore, not be destroyed solely by the military defeat of the nations which are trapped in it, if the military defeat of the Fascist Powers were not followed by a fundamental change in the whole complex of conditions which engendered it.

If this war were simply a national war between Germany and Great Britain, or between the Axis Powers and the United Nations, a victory of the latter would only achieve immediate national ends; Fascism itself would not be destroyed. The victorious Powers might stamp out the war machine of the Axis Powers; they might re-draw the map of the world; they might encircle the defeated Powers and keep them down. But if the intrinsic causes of Fascism were not eliminated, Fascism would thrive in both camps and ultimately engulf the world once more in war. For its operating causes are at work all over the world. They do not affect the Germans alone, or the Italians, or the Japanese. They are latent and threatening everywhere—in France as well as in the United States, in the Argentine as well as in Great Britain.

If, then, the aim of this war is to free the world from the Fascist danger, the task is twofold. Firstly, the destruction of the military power of Fascism; secondly, the transformation of the economic, social and political structure of society from which it emerged.

All this has been so clearly proved that it hardly seems necessary to go all over it again. Socialists, at least, have rejected the interpretation of the war as "a conflict of nations, not of ideas"; they

have consistently held the view that Fascism is an international phenomenon, and that the war is in its social sense an international civil war.

The passions bred by the struggle have, however, changed the outlook of many Socialists. They are now inclined to agree with the theory of the traditional school of power politics which insists that "the mortal danger is the German danger, the old danger of a Germany, whether despotic or democratic, whether reactionary or progressive, wielding exorbitant power in Europe", as the Editor of the *Nineteenth Century and After* * explained. They regard National Socialism not merely as the German type of international Fascism, but as the innate characteristic of the German mind. They, then, are waging war not solely against Germany as a Fascist Power, but against the German people as the alleged actual and potential enemy of freedom of the world.

The dispute on the character of the war is, thus, not an academic matter only: the crucial problem of the destiny of humanity is involved in it. The political future of Europe and of the world will be shaped in one way if the assumption prevails that "the mortal danger is the German danger"; that the responsibility for this war rests with the German people as well as with the German Government; and that the German people must be cast down. It will be shaped in a quite different way if public opinion is convinced that the mortal danger is Fascism; that not merely its military power, but also its operating causes must be defeated; that National Socialism is no more than a symptom of the Fascist disease which is corrupting modern society.

The great decisions which will determine the course of history depend, therefore, to an enormous extent on our interpretation of the riddle of Fascism and, at this juncture, of Germany.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RIDDLE OF THE GERMAN MIND

"When I was young, the French ate frogs and were called 'froggies', but they apparently abandoned this practice when we concluded our Entente—at any rate, I have never heard it mentioned since that date."—BERTRAND RUSSELL, *Which Way Peace?*

THE GERMAN RACE AND OTHER RACES

DURING THE last war a learned German professor, Werner Sombart, published a small book entitled *Shopkeepers and Heroes*. In it he set out to prove that the German race, by virtue of its

* February, 1942.

very nature, of its blood, of its glorious history and its venerable tradition, consisted entirely of heroes. Every German man was a Hector, every German woman dauntless as an Amazon, and, when called upon, the draper round the corner and the clerk at the Dortmund Bank would, like the Professor of Archaeology at the University of Heidelberg, fight as bravely as a lion. Such was the stuff of which inscrutable Providence made the German race.

Professor Sombart discovered, further, that apparently Providence was less kindly disposed towards the British race. Nature, blood, history and tradition moulded the character of the British in precisely the opposite way. The permeation of the British mind by the ideas of 1789 had destroyed the remnants of British heroism. "The ideals of 1789: freedom, equality and brotherhood, are the ideals of shopkeepers," he maintained; "they are entirely unsuited for the development of heroic idealism." And so it came about that the English developed the mentality of greedy shopkeepers, of mean costermongers, haggling over every penny; they dreamed merely of cotton and coal, of trade and commerce, of profits and interest, instead of glory and fatherland, the riddle of the universe, the enigma of history and its higher purpose. The English had hobbies, to be sure, but no ideals. They professed to be Christians, but behind that mask they were irreligious hypocrites. They had no faith and felt no historical vocation. Small wonder that they lacked the high spirit and prowess of the Germans.

In 1914 Germany was at war also with Japan. So Professor Sombart confessed then that he had always regarded the Japanese not as proper human beings, but only, as he said, as "extremely adroit semi-monkeys". "It is rather hard", he added, "to accept them with proper human feelings; even without hatred. You do not hate the cur that bites your leg; all you do is to thrash it. Honest arms would be tarnished were they used against such people."

This was the conclusion which Dr. Werner Sombart, Professor of Sociology at the University of Berlin, reached after painstaking search for the truth and nothing but the truth. His writings brought to my mind Shakespeare's line: "Though this be madness, yet there is method in't". It was a remarkable madness, and luckily for Professor Sombart it fitted perfectly in the scheme of the German High Command. Krupp had to provide the guns and ammunition; Werner Sombart the "scientific" weapons.

Later, when Hitler was already in power and the German race theory was embodied into the law of the Third Reich, German biologists and anthropologists, sociologists and archaeologists, historians and philosophers, proved, with the scientific impartiality

becoming to scholars, that the Jews were the most wicked people who ever desecrated God's garden. They were the filthy scum of the earth; they were the veritable scourge of mankind. They had no human intelligence at all, only a sinister monkey-cunning. They were incapable of love; what they called love was merely lust. Their God was Mammon; their purpose in life wealth; the sole motive of their activity was the meanest sort of greed. There was no crime, however cruel and obscene, that they had not committed. They used to slaughter small Christian children in order to feed on their warm blood. They liked to rape blonde Teutonic girls to satisfy their lust. They had incited all the wars in history, they had stirred up all the revolutions; they provided the dynamic force in Plutocracy, Bolshevism, Free-masonry and Marxism, all simply felonious Jewish devices in their drive for world domination.

Contemporary science in Germany evolved even more subtle variations on the theme of the recognised inferiority of the Jewish race. For instance, the Nazi anthropologist, Herman Gauch, proclaimed* that the Jews were merely a transitional species between man and the lower animals. Celebrated physicists invoked weighty arguments to prove that the Jew Einstein's theory of relativity was not science, but an attempt to undermine the edifice of science; noted psychologists demonstrated that the psycho-analytic theories of the Jew Freud were not science either, but pernicious attacks on the institutions of family and fatherland. It was furthermore shown that the paintings of the Jew Liebermann, the music of the Jews Mendelssohn and Mahler, the poetry and writing of the Jews Heine and Schnitzler, could not be art, because the Jews, lacking creative force, were as little able to produce art and letters as science. Thus the scholars of contemporary Germany came to distinguish between Jewish and Aryan mathematics, Jewish and Aryan physics, Jewish and Aryan art. "Though this be madness, yet there is method in't."

I am sure that most people with common sense and decency will feel nothing but contempt for the crude Nazi nonsense or, what amounts to the same thing, the nonsense of the nationalist German professors of the last war. But would we not be committing exactly the same malicious blunders if we were to indict a whole nation of seventy or eighty million people?

A TRULY BLACK RECORD

Indeed, every one of us is seething with rage at all we have experienced at the hands of Germans. We are naturally inclined to

* Herman Gauch, *Grundlagen der Rassenforschung (Principles of Racial Research)*.

condemn the whole lot of them. The other day I read the Polish Black Book, *The German New Order in Poland*. It contains five hundred and sixty-two pages of documents ; they are five hundred and sixty-two indictments for the most fiendish and bloody crimes, literally without precedent in history. The volume contains one hundred and eighty-five photographs ; they are one hundred and eighty-five accusations of the most horrible villainies. I have also read in Dr. E. V. Erdely's book, *Germany's First European Protectorate*, his account of the atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis in Czechoslovakia, and I have seen Molotov's Note on the German atrocities committed in Russia. I confess frankly that my nerves could not stand the record of these barbarities. Germans have slaughtered and tortured tens of thousands of Serbs, Russians, Greeks, Jews ; they have deliberately starved to death hundreds of thousands of people : purely as a means of intimidation, they have laid Rotterdam, Warsaw and Belgrade in ruins, massacring by raids and bombing at least a hundred and fifty thousand men, women and children in those three cities alone. Like the Furies in Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* they have, as "the ministers of pain, and fear, and disappointment, and mistrust, and hate, and clinging crime", tracked "all things that weep, and bleed, and live". Never has mankind suffered such an enormous accumulation of organised cruelty. And with dismay and fury we have witnessed how the German war machine, that demoniacal force of destruction, swept from land to land, leaving behind a wilderness of misery, blotting out the liberties of nations, degrading humanity to the lowest level of serfdom, turning the whole of the European continent into one vast concentration camp and making the earth a slaughter-house. Dante's fearful vision has come true: "What mean their bells and trumpets, their horn and flutes, but 'Come, hangman ; come, vulture !' "

In the face of such facts, it is very hard indeed not to condemn the people in whose name these crimes were committed ; who, by tens of thousands, have carried out these crimes ; and who are apparently in their millions conniving at these crimes.

And yet, we ought, I submit, to consider, firstly, whether the wholesale impeachment of the German people would be in accordance with our sense of justice, and, secondly, whither it leads.

NAZI RACE THEORY—REVERSED

Most British people reject the Nazi racial theory of the inferiority of the Jew, of the inferiority of the French, the Poles, the Serbs, the Czechs, and so forth ; many have with equal scorn ridiculed the doctrine of British superiority, in so far as it is bound up

with the doctrine of the "White Man's Burden"—this I conclude from the popularity of Daniel Defoe's delightful satire on racial doctrines, *The True-Born Englishman*; few only would not subscribe to Mill's remark * when he says of the supposed differences of race, "Of all vulgar modes of escaping from the consideration of the effect of social and moral influences on the human mind, the most vulgar is that of attributing the diversities of conduct and character to inherent differences".

But if "the Germans" are to be indicted for being "bad", is not such an indictment tantamount to the acceptance of the "most vulgar" race theory? Even Lord Vansittart admitted in his *Black Record* that "good Germans" do exist, though "they have hitherto not been numerous enough to turn the scale". Camille Huysmans, a Socialist of great prominence, and President of the Labour and Socialist International, however, holds that there are no exceptions worth noting among the race of the "butcher birds". "When speaking with some of Hitler's victims," he wrote, "I . . . had the impression that in the depth of their minds they would come to political agreement with Nazism if the persecution of their friends came to an end."† In his view the German people are mentally different from, say, the Belgian people. "In their minds", he writes, "democracy has another signification than in ours." Thus their "spirit of violence", reinforced recently by military successes, has "created political madness in nearly the whole population". Consequently he does not think it "sufficient" to get rid of the masters of the moment in order to create in Europe a real and lasting peace. "The disappearance of Herr Hitler and his friends will not prevent the others from making a new war within twenty years. . . ." Twice in his lifetime the Germans have invaded and ravaged Camille Huysmans' fair country, have pillaged and disgraced beautiful Antwerp, of which he was the venerated burgomaster. His bitterness is deeply rooted.

EIGHTY MILLION BUTCHER BIRDS?

But in the fog and haze of bitterness everything is enlarged. For, in the clear light of reason, can the assertion really be maintained that a nation with such great achievements in music, literature, science, philosophy and political thought is a nation of savages? That a people of seventy, eighty, or, if we take the whole of the German nation on the Continent, of a hundred million souls, can turn into almost as many butcher birds? Professor F. J. C. Hearnshaw even proved that from the days of Julius

* J. Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*.

† Letter to the editor of the *Sunday Times*, 5th January, 1941.

Caesar down to Hitler the Germans have been a "savage and aggressive people".* But how can it be conceived that, as Rohan D'O. Butler affirms, "individual Germans, respected as decent, warm-hearted men and women, lovers of family and the home, orderly, upright and industrious, can suddenly, to all appearance, forget themselves completely and eagerly merge their being in a national whole, distinguished for its aggressive ferocity and its ruthless disregard of the accepted principles of conduct in civilised society"?

Were it indeed so, how could these paradoxes be explained? Burke once said, "I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people". Mr. Butler attempted it. His book, *The Roots of National Socialism, 1783-1933*, appeared to me the most suggestive and fascinating endeavour to analyse the German mind. Let us examine his theory.

With a width of reading of German thought, literature and history, Mr. Butler attempts to show "that National Socialist theory is almost entirely derived from the common elements of tradition in German thought during the past hundred and fifty years. For the line of thought which leads from Herder to Hitler is traditionally and typically German, despite the internal limitations and the external affiliations."

If that were true, then Mr. Butler would certainly be right in stating that "National Socialism is . . . naturally German". "This indeed is necessarily the case," he maintains, "for . . . the Nazis would never have won the devotion of the German folk by imposing upon it a régime wholly alien to the German outlook. They won it, on the contrary, by calling up the German spirit from the depths."

F. A. Voigt, another notable student of contemporary German history, does not go so far. As the Berlin correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, he lived in Germany for ten or fifteen years. He witnessed the struggle between the Weimar Republic and National Socialism. He argues † that National Socialism is simply a secular religion, which, in fact, has its origins in Marxism, also regarded by him as a secular religion. He may or may not be right. But he is far from asserting that National Socialism is "naturally German". He refrains from pronouncing the German people as a whole as being imbued with that demoniac creed of savages. "It is untrue", he says, "that the Germans, who now menace the world with war" (this was written in 1938, before Hitler had actually unleashed war), "and live under barbaric despotism, are less civilised than the English, the French and the

* F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *Germany the Aggressor Throughout the Ages*.

† F. A. Voigt, *Unto Caesar*.

Americans." And elsewhere he writes: "No modern nation has had men of greater genius than Germany. First in philosophy, easily first in music, second to none in science, high in art and letters, her civilisation is an organic part of our modern civilisation as a whole."

We note also that S. D. Stirr,* who, in contrast to Mr. Voigt, derives National Socialism from Prussianism, not Marxism, distinguishes very clearly between the Prussian and the Weimar spirit, between Prussian Hitlerite Germany and the "Other Germany"; though he maintains that Prussianism has prevailed since 1871, when the German Empire came into being.

Mr. Butler, however, holds that all that National Socialism stands for may be deduced from the "common elements of traditional German thought during the past hundred and fifty years"; that it is the essence of the German mentality; that it is the spirit that lay dormant in the depths of the German soul until the advent of Hitler; and that it was not created but merely aroused by the Nazis. Moreover, he even implies that this spirit has been hitherto suppressed by the ideas of Western civilisation, which are intrinsically alien to the Germans, and that, consequently, the Nazis, in realisation of the inner German thought, have "brought liberation to the German folk through self-realisation".

Such are the results of Mr. Butler's scholarly investigations. They are certainly suggestive, though, I fear, disastrous in their implications.

In an atmosphere of academic tranquillity and cloistered ease they would, perhaps, be of small political importance. They would certainly interest the man of letters and the philosopher, the thin stratum of educated people; they would, perhaps, be contested or at any rate discussed on the plane of reason and fact. Yet they would hardly interest the multitude that crowds the towns, dwells on the land, and will have ultimately to decide the destiny of humanity.

But today, in these times of upheaval that shake the world, opinions like those powerfully evolved in Mr. Butler's book are of the gravest consequence. For since they are concerned with the issue of our great struggle, they are brought home to the masses in "revealing brevity" through pamphlets and newspapers; they are stripped of all the reservations that the author was at pains to make; they are reduced to the simple and impressive formula that all that Hitler is and stands for is the expression of the true mind of the German people.

The man in the street is naturally unable to scrutinise critically the findings in matters of such a sublime and complicated nature.

* S. D. Stirr, *The Prussian Spirit*.

But he now learns that the Nazi concept of the German racial superiority is a concept of the whole German people; he now learns that the Nazi claim to rule the nations of the world is the whole German people's claim; he now learns that the whole German people share the Nazi worship of brutal violence. He has probably never heard of that sinister man, Johann Gottfried Herder, born in 1755, who is, as it is now revealed, Hitler's ancestor. What's Herder to him or he to Herder? But he might be induced to believe that there is no other Germany than "the Germany of Herder and Hitler"; that the Germans, individually and as a people, have malignantly plotted war against the world since the times of Herder, if not since the times of Tacitus. And in just fury, he might well cry to the heavens: "Lord, scatter that nation that wished for war!"

But could it not be that even should the Lord scatter the Germans, the causes of the world's disease would not be eliminated? That the disease that torments humanity might multiply its curse? For did the Germans in fact generate the social, economic and political tension that exploded in this war? Was it really the German *nation* that wished for war? Did the sixty or seventy million German workers, peasants, shopkeepers, teachers, wish for war in 1914 and again in 1939? Is the mind of the German multitude really imbued with that bestial spirit of violence and rapacious lust which all of us hate in the Nazis? And was Herder, in short, really Hitler's ancestor?

FROM HERDER TO HITLER

I was astonished to learn from Mr. Butler's book, as well as from, for instance, essays by Mr. A. L. Rowse and Wickham Steed, of the existence of a sort of spiritual relationship between Herder and—Hitler!

The evaluation of Herder's place in the history of German thought and of his influence on the minds of contemporary German people would indeed be of small importance, if such a dispute were just an academic affair. But it is asserted that ever since Herder "the Germans" have been impregnated with a spirit of violence, ruthless nationalism and brutal aggressiveness; that it was Herder who started poisoning German brains and hearts. May I say a few words about him?

Who was Herder? What did he mean to us Socialists, German as well as Austrian and Swiss?

Herder was one of the great humanist German philosophers who shaped to a considerable degree the minds of the "Other Germany", that Germany which, to be sure, Mr. Rowse and many

others regard as a myth. His conception of the nation, which appears now as one of the roots of National Socialism, was perhaps but a small part of his contribution to the heritage of the European civilisation. But I must necessarily refer to it, because it forms the chief evidence of Herder's "guilt".

For two thousand years and even longer, European philosophy was dominated by the conception of the natural equality of man. "We are all akin by nature, which has formed us of the same elements and placed us here together for the same ends", said Seneca. This conception of Natural Law and Humanity was based on the assumption that a "common law" pervaded all nature and the whole universe, and manifested itself in human reason. "If our reason is common, there is a common law. . . . And if there is a common law we are fellow-citizens; if this is so, we are members of some political community—the world is in a manner a State", so Marcus Aurelius defined the "Natural Law". Thus it was assumed that the true nature of man expressed itself in this natural law. Originated by Zeno, the founder of the Stoic school, and developed by Aristotle in his doctrine of law, the Stoic philosophy maintained that Nature was synonymous with Reason, and Reason was synonymous with God, and that there are no nations, but mankind only, one and undivided, a single "city of God", a cosmopolis. It was incorporated into the tradition of the Christian Church which postulated the eternal idea of a common Humanity based on the rational and religious unity of mankind—the single *respublica Christianity*. It was the fountain-head of the rationalist thought in the era of enlightenment. It was, and is still, the basic tenet of Socialism in its West European expression as well as in Marxism.

Thinkers of nearly all European nations have contributed to this complex of ideas. Equally, thinkers of nearly all European nations have since the close of the eighteenth century contributed to the "historical school" of thought which, in contradistinction to the "rational school", conceived a national variety of political institutions, ethics, philosophy and law, determined and differentiated by, and changing with, geography, economics and historical events. It refused to accept the bare abstract idea of universal humanity. It discovered the national individuality of which humanity is composed. In Germany, it was Johann Gottfried Herder who first developed the theory of historicism in his research into the phenomenon of nation.

In revolt against Rousseau's cosmopolitanism, which had swayed the philosophical mind of his age with revolutionary force, and in succession to Montesquieu and, in a sense, Machiavelli and Bodin, Herder applied the concept of organic development to the

history of entire nations and cultures. In his major work, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Menschheit*,* he expounded a morphology of cultures based upon the doctrine that "every nation is a plant of Nature", shaped "not only by woods and mountains, seas and deserts, rivers and climates, but more particularly by languages, inclinations and characters". His romanticist, metaphysical speculations extended to an even wider scope. Herder held that the national community as a whole, as well as the individual as a member of the nation, was shaped by a spiritual force which today we should call "the national spirit", but which Herder himself called the "soul of the people" (*Volksseele*). The cultural history of a nation thus appeared to him the unfolding of that miraculous force, as "an organic, plant-like blossoming of the souls of the people", and mankind, not as it had appeared to the school of Natural Law, as an aggregation of human beings, but as, to borrow the words of Ernst Troeltsch,† a "rich universe of unique and individual structures of the creative mind", manifested in the "spirit of nations", a "mirror of God presented by a number of national minds".

Serious modern sociology accepted without reservation the notion of the variety of national characters and national "spirits". It rejected Rousseau's romantic concept of the homogeneity of mankind, the tenet of "naive cosmopolitanism", to use Otto Bauer's phrase. Equally, it rejected Herder's metaphysical historicism. But it did not contest the formative factors of climate, topography, religion and language, in the process which moulds national character. Since Herder, Humboldt and even Hippolyte Taine, the problem of the national character has indeed been examined with more refinement of method. Wundt, for instance, in his great work *Völkerpsychologie*,‡ demonstrated with an abundance of evidence the interplay of geography and economics in the process of fashioning national character, and stressed the decisive influence of social structure on language, habits, customs, and "spirit" of a people and its special national character. Finally, Otto Bauer, in his thoughtful book, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*,§ for the first time applied the Marxist method of historical materialism to research into national phenomena and analysed as primarily formative factors the interplay of class-relations and common historical experiences.

Yet, it was by no means Herder's philosophical, still less his metaphysical, speculations, but his truly humanitarian mind

* *Ideas on the Philosophy of Mankind.*

† Ernst Troeltsch, *The Ideas of Natural Law and Humanity.*

‡ *Psychology of the Peoples.*

§ *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy.*

which impressed so many Socialists of my generation. He discovered not only "the soul" of the *German* people; he discovered the soul of *all* peoples. He discovered not only the soul of the known, the historic peoples; he discovered also the soul of the then unknown peoples, peoples without their own historical life, the "forgotten peoples" of Eastern and Southern Europe, whose indigenous culture had been, centuries before, submerged by the Hapsburg and Turkish domination. It was Herder who explored and collected their folk songs in his *Stimmen der Völker*,* who brought home to the Germans the fact that the despised Czechs, Serbs, Ukrainians, were also human beings with a rich civilisation of their own.

That was indeed a great discovery. Even universal thinkers like Marx and Engels did not believe in the resurrection of the Southern Slav nations or of the Czechs. "All known testimonies of the last four hundred years indicate the agony of the Czech nationality," they wrote, seventy years after Herder, in their jointly drafted *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*, published in 1852. "The very last effort of the dying nation in 1848 solely proved the fact that Bohemia can exist only as part of Germany, even should a section of her population continue to use, for a few more centuries, a non-German language." But the Czech nation did revive. T. G. Masaryk † recognised the Czechs' debt to Herder and paid him profound homage as the "resuscitator of the Czechs".

Herder was also, incidentally, the resuscitator, in a spiritual sense, of the Jewish nation whose folk-songs he collected. When the ardent Socialist and humanitarian philosopher, Moses Hess, a friend of Marx, as the first Zionist raised the problem of national independence of the Jews in their own ancient land, he justified that claim with philosophical arguments which were clearly derived from Herder. "Like Nature," Hess wrote, "which produces no one general flower or fruit, no one general animal or plant, but only varieties of plants and animals, so the Creator of history created only types of peoples. We find here a primeval variety of national types which at first merely lived side by side as the plant world, then proceeded to fight and absorb one another as in the animal kingdom, and finally to liberate themselves, to live side by side in peace and for one another in solidarity, without renouncing the typical features which differentiate them." ‡

I have quoted Hess in order to demonstrate what sense the

* *Voices of the People.*

† T. G. Masaryk, *Die Tschechische Frage (The Czech Question).*

‡ M. Hess, *Rome and Jerusalem.*

Socialists made of Herder's thought. Jaures compared the nations to the jewels of humanity's diadem. To the Socialists of my generation who had witnessed the grandiose spectacle of the re-awakening of "nations without their own historical life", Herder appeared as their herald, as the true citizen of the world, as the great representative of the humanitarian legacy.

Herder's fundamentally European outlook is, then, in diametrical antithesis to all that is called the philosophy of National Socialism—both as a system (if there is such a thing) and as a collection of thought and ideas.

Nazi philosophy asserts the superiority of the German nation. In Herder's writings you would search in vain for the faintest trace of such a claim. Herder preached: "Every nation has in itself its centre of beauty, as an orb has its centre of gravity".

Nazi philosophy maintains that the German nation is the chosen people. Herder, however, wrote: "No nationality has been solely designed by God as the chosen people of the earth; above all we must see the truth and cultivate the garden of the common good".

National Socialism claims the omnipotence of the State, in which, as Ernst Forsthoff explained,* even "the privacy of individual existence is abolished". Herder wrote: ". . . still less could the notion be perceived that the purpose of man is the State, that the State's institutions were the sources necessary for man's true happiness".

Nazi philosophy demands the aggrandisement of the State, and the establishment of the German world empire. Herder warns: "It is obvious that with an increase in the size of the State and its sublime constitution, the danger for the individual grows enormously. In great States hundreds of people must starve so that one person may feast and debauch himself; tens of thousands are enslaved and driven to death so that a crowned fool . . . may gratify his whims. Finally, since all philosophers of the State concept maintain that every well-constituted State must be a machine, dominated by the will of a single person: what happiness can the individual subject of this State derive from the fact that he has to serve that machine as its dead link? Or that he should, against better knowledge and instinct, be tied for life on the wheel of the State machine? To the unhappy men, condemned in this way, would be left no consolation unless they stifled their . . . free souls and sought happiness in the dead machine of the State."

National Socialism insists that it was Providence that called the Germans to strive for world domination. Herder pleads: "Oh, if we are to be human beings, we should be grateful to Providence

* Ernst Forsthoff, *The Total State*.

that it has not implanted in us such an aim (the large State) as the universal goal of humanity. . . . The State might give us something artificial; but it might unfortunately deprive us of something more essential, namely our personality."

National Socialism glorifies war. "Far be it", as, for instance, Fritz Lenz wrote, "that humanity should, in our minds, refute War; nay, it is War that refutes humanity."* And Professor E. Kaufman suggests: "Not a 'community of men of free will', but victorious war, is the social ideal. . . ." Or—to quote another Nazi from the immense collection of Nazi thought which Aurel Kolnai has so profoundly analysed in his book *The War Against the West*—Professor E. Banse maintained: "War means the highest intensification not only of material means but of all spiritual energies. . . . War is a purifying bath of steel, breeding new impulses. . . ." Herder, on the other hand, taught: "Peace, not war, is the natural condition of unfettered humanity. War is a reflection of distress, not of original enjoyment. War was never the purpose of nature, but sometimes a bitter and desperate means. . . ."

What, then, has Herder in common with Hitler? Mr. Butler asserts that it was Herder's metaphysical conception of the nation which in the long run has turned into Hitler's conception of the German race. "It is the community of the folk", he says, "which runs back from Hitler to Herder". But it could with equal justification be maintained that the conception of the "community of the folk" runs back from Hitler to H. Taine, Montesquieu, Machiavelli, Bodin, Burke and Renan. Renan, for instance, almost in the same words as Herder, evolved the idea of the community of the folk; he said: "A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things which are really only one, go to make up this soul or spiritual principle. One of these things lies in the past, the other in the present. The one is the possession in common of a rich heritage of memories; and the other is actual agreement, desire to live together, and the will to continue to make the most of the joint inheritance."† Is also the French philosopher Renan to be regarded as an ancestor of National Socialism?

JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE—THE FIRST NAZI?

I was indeed considerably surprised to learn that Fichte as well is to be regarded as the spiritual father of German Fascism. For Socialists with the German cultural background, such as Friedrich Engels, appreciated Fichte rather as an ancestor of Socialism

* Fritz Lenz, *Die Rasse als Wertprinzip* (*The Race as a Principle of Evaluation*).

† E. Renan, *What is a Nation?*

(the antithesis of National Socialism). In the preface to his book, *The Development of Socialism from Utopianism to Science*, Engels said: "We German Socialists are proud to descend not only from St. Simon, Fourier and Owen, but also from Kant, Fichte and Hegel".

It can hardly be contested that the Marx-Engels conception of Socialism differs fundamentally from Hitler's. It cannot be disputed that the universalism of Marxism is diametrically opposed to Hitlerism. What, then, is it that makes Fichte as much an ancestor of Hitler (in Mr. Butler's judgment) as of Marx?

Fichte was a Socialist. He was the first German Socialist to evolve a systematic conception of a Socialist society.* In this concept, Mr. Butler submits, was the germ of Nazi Fascism. It is, however, most significant that Mr. Butler compares Fichte's treatise with Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. "Fichte deliberately denies almost everything that Adam Smith had taught," says Mr. Butler. That is hardly surprising, for Fichte was a theoretician of Socialism, while Smith was a theoretician of capitalism. Fichte contested, naturally, as Marx did afterwards, the classic concept of liberal capitalism. But we do not, on that account, regard Marx as a forerunner of the Nazis. For the antithesis of liberal capitalism is not Fascism, but Socialism.

It may also be worth while to consider the economic and political environment from which Adam Smith's as well as Fichte's economic conceptions sprang. When Adam Smith conceived his doctrine of harmony of interests, based on *laissez-faire*, Great Britain was a united and comparatively large national state. Her industrial revolution, contemporary with Watt's invention of the steam engine—curiously enough in the same year as the publication of *The Wealth of Nations*—turned England into the workshop of the world. Thus, Adam Smith's theory was well suited to a large united nation with a vast and expanding economy, favoured, moreover, by its geographical situation and natural riches in coal and iron.

Since people are usually inclined to think that what is good for themselves must also be good for all, the British people accepted enthusiastically Adam Smith's and, as we shall see, David Ricardo's doctrine of harmony of interests as a fixed and absolute standard of political and economic ethics. Full credit can be given to the sincerity of *The Times*, when remarking, as Professor E. H. Carr recalls, that "if Great Britain has turned itself into a coal-shed and blacksmith's forge, it is for the behoof of mankind as well as its own".†

* Fichte, *Der geschlossene Handelsstaat* (*The Self-Contained Economic State*).

† E. H. Carr, *Twenty Years' Crisis*.

In not quite such a fortunate situation as the British people were the Germans of Fichte's day. Germany was then merely a spiritual notion; politically and economically, the Germans were split into scores of States, divided by customs frontiers, by different currency and trade policies, and with a young and undeveloped industry. Thus, the doctrine of *laissez-faire* and international free trade did not suit the Germans so well as it suited the British. Free international exchange provided highly developed British industry with the markets of the world: but it strangled the still undeveloped industry everywhere else.

David Ricardo was absolutely right about conditions in England, when he wrote: "Under a system of perfectly free commerce, each country naturally devotes its capital and labour to such employments as are most beneficial to it. This pursuit of individual advantage is admirably connected with the universal good of the whole. By stimulating industry, by rewarding ingenuity and by using most efficaciously the peculiar powers bestowed by nature, it distributes labour most effectively and most economically: while, by increasing the general mass of productions, it diffuses general benefit and binds together by one common tie of interest and intercourse the universal society of nations throughout the civilised world. It is this principle which determines that wine shall be made in France and Portugal, that corn shall be grown in America and Poland, and that hardware and other goods shall be manufactured in England." *

But, for instance, America, to which Ricardo referred, also desired to develop her own industry. And it was in fact the American statesman, Alexander Hamilton, who was the first to perceive the repercussions of international free trade on countries with undeveloped industries. It was, to be sure, the Anglo-Saxon Alexander Hamilton, then Secretary of the United States Treasury, and not the German philosophers and economists like Fichte and List, who introduced the doctrine of autarchy. In a report to the House of Representatives in 1791, Hamilton stated: "Not only the wealth, but the independence and security of a country appeared to be materially connected with the prosperity of manufacturers. Every nation, with a view to these great objects, ought to endeavour to possess within itself all the essentials of natural supply." And he laid down, as the policy of his Government, the promotion of such manufactures "as will tend to render the United States independent of foreign nations for military and other essential supplies". Hamilton did for his country what Fichte and List recommended for Germany: he instituted a protective-tariff system in Washington's administration.

* Ricardo, *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*, 1817.

Friedrich List, also proscribed as a Nazi ancestor, was actually inspired by the American experiment when he said that he was in favour of free trade—but only after the less advanced nations had caught up with the more advanced. “Any nation which, owing to misfortunes, is behind others in industry, commerce and navigation, while she nevertheless possesses the mental and material means for developing those acquisitions, must”, he wrote, “first of all strengthen her own individual powers in order to fit herself to enter into free competition with more advanced nations.”* List complained, perhaps reasonably, that England, having become great before free trade was her motto, was now trying to make it impossible for other nations to follow suit. “It is a very clever common device,” he said, “that when anyone has attained the summit of greatness, he kicks away the ladder by which he has climbed up in order to deprive others of the means of climbing up after him”. And almost in the same words as Hamilton he observed: “All the mental power of a nation, its State revenue, its material and mental means of defence, and its security for national independence, are increased in equal proportion by establishing in it a manufacturing power.”

Fichte, still earlier than List, but later than Hamilton, as a result of Germany's particular historic and economic situation conceived the idea of protectionism. But while Hamilton and List stood for protectionism as a means for industrial development on a capitalist basis, Fichte advocated protectionism as a means for industrial development on the basis of planned Socialist economy. So he evolved his concept of the self-contained economic State as the ideal constitution of a Socialist society. It is perfectly true, as Mr. Butler points out, that Fichte was the first German political philosopher to conceive the idea of autarchy, which, more than a century later, the Nazis have turned into a reality—though, I would say, not simply for the sake of Socialism as Fichte thought of it. However, Fichte's conception cannot be properly appreciated if it is taken from its historical and economic context, and if it is not scrutinised with the “weapon of the relativity of thought”—so admirably used by Professor Carr.†

Mr. Butler denounces Fichte again for having introduced the idea of patriotism into the minds of the Germans. True, Fichte was a German patriot. But his patriotism, voiced in his *Speeches to the German Nation*, must in justice be valued in relation to the historical atmosphere from which it emerged. Mr. Butler refers to a phrase where Fichte proclaims his belief “that really no cosmopolitanism can exist at all, but that in reality cosmopolitanism

* Friedrich List, *National System of Political Economy*, 1841.

† E. H. Carr, *Twenty Years' Crisis*.

must necessarily become patriotism". But even this phrase does not denote, I feel, a refutation of cosmopolitanism; still less if it is appreciated as an element of Fichte's trend of thought. It only indicates in Fichte's outlook that love for humanity leads necessarily to love for one's own people. Cosmopolitanism and patriotism are, in this context, not contradictions.

Fichte's patriotic urge can be rightly understood only in relation to its historical background. It was in 1806 that Fichte wrote this phrase. 1806—a year after Napoleon had partly conquered, partly subdued all the German countries; they were occupied by France from 1806 till 1813, as France of today is occupied by the Germans.

Fichte, before this event, worshipped France ardently. He had enthusiastically welcomed the French Revolution. He longed to serve the country of the Rights of Man. Even in 1799 he could still say: "It is clear that from now on only the French Republic can be the fatherland of the upright man; to her he has to devote his strength. For in her victory not only France's existence is involved, but also the most precious aspirations of mankind." And still in 1804, shortly before Napoleon had bitterly humiliated the German nation, "Fichte solemnly renounced the German Fatherland", records his biographer, Reinhold Schneider.* "For Fatherland always means the country with the highest cultural level. It is not the soil, not the blood, not the heritage of destiny, which binds together man to man, but only the spirit in its eternal metamorphosis. . . . This spirit, undoubtedly, smiles over France." It was a matter of utter indifference to him whether or not "the people of Lorraine and Alsace found their towns and villages in the geographical books under the chapter devoted to Germany or France". He regarded the war against revolutionary France not as a national war between the French and the Germans, but as a war between freedom and despotism.

When Fichte now, two years later, under the impact of the national disgrace discovered that there existed after all besides the French nation a German nation as well; that his love for the French must not suffocate his love for his own people, his patriotic reaction did not, necessarily, antagonise his cosmopolitanism. Even in his *Speeches to the German Nation*, though their aim was to awaken the national consciousness of the people in the tragic hour of German humiliation, he emphasised the humanitarian, universal task which the German nation should accomplish. He said: "Yea, in all nations there are still some souls who cannot even yet believe that the great promise of justice, reason and

* Reinhold Schneider, *Fichte, Der Weg zur Nation* (*Fichte, The Road to the Nation*).

truth for the human race is vain and nought, and who, therefore, assume that the present age of iron is but the transition to a better state. These, and with them the whole of mankind, are relying upon you. The old world, with its glory and greatness, as well with its defects, has fallen by its own unworthiness." He then appealed to the Germans to fight not only for the rebirth of their own nation, but for the rebirth of civilisation. "The struggle with weapons is terminated", he said. "There emerges, if we will it, the new struggle of principles, of morals, of character." He gave his people the vision of a "Kingdom of Reason, and Truth, and Justice". With his spiritual eye he saw it coming: "The dawn of a new world is already past its breaking, gilding the mountain tops and the coming day", he said. When in the spring of 1813 the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm issued his desperate appeal "To My People", urging the Germans to rally against Napoleon, Fichte set out to investigate for whom and for what the Germans should fight. For the thrones of the German principalities, or for the cause of the German people?, he asked. He demanded the abdication of the Princes and the formation of a German Republic: a "true Realm of the Rights of Man, as has never been known before in the world; a Realm born from the same enthusiasm for the freedom of its citizen as we have seen in the ancient world; but without sacrificing the majority of men to slavery, on which the ancient States were based. Freedom (in this Realm) shall be founded on the equality of all human beings." That was Fichte's conception of patriotism. And that was, also, Fichte's socialist and humanitarian testament. He wrote it shortly before his death.

It must not, however, be denied, in fairness to his critics, that Fichte did indeed believe that it was the historical mission of the Germans to achieve the Realm of Freedom and Equality of Men, and to lead the European nations in the movement towards human perfectness and spiritual greatness. But this hegemony or primacy, as claimed by Fichte for the Germans, was also claimed by Mazzini and Gioberty for the Italians, by Guizot and others for the French, by Cieszkowski for the Poles, by Melchior Hirzel for the Swiss. Every nation, proud of its spiritual or political greatness, regarded itself as the "chosen people": the Jews, the ancient Greeks and Romans, the French from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, the Russians, the Americans—all these peoples felt as their right and duty to head the world towards the millennium. But this claim was not always necessarily a claim to political domination: Melchior Hirzel, for instance, visualised Switzerland as the generating centre of the European Republic, governed by modern philosophy. And W. T. Stead, who raised

much the same claim for the English-speaking race, vindicated the British hegemony with the inscrutable will of Providence. "The English-speaking race is one of the chief of God's agents for executing coming improvements of the lot of mankind", he declared.*

Then with the "weapon of the relativity of thought" let us examine the assertion that Fichte was the forerunner of Hitler because he believed that it would serve mankind if the German nation were to build its own State as a "Realm of Freedom and Equality of Men"; that it could become a realm of freedom and equality if it were built on economic, political and ideological foundations, as he conceived them in the context of the historic conditions under which the German people lived at his time; on principles that would not infringe the rights of other States; on national ideas which were in harmony with the idea of humanity. Why, then, should he, on that account, be stigmatised as an aggressive nationalist?

The rich thoughts of a genius are, of course, grist for many a mill. The Nazis were, therefore, eager to seize upon Fichte and to exploit that great German thinker who has become a national myth. S. D. Stirk, however, reminds the Nazi admirers of Fichte that he was "in the main cosmopolitan, and that it was rather pressure of circumstances, his love of freedom and his hatred of tyranny, which turned the 'citizen of the world' into the Prussian and German patriot of 1807". "Indeed, with the help of enquiries," he added, "which have already been made into Fichte's political philosophy, it would be possible to argue that many of his ideas were the very opposite of Prussianism and Hitlerism."† Mr. Stirk quotes Joseph Nadler's monumental *Literaturgeschichte der deutschen Stämme und Landschaften*.‡ "The State was for Fichte only a subordinate means. The only goal which he always had in mind was the (individual) human being." Mr. Stirk quotes also Fritz Medicus, who regarded the *Speeches* as "the noblest expression of Fichte's democratic mind". And H. T. Betteridge § comes to this conclusion: "To sum up, we may say that Fichte was a liberal democrat in the case of the superior citizens in any State, and for all mankind in the ideal future society. For the existing masses, he was an authoritarian socialist. Ideally he was a pacifist and internationalist, but he welcomed and encouraged nationalism in Germany."

* In the editorial manifesto of the opening number of the *Review of Reviews*, founded in 1891.

† S. D. Stirk, *The Prussian Spirit*.

‡ H. T. Betteridge, *Fichte's Political Ideas*.

§ *Literary History of the German Tribes and Provinces*.

FERDINAND LASSALLE—ANOTHER OF HITLER'S ANCESTORS?

When indicting the Germans as a whole, both as regards their present and past, how then could the German socialists remain free from blame? When the existence of the "other Germany" is contested, how could the existence of genuine German socialists be admitted? Mr. Butler, therefore, insists that "German Socialism, prejudiced at the start by Lassalle, gradually came to be State Socialism, Prussian Socialism, National Socialism".

The evaluation of Lassalle's significance in the history of Socialism has indeed been fiercely disputed since his meteor-like advent on the German horizon. In his recent excellent biographical study of *Karl Marx*, Mr. I. Berlin, like Mr. Butler, discerns "seeds of romantic fascism in Lassalle's beliefs and acts, particularly in his expressed patriotism, his belief in a State-planned economy,—controlled, at any rate for a time, by the military aristocracy, his advocacy of intervention by Germany on the side of the French Emperor in the Italian campaign (which he defended against Marx and Engels on the ground that only a war would precipitate a German revolution), his unconcealed sympathy with Mazzini and the Polish nationalists and, finally, his belief, on which the National Socialism of our day offers a curious commentary, that the existing machinery of the Prussian State can be used to aid the *petite bourgeoisie* as well as the proletariat of Germany against the growing encroachment of merchants, industrialists and bankers". Mr. Berlin thus arrives at the conclusion that Lassalle, "as a theorist of State supremacy and a demagogue, should be counted among the founders not only of European socialism, but equally of the doctrine of personal dictatorship and fascism, a fact which the reading of his works and in particular his speeches in the light of subsequent history bears out to an astonishing degree".

It is extremely difficult for me to accept this summary interpretation of Lassalle's political thought. Lassalle was, undoubtedly, a German patriot. But is it not too rash a conclusion to deduce, as so many British, Belgian and French Socialists are inclined to do, that Lassalle's patriotism was simply the same sort of patriotism as that which inspires Hitlerism? That, further, because Lassalle was the founder of the German Labour movement, the German Socialists were at the bottom of their hearts National Socialists?

What was the character of Lassalle's patriotism? Did his patriotism aim at a warlike Germany, conquering, and ruling over other nations? Was his patriotism merged with any sort of imperialism? It is rather surprising to observe that Mr. Berlin,

who indicts Lassalle for his expressed "patriotism", indicts him in the same breath for his "unconcealed sympathy with Mazzini and the Polish nationalists".

GIUSEPPE MAZZINI—ALSO SUSPECT

Was then, perhaps, Mazzini also a forerunner of the Fascists? What did he stand for? Firstly, for the liberation of his people from foreign oppression. Secondly, for the unification of his people into a State of their own.

Italy was at that time divided into half a dozen foreign principalities. Lombardy, Venetia, Trento and Trieste were under Hapsburg rule; Naples, Southern Italy and Sicily were under the Bourbon reign; Tuscany, Parma and Modena were three independent dukedoms under Hapsburg princes; Piedmont, Genoa and Sardinia were ruled by the House of Savoy; Central Italy with Romē was a State of the Church under the Pope. Italy was, as Metternich said, merely "a geographical expression". She was, also, a synonym for corruption, rottenness and cruel oppression. A decree in 1821 by the Government of the Kingdom of Sardinia forbade anyone owning less than 1500 Lire to learn to read and write. In the Papal States Sismondi observed that the people of Rome wear either a tonsure as priests, a livery as servants, or rags as beggars. Machiavelli described, in his *Prince*, the dire plight of the Jews in Egypt, the brutal oppression of the Persians by the Medes, the discord among the Athenians; then he said: "Italy is still harder pressed than the Jews, still worse enslaved than the Persians, still more hopelessly split than the Athenians. Without a head, without order, tormented, pillaged, visited by all sorts of distress . . . Italy prays every day to God that He send a man strong enough to redeem that country from the cruelty and audacity of the barbarians."

That prayer rang in the heart of every Italian patriot through all the centuries from Machiavelli to Mazzini. Mazzini claimed, as Machiavelli had done before him, the right of the Italian people like the British and French to unite themselves into their own national State; and to govern themselves as the British and French people had done for centuries. He strove for a united Italy, free from foreign domination. That was his national aim.

But Mazzini's scope of political aspirations was far wider. His ardent patriotism embraced truly the whole of humanity. He was, it is true, a disciple of Herder. But, curiously enough, Herder's ideas engendered in Mazzini a somewhat different outlook from that which—according to Mr. Butler—it has done in Hitler. Like

Herder, Mazzini conceived the nation as a living entity. No more than Herder did Mazzini ever omit to maintain that above the individual nation stands the community of all nations. Mazzini's thought was above all devoted to the idea of humanity. "Mankind is God's living word", he once said. He was also deeply aware of the truth—of which we now have bitter experience—that the individual human being of every nation is inextricably bound up with the destiny of all nations. "Not the Englishman, Frenchman, or Italian," so he once wrote, "but the citizen of the great earth—a microscopic crystallisation of all the eternal law of the universe—is the pivot of the social drama." He was—like any noble mind before his time, in his day, and of today—haunted by the discord of the world and the ever-recurring wars that only increased its discord. Dante conceived a universal monarchy as the redemption for the distress of disunity of nations. Mazzini's universalism conceived a free association of free nations which could be a world, or, at least, a European organisation to maintain harmony and peace among the nations.

From this universal philosophical concept, he developed his concrete policy. Europe, in Mazzini's day, struggled under the yoke of Metternich's "Holy Alliance". Italy was cut to pieces by foreign rulers; Poland was carved up by Prussia, Hapsburg Austria and Czarist Russia; Germany was divided among scores of princes; Greece was under Turkish rule. Mazzini's idea was to counter Metternich's "Holy Alliance" with an "Alliance of the Oppressed". He appealed to the people of Europe to unite themselves against their reactionary masters. He founded the "League of Young Europe" in order, so he wrote in an appeal to the Swiss patriots, to "challenge the Old Europe of the Kings". In one of his first drafts of the Principles of "Young Europe" he declared: "Humanity will be constituted only when all nations have themselves gained sovereignty; when they are united in a Republican Federation . . . striving for the common goal of all mankind". He had quite a clear vision of the Europe at which he aimed. He elucidated his concept at the Peace Congress at Geneva in 1867. He proclaimed as his aims the reconstruction of Poland; the unification of Germany, Italy and Greece; a transformation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire into a Danubian Federation; the transformation of Turkish dominion in the Balkans into a Balkan Federation; a federation of the Scandinavian and of the Iberian countries; and the crowning of the new Europe by a United States of Republican Europe.

It might be assumed, perhaps, that Mazzini was just an idealistic dreamer. If so, he was a most dangerous one, at least for the tyrants of his day. He was a gigantic dynamic force. He passed

from word to deed. He revolutionised the oppressed nations; he infused them with his great idea. He inspired the rising in Piedmont in 1833; he organised a revolutionary expedition from France and Switzerland into Savoy; he had a hand in the revolutionary revolts in the Abruzzi in 1841; in Romagna in 1843; in Calabria in 1844; and again in Romagna in 1845. He was persecuted by the police and Government of every State. Metternich once testified: "I fought against the greatest soldier of our time; I succeeded in uniting Emperors and Kings, Czar, Sultan and Pope. But there was no man on earth who made things so difficult for me as that brigand of an Italian, lean, pale, in rags—yet eloquent, like a tempest; ardent, like an apostle; impudent, like a thief; insolent, like a comedian: unrelenting, like a lover; and that man was Giuseppe Mazzini!"

I, for one, fully appreciate Lassalle's fondness for Mazzini.

Mazzini was, above all, a Socialist. Profoundly influenced by Lamennais's *Paroles d'un Croyant*, his vision of Socialism was rather of a religious, romantic pattern. He proclaimed in the Declaration of "Young Europe": "The principles of Freedom, Equality and Humanity form three unchangeable elements; they alone can provide an entirely satisfactory solution of the social problem. Whenever we sacrifice one of these basic tenets, the other two will fail us."

Again: "We believe in the divine and human law that all men are equal, free and brothers; equal in rights and duties; free in the right to use their capacities to the benefit of mankind. . . ."

True, Marx's conceptions of Socialism, and also Bakunin's, were different. Mazzini was, to be sure, invited to the inaugural meeting at the St. Martin's Hall, London, on the 28th September, 1864, of the International Workers' Association. He even drafted the Statute of the First International. Marx had indeed not much appreciation for Mazzini's "cosmopolitic, neo-Catholic, ideological manifesto"; he replaced it with his famous *Inaugural Address*. Nevertheless, if Mazzini's concept of Socialism—or rather of the means of achieving Socialism—differed considerably from that of Marx, it was still Socialism, pure and true. It was international Socialism for which Mazzini stood.

Mazzini's fascinating personality, and the spirit of pleasant geniality which pervaded his writings, were indeed a powerful inspiration to the German revolutionary, Ferdinand Lassalle, as they were to the Norwegian novelist, Björnsterne Björnson, the Hungarian revolutionary, Franz Kossuth—"Danton and Carnot together", as Marx said of him—the Russian revolutionary, Alexander Herzen—to name only a few outstanding men of, if I may say so, generally acknowledged progressive minds. Mazzini's

cause was alike the cause of the British working men of his time. They gave a royal welcome to Garibaldi, Mazzini's brother-in-arms, when he came to London. The working men of the Tyne-side even presented him with a gold-hilted sword, inscribed: "To General Garibaldi, from the people of Tyneside, friends of European freedom". Why, then, should Lassalle alone be singled out and indicted as an embryonic Fascist because of his sympathy with Mazzini?

Nor can I understand why Lassalle should be regarded as suspect for his sympathy with the Polish patriots. Poland was, as it is again to-day, under foreign domination. The Polish patriots who rose in 1830 and in 1863 for the restoration of a free Poland, were supported, as they are to-day, by the European democracies, by English Liberalism and Chartism, and by the Socialist International. The Chartists commemorated, in 1847, the anniversary of the Polish insurrection in a meeting to which Karl Marx came from Brussels. In Marx's *Inaugural Address* the restoration of a free Poland is proclaimed as the immediate aim of the working class of all countries. Thus Lassalle's support of the Polish cause was perfectly in harmony with the foreign policy of the Socialist International.

KIPLING'S AND LASSALLE'S PATRIOTISM

It should, perhaps, be emphasised that the meaning of words does sometimes change with the changing of historical conditions. Lassalle's, like Mazzini's, conception of patriotism, his psychology of nationality and nationalism, was, unlike modern patriotism, deeply influenced by the psychology of democracy. Lassalle's patriotism was cosmopolitan and democratic. Modern patriotism is imperialist and authoritarian. The word "patriotism" had in Lassalle's and in Mazzini's day a profoundly different meaning from that which it had in the day of, say, Kipling. Lassalle's affection for the national aspirations of the Italians and Poles derived, to be precise, from his affection for the cause of the German nation. He strove, united in issue with the Italian and Polish patriots, for exactly the same ends as those which the British and French had achieved centuries before. It must be remembered that Germany was, in Lassalle's day, split up into scores of independent sovereign principalities.

An idea of the state of affairs with which Lassalle was confronted might perhaps best be obtained if it were imagined that the island of Britain were divided between a King of Wessex, ruling over, say, Middlesex, Essex and Sussex, with London as his capital; a sovereign Duke of Kent; a sovereign Duke of Gloucester-

ter, ruling autocratically over his independent State, comprising Gloucester, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Dorset; a kingdom of Cornwall, Devon and Somerset; a Kingdom of Wales, a Kingdom of Chester, and so on. It might, further, be assumed that every King and Duke would rule his principality at his pleasure; that every one of the princes would keep his own army; would surround his little principality with tariff barriers; would build roads and railways with no regard for the economic needs of the British Isles as a whole, but only for the particular interests of his small county; that, finally, the British people were told by the authorities of State and Church that no such thing as "English" exists, but only "Winchester", "Kentish", "Cornish", etc., that there is no such thing as an English nation, but only the nation of Winchester, the nation of Cornwall, the nation of York, and so forth. I assume that all the progressive people in those Kingdoms and principalities, spread over the British Isles, would rise in national patriotism; they would strive for the unification into a single national State of all the people of their island who spoke the same language and shared the same national culture.

Luckily for the British people, this problem of English patriotism was first settled as early as 829 by King Egbert; later, in 1283, by the union between England and Wales; and finally, in 1603, by the union between England and Scotland. Since 1707 Great Britain has been governed by the same legislative body. So the problem of national unity was solved for Britain. More than that, it never appeared to the British people as a problem. It was solved by geography, by the insular position of Britain centuries ago.

But while Great Britain has been a united country for more than two hundred years, the German Reich was still split up into two hundred and eighty-nine sovereign States. Think of that: two hundred and eighty-nine States instead of a single one! Some of those belonged to foreign princes. Hanover, for example, to the King of England; Holstein to the King of Denmark. Even in Lassalle's day, the idea of the Reich was still merely a historic and romantic notion, not a living reality. A country called Germany did not in fact exist. There was a Kingdom of Prussia, a Kingdom of Bavaria, a Kingdom of Saxony, as well as a Hapsburg Empire containing ten million German-speaking people, together with about forty million Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Poles and other nationalities. What is Germany today, in Lassalle's time still consisted of thirty-eight completely sovereign States, each protecting its independence jealously. Neither did the German nation exist in Lassalle's time; there were German-speaking Austrians, there were Prussians and Swabians—but no Germans. And every one of the princes saw to it that the German State and the German

nation did not come into being, for that would mean a threat to, or even the end of, his sovereignty. So the problem of nationalism and nationality was unsolved for the German people.

R. H. S. Crossman emphasises * the striking contrast between English and German political thought as conditioned by certain geographical, economic and political factors. "The German people", he says, "found no easy ready-made solution. For them", he explains, "in Luther's time, as today, State and nation were separate, even contradictory, terms. National unity had to be achieved, not within, but in spite of, political institutions. They were faced by the question: What is the German people? What parts of that people shall be included in the German national state? Which (if any) German dynasty shall wear the Imperial Crown? How can national frontiers be reconciled with strategic and economic needs? Thus, throughout German history, the practical problems of everyday statesmanship necessitated a consideration of the fundamental postulates of the nation-state. There is no necessity", Mr. Crossman goes on, "to assume that the Germans are racially or hereditarily more profound thinkers than we. Man seldom thinks unless he has to: his most abstract chains of speculation originate usually in some immediate practical need. The fact that, ever since the break up of the feudal system, Germans have been compelled to solve for themselves problems solved for us by geography, is sufficient to account for the difference." Mr. Crossman is also right when he concludes: "But to account for it is not to remove it, and the difference, once made, has influenced the language, the institutions, and the ethics of both nations".

Lassalle was a democrat through and through. "I belong to the Party of genuine and consistent democracy", he stated. Basically every German nationalist of his day was democratic. For the aspirations of the German patriots, the unification of the three dozen German countries, could be achieved only by asserting the rights of the people against the prerogatives of the princes. Every German patriot was a liberal and, therefore, suspect as a "traitor".

To Lassalle, democracy was indeed conceivable only within the framework of a free nation. "The principle of free nationality is the soil and source of life of the principle of democracy", he wrote.† He denounced those democracies which have evolved from a

* In his brilliant Essay on "British Political Thought in the European Tradition" (published in J. P. Mayer's admirable *Political Thought—The European Tradition*).

† Lassalle, *Der Italienische Krieg und die Aufgabe Preussens* (*The Italian War and the Task of Prussia*).

“dark, barbaric and exclusive notion in the spirit of the Middle Ages, the right of conquest and domination over other nations”; he condemned a democracy that strove for its own national freedom but did not at the same time recognise that freedom is also an indispensable necessity for other nations. Lassalle’s patriotism, together with his belief in the freedom and independence of all nations, and their inalienable rights to their own national life, is, if I have not misunderstood it entirely, in accordance with the supreme aims of the twenty-seven nations which have signed the Atlantic Charter.

Yet, though Lassalle’s patriotism had its own form, it was no more pronounced than, for instance, that of Jaurès. Jaurès’ patriotism was rooted in the France of the great French Revolution; Lassalle’s, in anticipation of the German revolution, which, though it had failed in 1848, was, he hoped, still to come. The emancipation of the working class meant to him the emancipation of mankind. For, he declared, “the unfolding of freedom is the living principle of history. . . . Your cause (the cause of the working class) is the cause of the whole of humanity.”*

The twofold nature of its struggle was implicit in the early working-class movement: namely, a struggle for a united German Republic and, at the same time, a struggle for Socialism. One of the most ardent internationalists among German Socialists, Wilhelm Liebknecht, formulated this concept when he spoke in 1872, before the Leipzig Court, on trial for high treason for fraternising with the French during the Franco-Prussian War. He said: “Two ideals have inspired me since my youth: a united, free Germany and the emancipation of the working class, which means, in truth, the emancipation of mankind. For this twofold goal I have fought with all my strength. For this I shall continue to fight until the end of my days. That is the command of duty.”

Lassalle strove, in the first place, for freedom. Freedom was the beginning and end of his Credo. The idea of freedom dominated all his thoughts; it also underlay his conception of the State. “The purpose of the State”, he said, “is the education and development for freedom of the human race. . . .”† How Lassalle’s patriotism could be put on the same level with the Nazi concept of patriotism, which aims at the domination of the German race over the world, is hard to understand. To Lassalle patriotism was, in the words of John Aubrey, “not a vindictive passion”, but a “magnanimous one”, full of “the reverence due to total humanity”.

* Lassalle, *Arbeiterprogramm (Programme of the Workers)*.

† *Idem, ibid.*

GERMAN PATRIOTISM AND BRITISH PATRIOTISM

It is amusing to observe how some Englishmen reproach the Germans for patriotism, although they would themselves be shocked if they were suspected by Germans of lack of patriotism. Dr. Johnson's definition of patriotism as "the last refuge of the scoundrel", can hardly be accepted as universally true. Most of the people of this country would prefer J. A. Froude's description of patriotism as a sentiment on which is based "the noblest part of our existence". . . . "A nation", he goes on, "which does not respect its past will have no future which will deserve respect. Great Britain is what it is today because thirty generations of brave men have worked with brain and hand to make it so. . . ." And indeed, during the six years I have had the privilege of living in Britain, I have met not a single Englishman who does not love "this land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land". My English Socialist friends would, however international their outlook, endorse the line of W. E. Henley:

"Life is good and joy runs high
Between English earth and sky".

George Orwell, analysing the psychology of the British working men, observes: "Patriotism is usually stronger than class hatred, and always stronger than any kind of internationalism. Except for a brief moment in 1920 (the 'Hands Off Russia' movement), the British working class have never thought or acted internationally. For two and a half years they watched their comrades in Spain slowly strangled, and never aided them by even a single strike. But when their own country was in danger, their attitude was very different. At the moment when it seemed likely that England might be invaded, Anthony Eden appealed over the radio for Local Defence Volunteers. He got a quarter of a million men in the first twenty-four hours, and another million in the subsequent month. One has only to compare these figures with, for instance, the number of Conscientious Objectors, to see how vast is the strength of traditional loyalties compared with new ones. . . . In the working class patriotism is profound."* So much for the degree of patriotism of the British working man.

The similarity in the character of patriotism is also clearly discernible. The disgraceful vice of obedience towards the State authorities, with which, as some Englishmen have commented, the Germans are obsessed, is in England obviously considered a patriotic virtue. Leonard Woolf, in his *After the Deluge*, a thoughtful book to which I am deeply indebted, draws attention to the

* George Orwell, *The Lion and the Unicorn*.

authoritarian character of modern British patriotism. "British patriotism", he says, "teaches that individual happiness must be subordinated to that of the community; but this community is not a community of individuals; it is a communal abstraction—'one's country'. In practice, 'one's country' is the State, or even those who, at the moment, exercise authority in the State. For instance, in war or whenever the Government considers that the country or the State is in danger, it is held to be the duty of the patriot to put himself absolutely at the disposal of those in authority. . . . Under such circumstances, for an individual to oppose or even criticise the Government is almost universally considered to be unpatriotic. . . . In this psychology of patriotism, the idea of one's country . . . becomes inextricably confused with the State or machinery of authority and government. . . . The community is deified and worshipped as 'one's country'. . . . Whenever it is possible to make an appeal to the patriotic instinct, the good patriot is expected and often required to feel, think and act on the axiom: 'my country, right or wrong!', and therefore when patriotism enters politics, reason and reasoned criticism have to leave by the same door. Patriotism thus emotionally takes the place of religion, being a mixture of faith, love and worship."

SENSE OF POWER

It is further indicated that Lassalle's inclination for power politics had taught Bismarck or Hitler how to deal with world affairs. Lassalle indeed possessed a strong sense of power. But he had also, as H. N. Brailsford wrote of Voltaire, "the art of stripping political actions and relations of the trappings of abstract words in which they are commonly draped". When speaking of the Prussian Constitution, Lassalle rather disrespectfully stripped the Crown of its mystical glamour of divinity. When the Prussian King Wilhelm, on ascending the throne in 1861, proclaimed that "the Rulers of Prussia had received their crowns from God", Lassalle explained * that the power of the Crown does not rest on God's vocation alone, but on the absolute control by the King over the armed forces of the country. In fact, the King later defied his Parliament, pointing menacingly at his cannons and bayonets; he challenged the written Constitution by raising money to enlarge his army. In the face of this direct violation of the Constitution, Lassalle merely drew attention to a point of fact when he said that "what is written on a sheet of paper is a matter of complete indifference if it contradicts the real state of affairs, the

* Lassalle, *Ueber Verfassungswesen (On the Nature of the Constitution)*.

actual power-relations". The liberals did not dare to take up arms in order to defend the Constitution. Lassalle, therefore, called them "old women", which Mr. Butler deeply resents. The working class, on the other hand, were not yet at this time politically or industrially organised; and hence were powerless. Lassalle urged them to make their real power felt as the supreme economic force of society by organising themselves as a political party in order to change the scale of actual power-relations. Only in this way would they emancipate themselves from their position as the lowest class, oppressed by the rulers. "Even if this Association of Workers only embraced a hundred thousand German workers, it would become a power that everyone would be forced to take into account", he said.

LASSALLE AND NAPOLEON'S PLEBISCITE

Lassalle was certainly, as Conrad Ferdinand Meyer said of Ulrich von Hutten, "not an artificially constructed book, but a human being with his contradictions". He stood for democracy. But at the same time he harboured in the depth of his heart the vague idea of a revolutionary dictatorship, such as Marat had demanded in 1792 for the French working class, and like that which Wilhelm Weitling had visualised half a century later for the German proletariat. "I behold", Weitling wrote, "the advent of a new Messiah with the sword to achieve the thought of the first," and he continued: "He will be put, by virtue of his courage, at the head of a revolutionary army; he will smash the rotten edifice of the old society; and will . . . transform the earth into a paradise".* Lassalle, moreover, witnessed the amazing spectacle on the French political scene when, in 1852, the citizens of France overturned the Second Republic by plebiscite and with a majority vote of over seven and a half million made Napoleon III Emperor, and virtually dictator, of the French. That event impressed Lassalle as deeply as later it did George Sorel. Influenced by Marat and Weitling and by the experience of France, Lassalle pondered deeply on the principle of leadership. It is not unlikely that Lassalle, whose genius was surpassed only by his vanity, may have thought that he himself might not cut so bad a figure as the new Messiah. In any case, he allocated the rôle of Labour dictator to himself. The statute of the General German Workers' Association which he had drafted conferred upon him, as its President, more or less dictatorial powers.

* Wilhelm Weitling, *Garantien der Harmonie und Freiheit* (*Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom*).

LASSALLE AND THE WEBBS

Lassalle even entered into secret negotiations with Bismarck, proposing an alliance between the working class and the Prussian aristocracy in exchange for a general franchise for the workers, a condition which Lassalle regarded as indispensable to political power, and State subsidies for the labour co-operatives, which he regarded as an important means of economic power. I feel, however, that John Strachey wrongs Lassalle when he says, "that Lassalle was . . . making strenuous efforts to sell out to Bismarck the German Workers' Party".*

Lassalle pursued, in practice, the same policy as Sidney and Beatrice Webb thirty years later recommended in their *Industrial Democracy*, published in 1897. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, as is well known, advocated the use of the power of the State to protect the workers, and urged the workers to get rid of their liberal prejudice and submit to the authority of the State whose protection they enjoyed. Lassalle aimed at the constitution of the working class as a distinct political power. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, however, questioned the need for a Labour Party. "The strong desire of nearly all sections of Trades Unionists for this or that measure and legal enactment . . . does not, for the moment, attach them, as Trades Unionists, to any political party. But it implies, perhaps," they wrote, "that they would be strongly, and even permanently, drawn to any political leader, of whatever party, who shared their faith in the efficacy of the Common Rule, and who convinced them that he had the technical knowledge, the will and the Parliamentary power, to carry into law such proposals for legal regulation as each Trade from time to time definitely demanded." They even scorned the "revolutionary shibboleths, as to the 'nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange', which the bulk of the Trades Unionists fail even to comprehend".

But Lassalle never lost sight of the goal of Socialism; in fact it dominated his ideas. As a politician he was, it is true, very anxious to use the power of the State in pursuit of the immediate ends of the working class. At the beginning of the struggle for the influence of Labour in the State, he regarded the liberal middle class as a possible ally. When the middle class failed to challenge Bismarck's despotism during the constitutional crisis, because of its alarm at the new claims of the proletariat, Lassalle contemplated an alliance with the aristocracy. The real power of the State resided then in the Prussian monarchy, founded on divine right, and in a military aristocracy, a survival from feudalism.

* John Strachey, *Theory and Practice of Socialism*.

Crown and aristocracy were not yet entangled with the interests of the manufacturing classes; they were rather in a position to arbitrate between the working class and the rising industrial and mercantile classes; to play the rôle of defenders of labour against the despised manufacturers. So Lassalle entertained the idea of a "social and revolutionary Kingdom", based on an alliance between the Prussian Crown and the working class. In his strange letter to Bismarck, he asserted that the working class would, "in spite of their republican outlook", not oppose "a social dictatorship of the Crown . . . if the Crown were prepared, as seems, to be sure, very unlikely, to take the revolutionary step of transforming the (Prussian) Kingdom from a Kingdom of the privileged classes into a social and revolutionary Kingdom". Sidney and Beatrice Webb also advocated State control, State Socialism, and, like Lassalle, the idea of a social dictatorship of the Crown. In their *Industrial Democracy* they suggest that, in view of "the increasing incapacity of the House of Commons to cope with its work", England would "be saved by the Royal Prerogative". In their *History of the Trade Unions*, they emphasise the conspicuous merits of the Tories in protecting the workers in the factories and mines in the teeth of the opposition of the Liberal middle classes. They were particularly anxious to obtain the support of Imperialists like Lord Rosebery or Joseph Chamberlain, for Labour.

Sidney and Beatrice Webb pleaded their policy frankly in their writings and speeches. Lassalle, however, concealed from the workers his negotiations with Bismarck and his amazing letter to Bismarck, which he wrote shortly before his death. It became public only in 1928, when Gustav Meyer published it in his *Bismarck and Lassalle*. It is to be assumed that Lassalle would probably have been disavowed by the German workers had they known of his negotiations with Bismarck—let alone his letter. Lassalle's dictatorial habits were even opposed by the members of his own party: the statute of the General German Workers' Association was abolished soon after his death. Lassalle's dictatorial concept had no influence whatever on the mind of the German workers—they did not even know of it. Lassalle's "immortal merit" was, as Karl Marx emphasised in a letter to Schweitzer, "that he awakened the German Labour Movement again after it had been dormant for fifteen years". He was, wrote Marx to Engels, on learning of Lassalle's death, "one of the old stock . . . the enemy of our enemies". And to Countess Hatzfeld he wrote consolingly: "He died young—fighting—like Achilles".

LESSALLE AND THE GERMAN SOCIALISTS

Mr. Butler, in his appreciation of Lassalle's influence upon the German Labour Movement, by no means overlooked a historical factor which was of the greatest significance to the whole trend of German Socialist thought after Lassalle's death. This was the fierce opposition by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, as well as by August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, to Lassalle's attempt to achieve Socialism within the given framework of Prussian Germany. In expressing his antagonism to Lassalle's concept of national policy, Bebel caused a rupture in Lassalle's Workers' Association by founding in Eisenach, in 1869, the *General German Social Democratic Workers' Association*, on the basis of Marx's concept of international Socialism. Bebel's party—that is, the German Social Democratic Party, as it was baptised in Gotha—was a party of international Socialism. It joined the Socialist International, and stood, from the first hour of its birth, in spirit and in the letter of its programme, for the principles of international Socialism. It was inspired by the same principles as the French, the Dutch, the Belgian and the British Labour Parties. In this spirit the German Social Democratic Party voted against the granting of war credits when Bismarck annexed Alsace Lorraine; it was passionately opposed to Prussian militarism, the imperialist policy of Wilhelm II, his armaments race, his naval policy, his colonial policy, and his adventures in Agadir, Tangier, and Turkey. Never until 1914 was the foreign policy of the German Social Democrats reproached by any of the Labour Parties affiliated to the Socialist International for infringing its international creed or its obligations. It is indeed hard to understand how Mr. Butler can still denounce German Socialism for being prejudiced by Lassallianism.

At the cradle of British Socialism, after its rebirth following the Chartist interlude, stood Henry M. Hyndman, a Marxist, tinged with Disraeli's national conservatism, resembling Lassalle not only in his patrician bearing, but still more in his anti-liberal feeling and in his domineering temper. If I wrote on the spirit of British Socialism and, ignoring Keir Hardie and Sidney Webb, asserted that British Socialism was prejudiced at the start by Hyndman, my record would hardly be regarded as perfectly accurate and unbiased. The German Labour movement had in Lassalle its Hyndman, in August Bebel its Keir Hardie, in Eduard Bernstein its Sidney Webb, in Kurt Eisner its Arthur Henderson, in Ledebour its Lansbury, in Gustav Landauer its William Morris—but it had no counterpart to Mosley, Mussolini, de Man or Marcel Déat.

"READING IN THE LIGHT OF SUBSEQUENT HISTORY"

I do not want to discuss Mr. Berlin's observation that "as a theorist of State supremacy and as a demagogue, Lassalle should be counted among the founders not only of European Socialism but equally of the doctrine of personal dictatorship and Fascism, a fact", as Mr. Berlin points out, "which the reading of his works, and in particular his speeches in the light of subsequent history, bears out to an astonishing degree". The present issue is not a defence of Lassalle, Fichte or Hegel. I simply want to submit that "in the light of subsequent history", it should not be hard to deduce some of the doctrines of Fascism from many political thinkers of many nations during the last three thousand years.

Mr. Berlin points particularly to Lassalle's theory of State supremacy. Lassalle accepted, it is true, Hegel's transcendentalism; he believed, indeed, in Hegel's thesis that the State is "the reality of the moral idea" and the "image and reality of reason". But if that concept of the State is stripped of its metaphysical drapery, it will be found that Lassalle's political thought did not transcend the doctrines of State supremacy as evolved by the French and English political school. Lord Acton points out, in his *Essay on Liberty*, that, according to the English and French system, "Nationality is founded on the perpetual supremacy of the collective will, of which the unity of the nation is the necessary condition, to which every other influence must refer, and against which no obligation enjoys authority, and all resistance is tyrannical. . . . The nation", Lord Acton goes on, "overrules the rights and wishes of the inhabitants, absorbing their divergent interests in a fictitious unity; sacrifices their several inclinations and duties to the higher claim of nationality, crushes all natural rights and all established liberties for the purpose of vindicating itself. . . ." It cannot be denied that this concept of State supremacy is, if not exactly that of Lassalle, precisely that of Hitlerism.

Reading Hobbes' *Leviathan*, for instance, "in the light of subsequent history,"—to use Mr. Berlin's phrase—we find even the most perfect doctrine of dictatorship. Thomas Hobbes of the School of Natural Law admits, as Liberals and Socialists from the ancient times up to the advent of Hitler have insisted, that everybody has, according to the law of nature, a right to do anything—"that is to say, to do whatever he listeth and to whom he listeth, to possess, use and enjoy all things he will and can. . . ." But Hobbes believed that freedom could unfetter the human passions and cause perpetual discord—a *bellum omnium contra omnes*. And just as Hitler says today that it cannot be tolerated that everybody "do whatever he listeth" and say whatever he thinks, but that

there must be one man in the State with the right to speak and to command, to overcome the social and political strife of parties and classes, so the English philosopher Hobbes long ago advised us "to confer all power and strength upon one man . . . that may reduce all their wills . . . unto one will". In this one man—call him monarch, dictator or *Führer*—shall be embodied the authority of the State, an authority that overrides all other authorities, even those of religion, conscience or morality. Hobbes stipulated that the law of State is, "like the law of God", a command which requires instant acceptance and obedience. "Though a monarch, as sovereign, may in his passion pursue aims contrary to the law of nature, no subject has a right", says Hobbes, "to make war on him." Even, Hobbes goes on, "when the civil sovereign is an infidel" (like Hitler, for instance), "every one of his subjects that resisteth him, sinneth against the law of God". Consequently, "the constitution of 'mine' and 'thine' and 'his', in one word, 'property', belongs in all kinds of commonwealth to the sovereign power". This is precisely Hitler's attitude. *Leviathan* is indeed the first comprehensive scheme of absolute dictatorship. In tracing back National Socialist thought, we must not stop at the German philosophers Fichte, Hegel, Herder and Lassalle; we can go back to the English philosopher Hobbes.

The algebra of National Socialist philosophy is indeed not easy to decipher. But every one of its doctrines can, at pleasure, be traced back to English, French, Italian, even ancient Greek and Latin, sources as well as to German. Read "in the light of subsequent history", for instance, the English State philosopher Bosanquet. He proclaimed that "the Nation-State . . . is recognised as absolute power over the individual, and his representative and champion in the affairs of the world outside".* He questioned whether the universal laws of morality are also valid for the State: "the State, as such, certainly cannot be guilty of personal immorality". He wondered whether the observance of treaties by the State is merely a matter of expediency: "promises and treaties . . . are acts which embody public ends. . . . The question for him (the agent of the State), if he has to keep or break a public undertaking, is—to what the State is substantially bound. . . ." He rejected "the assumption that humanity is a real corporate being, an object of devotion and a guide to moral duty".* All these ideas are elements in Nazi philosophy. The Nazis, of course, derived them not from Bosanquet but from Hegel. But Hegel has shaped not the German mind alone but also the mind of the English people. Bosanquet was one of the

* Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*.

† *Idem*, *Social and International Ideals*.

eminent representatives of the neo-Hegelian school in England which, for a time, dominated the political thought in this country; his *Philosophical Theory of the State* became soon after its publication in 1899 a classic in English political literature.

Benjamin Kidd, also an English neo-Hegelian, proclaimed "the divine mission . . . of a nation", and submitted that "when we discover how naturally these ideas have . . . taken root and grown into the permanent structure of men's minds, until their truth has become an unconscious presupposition, and realised the ardent conviction with which everyone here regards them as binding the conscience with a religious sanction, we must admit that we have to do with a genuine moral code".*

Bagehot, an English economist, justifies aggression and conquest on the same lines as does Nazi philosophy. In his *Physics and Politics* he says: "Conquest is the premium given by nature to those national characters which their national customs have made most fit to win in war, and in most material aspects those winning characters are really the best characters. The characters which do win in war are the characters which we should wish to win in war."

Cecil Rhodes, joining issue with Bagehot and, for that matter, with Hitler, submits: "I contend that we are the first race in the world, that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race."† Or, as Duff-Cooper put it in a broadcast (on the 24th May, 1942): "We are the greatest people on earth, and I am not at all sure that we are not the greatest people that has been on earth". There is certainly wisdom, also, in Winston Churchill's remark: "The fortune of the British Empire and its glory are inseparably interwoven with the fortune of the world".‡ For the British Empire is in fact the most gigantic achievement of human statesmanship since the Roman Empire, and its downfall might have repercussions of similar weight. Hitler, who is indifferent to human happiness, may perhaps think that such a world disaster might be worth the greater blessing of a German Empire. It is hard to say, in fairness, that such aspirations are exclusive to the Germans.

The case of British *v.* German imperialism is certainly interesting. The British type lacks the undisguised brutality of aims and methods that characterises German imperialism both in the past and at present. However, there is also some force in G. Unwin's observation about C. Gill: "His phrase about conquering half the world in a fit of absence of mind was a stroke of genius. British

* Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution*.

† Quoted in W. T. Stead, *The Last Will and Testament of Cecil Rhodes*.

‡ Winston Churchill, *Arms and the Covenant*.

imperialism bears the same relation to the imperialism of Treischke or Bernhardi as the ambition of Macbeth bore to that of Lady Macbeth. Empire is congenial enough to the Englishman's temperament, but it is repugnant to his political conscience. In order that he may be reconciled to it, it must seem to be imposed upon him by necessity, as a duty. Fate and metaphysical aid must seem to have crowned him. What he would highly, that would be holily—would not play false and yet would wrongly win." *

Lord Elton, on the other hand, in complete agreement with Cecil Rhodes, goes a step farther. He advocates British domination of the world in virtue of the race superiority of the British. "In a world society whose huge central core was the British Commonwealth, the vital principle of which has been peaceful growth and change, it is most likely that an ascendant race-strain would be able to assert its superiority without violence." † Yet Lord Elton does not oppose violence merely on principle. On the contrary, he thinks highly of the creative force of war. "War, however much we may hate it, is", he writes, "still the supreme agent of the revolutionary process. Blind, brutal and destructive, it remains the final arbiter, the one test mankind has yet contrived of a nation's fitness to survive." This is, according to Mr. Butler, just the same as "German thought".

You can, if you like, trace back Nazi hero-worship to the British writer Carlyle; the idea of the supremacy and mission of a particular race to Plato and Aristotle; the German race theory to the French Count Gobineau and the English Houston Stewart Chamberlain; the new revolt against rationalism to the French philosophers Bergson, Barrès, Charles Maurras, George Sorel and the late Léon Daudet; the mystical worship of the blind instinct of life and the preference to "think with our blood" to the French-Jewish thinker Bergson; the Fascist doctrine of the co-operative State to the French jurists Duguit and Hauriou; contempt of democracy to Hilaire Belloc and G. K. Chesterton in Britain and to Brunetière, Faguet and Chéradame in France. Even the conception of National Socialism, as opposed to the Ideas of 1789, was evolved by a Swedish scholar, Rudolf Kjellen. He suggests that the war (of 1914) was "a struggle between 1789 and 1914". "1789 is represented", he says, "by France and England; 1914 by Germany. The new German ideas, as it is shaped now," he goes on, "opened its decisive fight against the French ideas which sprang into being at the beginning of the Great Revolution. . . .

* G. Unwin in an introduction to Conrad Gill's *National Power and Prosperity*.

† Lord Elton, *St. George and the Dragon*.

The men of 1789", he submits, "suffered from absolutism. We are suffering from freedom. . . . Equality means principally the levelling of humanity to the average." * In almost the same words do the Nazis now explain the historical significance of the present war. Alternatively take, for instance, the political lie, as a political maxim: that ruthless nihilism, enthroned by the Nazis, found its first justification, as Richard Crossman urges in his *Plato Today*, in Plato's *Republic*, and later in Machiavelli's *The Prince*.

Much amusement could be derived from comparing the phrases in which Hitler and Rosenberg proclaim the superiority of the German race with the phrases used by Cecil Rhodes, W. T. Stead, and Kipling,† when proclaiming the superiority of the British race, or with those used by Charles Maurras and Léon Daudet on the superiority of the French race. Moreover, the sacrament of war and violence has never been expressed with such glowing eloquence as by the French philosophers Proudhon and Sorel. Proudhon exalted war "as a divine reality, for it testifies the greatness of man".‡ He held that all society's institutions and its whole social structure—even the moral qualities of man—were generated by war. To Proudhon, as to Hitler, Mussolini and Lord Elton, war is the law of nature. Proudhon was a French Socialist, just as Lassalle was a German Socialist. The French Socialist Party, however, based its programme, as defined by its Congresses in 1867 and 1868, not on Proudhonism, but, on the contrary, on Marxism. Would it not be lacking in fairness to take the French Socialists to task for Proudhon's political thought?

THE EUROPEAN TRADITION

The truth is that the philosophical and political doctrines in which the National Socialist creed is rooted are, fundamentally, of pan-European origin. The Nazi doctrine of the transcendent nature of the nation; the notion of the chosen people; the concept of power-politics; the thesis of State supremacy; the theory of authoritarianism; the concept of dictatorship; the tenet of the charismatic character of the dictator; the doctrine of the precedent of might overright; the concept of war as a law of nature; Nazi racial theory; Nazi eugenics; and even Nazi nihilism—all these are elements of the European tradition. Men of letters from almost every European nation have contributed to this structure of thought, influencing and assimilating each other's ideas so intrinsically that

* R. Kjellen, *Die Idee von 1914* (*The Ideas of 1914*).

† Rudyard Kipling, *Recessional*.

‡ Proudhon, *War and Peace*.

the individual national origin of a particular theory can hardly be discerned. They are an integral part of European thought, as shaped since the days of Plato and Aristotle.

Yet they represent only one trend in European political philosophy and thought. There existed, as is well known, another trend of thought which has inspired mankind: the humanitarian trend, which has determined the school of natural law and humanity from the days of Zeno and of Aristotle throughout the Middle Ages right up to the rationalist thought of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It existed in the Greek and Latin philosophy of State and Law, and in the ethics of the Gospel. It inspired the Lollards, the Roundheads, Lilburne and the Levellers, the Bohemian Hussites, the Quakers, the German fighters of Münster, the Italian poet Dante, the Dutch philosopher Grotius, the Spanish-Dutch-Jewish thinker Spinoza, the Swedish philosopher Swedenborg; Locke and Spencer in England, Leibniz and Kant in Germany, and the French era of Enlightenment; it culminated in modern times in three great documents: the American Declaration of Independence in 1776; the Declaration of the Rights of Man of the French National Assembly in 1789; and Karl Marx's Communist Manifesto in 1847.

“WESTERN CIVILISATION”

The conflicting ideas of nationalism and cosmopolitanism, individualism and authoritarianism, reason and “vital force”, in perpetual struggle and development, emerged from the common heritage of pan-European civilisation; they are the structure of Western Civilisation.

The nomenclature “Western Civilisation” has a perfectly clear meaning; it has always connoted the pan-European heritage in distinction to Oriental civilisation—that is, to the Hindu, the Islamic and Chinese civilisation.

Yet again, as during the last war, the term “Western Civilisation” is used to indicate that the people living east of the Rhine have developed spiritually a fundamentally different civilisation. No one, of course, disputes that the thought and speculation of the humanist and cosmopolitan schools were elements in the European tradition. Many, however, fiercely contest that this complex of ideas, which has so powerfully moulded the minds of the English and French people, moulded the minds of the Germans as well. It is asserted, for instance, by Mr. A. L. Rowse, that an almost unbridgeable “chasm divides the German mind and German thought from the mind and thought of Western civilisation”. It is intimated that while the West believes in the eternal immut-

able law of humanity, the Germans believe in the relativity of human values.

Both these assertions require considerable qualification. Yet it must be admitted that there are differences between German and English and French thought; but more obvious are the points of similarity. There is certainly a distinct German cultural heritage, just as there is a distinct English and a distinct French cultural heritage. Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque as well as modern architecture is common European tradition; and yet there are distinctions between the English and the German Gothic or between the English and the French Baroque.

The German culture is permeated by the same varieties of thoughts which have permeated the English and the French culture. In the process of amalgamation the thought common to Europe has become tinged with the individual colours of the various national traditions; but altogether they form one whole. German civilisation is not something separate from the "Western Civilisation"; it is part of the indivisible European civilisation, to which German philosophy and literature have contributed as much as those of any other nation. For example, the great influence of Hegel on English thought should be remembered; on Caird, on T. H. Green, Bosanquet, MacTaggart. "At the close of the nineteenth century Hegel possessed a larger number of avowed followers in England than in Germany", observed Elie Halévy.* He then quotes J. B. Haldane, who wrote: "The name of the little territory which encloses Weimar and Jena stirs the imagination of thousands of our youth of both sexes, even as the name of Jerusalem moved the hearts of men in the centuries behind us."

Conversely, the humanitarian trend in the European tradition has influenced German philosophy and literature, and hence the minds of the German people, as powerfully as it influenced English philosophy and literature, and hence the mind of the English people. "Religion, literature, art, science no less than political thought and political systems of the different countries of Europe are", as R. H. Tawney emphasises, "cosmopolitan creation, to which all have contributed and all are in debt".† And with deep wisdom he observes: "Such things, it is true, do not in themselves create unity, but they create the conditions of it. They cause Europe, amid all its feverish jealousies and terrors, to be a single civilisation, as a contentious family is still a family and a bad State remains a State. They make its culture one, its crimes domestic tragedies, its wars civil wars."

* Elie Halévy, *History of the English People*.

† R. H. Tawney, Introduction to *Political Thought in the European Tradition*.

SELECTIVITY IN QUOTATIONS

Mr. Butler cannot, in fairness, be reproached for his neglect of the philosophy and literature of the "Other Germany". On the contrary, he consciously strives the whole time to be objective and honest. But he set out to investigate the roots of National Socialism, that "imagnate corpus of thought" from which it sprang. An analysis of the whole controversial complex of German thought did not lie within his scope, so that he was not bound to analyse the humanist heritage of German literature.

It seems to me, however, fantastic to deny the existence of the other trend of German thought and simply to ignore the Germany of Leibniz, Goethe, Kant, Schiller, Lessing, Humboldt, Heine, Börne, Marx, Moses Mendelssohn, Troeltsch, Mommsen, down to Rainer Maria Rilke, and the early writings of Gerhard Hauptmann.

It is indeed possible to twist any writings of any man of letters in support of any notion. Mr. Butler, for instance, twists Kant's famous ethical thesis—that man shall act so that his behaviour should be at the same time the moral law of the whole world—to support the theory that Kant's Categorical Imperative "left no room for mere happiness", although Kant himself insisted that he, for one, used to derive perfect bliss from his reflections. "Two things", he wrote, "fill the mind with an undying, ever-increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them; the starry heavens above us, and the moral law in our hearts. . . ." *

Mr. Butler, a remarkable master of the art of selectivity in quotations, twists some of Hölderlin's writings "as being in some sort similar in bearing to the train of German thought"—which, we must bear in mind, naturally culminated in Nazi thought. Hölderlin's soul craved for the pure beauty of the Hellenic idea of humanity; his intellectual being was utterly revolted by the pettiness of German reality—how admirable to be able to link Hölderlin "in some sort" of way with Hitler!

FRIEDRICH SCHILLER

Mr. Butler thinks that even some of Schiller's writings "can be twisted to support the National school of thought". I am at a loss to discover in which corner of Schiller's world of thought Hitler's Fascism could have taken root.

Friedrich Schiller was the German Shelley, imbued with ardent enthusiasm for the cause of humanity. He was the contemporary of the Prussian King Frederick II, the much-praised hero of

* Kant *Critique of Practical Reason*.

National Socialist patriotism. Schiller felt so little patriotic emotion and so small an affection for that great conqueror and master of slaves, that he wrote for him not the tiniest fragment of verse. For Schiller was the great German poet of liberty—of liberty for all peoples. The confession of Tom Paine—"where is no liberty, there is my country"—was true, at least in its spiritual sense, in the work of Schiller. He fought, in his play *Don Carlos*, against the Spanish, in his *Wilhelm Tell*, which glorifies the murder of tyrants, against the Hapsburg despotism. In his historical study, *Der Abfall der Niederlande*,* he justified Holland in her war of liberation against Spain. It was "the foundation of the freedom of the Netherlands", he recalls in the introduction to his book, that inspired him to enthusiasm and the highest admiration, for he felt it was an event of the greatest significance. It was in the Netherlands, he said, "where hard-pressed humanity struggled for its most noble rights . . . and where it triumphed in a fight of unequal resources; a fight between resolute despair and formidable tyranny. It is a great and consoling thought", he goes on, "that there at last exists a means of redress against the audacious challenge of royal power. The Netherlands", he continues, "have now become the sole bastion of freedom on the Continent." He visualised the emotion of the Dutch people when they had achieved that noble end. "How grand it must have been then," he said, "when the united people of Holland gained freedom at a time when the whole of the rest of Europe groaned under the sore yoke imposed upon the mind; when Amsterdam was well-nigh the only port for the freedom of the mind!"

Schiller was the poet of the Rights of Man. The line borrowed from Rousseau: "Man is created in freedom; he is free, even were he born in chains" was the ever-recurring melody in all his poems. The National Assembly of France proclaimed, in its decree of August 26th, 1792, that men such as Friedrich Schiller, Tom Paine, Washington, the Swiss pedagogue, Pestalozzi, the Polish patriot, Kosciusko, who had contributed so much to the emancipation of mankind from spiritual and political bondage, were not to be regarded in France as foreigners; it conferred on them the citizenship of France.

The noblest monument ever erected to the very idea of humanity is Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, in its towering *finale*, where the chorus rejoices in Schiller's words:

"Chant one greeting, myriads countless,
Reconciled be the whole world!
Brothers, o'er the starry span
There must be a loving father."

* *The Secession of the Netherlands.*

That was the spirit which in fact prevailed in German literature from the days of Goethe and Schiller to Hitler's advent to power.

WHAT DID THE GERMAN PEOPLE READ?

There existed, to be sure, plenty of nationalistic literature as well. But the broad masses of the German people read Schiller, Goethe, Lessing, Heine, Grillparzer; they did not even understand the jumble of mysticism and romanticism in the writings of Keyserling, Stefan George and Moeller van den Bruck. Nor had more than one in a hundred thousand Germans even heard any of these names. On the other hand, the German people devoured the progressive literature of all European nations, perhaps more greedily than any people. The writings of Ibsen, Björnson, Strindberg, Tolstoy, Zola, Anatole France, Romain Rolland, Dostoevsky, Gorki, Gibbon, Macaulay, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, Galsworthy, were read, in excellent translations, by the millions; they were entirely assimilated by the Germans and incorporated in the spiritual texture of German civilisation. The joke representing Shakespeare as a German genius has an element of truth in it; for Shakespeare, in the brilliant version of Schlegel and Tieck, was indeed esteemed by many Germans as a German classic. "Mastering all languages, all records of the intellectual man, it [German learning] has been able, or has enabled others, to strip away the husks of nationality and conventionalism from the literature of many races, and to disengage that kernel of human truth which is the germinating principle of them all," observed James Russell Lowell in his superb essay on Lessing.

Modern German literature which reflects as well as moulds contemporary thought—like the literature of every nation—was, until 1914, and still more between 1918 and 1933, governed by liberal, pacifist and Socialist tendencies. These tendencies called forth a passionate response in the hearts of the German people. For example, of the pacifist war novel by Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, one million copies were sold in a few months, and hundreds of thousands of the other great pacifist novel by Arnold Zweig, *Sergeant Grischa*. Carl Zuckmayer's biting satire of Prussian militarism, *The Captain of Köpenick*, was shown on the stage of all German cities to overflowing houses night after night for years; Werner Hegemann's *Anti-Frederick* and Emil Ludwig's *Wilhelm II*, both historical biographies, permeated with a devastating criticism of Prussianism, had a bigger circulation, and were read by more German people, than the whole nationalist historical literature, including Treitschke, put together. There

have been no German authors whose novels were read more eagerly than those of Heinrich Mann and Lion Feuchtwanger, which with sarcastic derision mirrored the bombastic shallowness of the Prussian society. This trend in the literature corresponded to the true minds of the German people.

CATHOLICISM AND SOCIALISM IN GERMANY

An investigation into the German mind and German thought can also hardly neglect Catholicism and Socialism, because both these religious and political movements are inspired by the very ideas upon which "Western civilisation" is based. It must be remembered that a third of the German people belong to the Catholic Church and that in pre-Fascist Germany more than two-fifths of the population confessed the Socialist creed (Social Democrats as well as Communists).

No spiritual community has been more anxious to preserve the tradition of the equality and dignity of man, of the conception of the divine law which pervades all nature, than Catholicism. In fact, Catholicism is the offspring of Stoicism; the concept of common humanity is its cardinal dogma, the very fundamental upon which the concept of the universality of the Catholic Church rests. We shall not discuss here how far the policy of the Church corresponds with its professed belief. We have observed Cardinal Innitzer of Vienna instantly submitting to Hitlerism, and Cardinal Faulhaber of Munich unswervingly opposing it. There exists, at any rate, a body with a century-old tradition of humanism which has influenced a vast multitude.

Marxism, on the other hand, is the synthesis of humanism and relativism. It is based essentially on the conception of the equality of man. It aspires to universal ends common to all mankind. It applies, at the same time, historicism and relativism as sociological instruments to the investigation of the riddle of society. To the masses converted to Socialism the Socialist-idea appeared as the gospel of humanity; the doctrine of equality and liberty extended to the economic sphere; the promise of "the coming of an ideal condition", to use Troeltsche's expression, "from the operation of the general laws of world order".

Socialism in Germany was in direct contradiction to the spirit of the ruling classes; it was conceived as something alien and hostile to the Prussian tradition, which was the tradition of the German political system. Hence follows the ostracising of the Socialists in imperial Germany and the mortal hatred with which they are persecuted in Hitlerite Germany.

THE PRUSSIAN TRADITION

The complex of ideas commonly denounced as German thought should rather be termed Prussian tradition, because the mind of the German people is, in fact, divided between that concept of thought called "Western civilisation" and the German national school, which is in reality the school of Prussian traditionalism. It is needless to emphasise that Prussianism is not a geographical but a spiritual conception; it is not confined to Prussia, where the Socialist (and Communist) movement was more deeply entrenched than anywhere else in Germany and where, moreover, Catholicism was strong. It is the expression of a chauvinist conservatism, full of romanticism and mysticism.

The division in the mind of the German people is both vertical and horizontal. It runs through nearly all classes of society; it separates the thoughts and feelings of the working class by an abyss from the thoughts and feelings of the ruling classes. There indeed yawns a precipitous gulf between popular feeling and Prussian traditionalism, between the outlook of the working classes, together with large sections of the middle classes, and the German political system. Of course, the German national school, as represented, for instance, by Hegel—separated incidentally by a whole world from the hallmarked German patriotism—or Treitschke, Müller, Clausewitz, Bernhardi and the Pan-German League, expressed accurately the ideology of a considerable proportion of the German people. But far bigger was the section of the people which thought and felt the opposite.

The ideology of Prussian traditionalism was the ideology of the upper class and a section of the middle classes; of the Prussian aristocracy, of the Junkers, the officer corps, of the higher ranks of the bureaucracy, of a section of the Protestant clergy, of the owners of the heavy industries, of a certain section of the business interests, and of a considerable part of the office workers.

Against that spiritual tradition stood the "Other Germany"; the ideology of the truly international Socialist creed, as professed by the majority of the working class; the Catholicism of a large section of the peasantry, workers and middle classes; and the liberalism, cosmopolitanism and pacifism of the majority of the urban middle classes—particularly in Berlin, among the professional, and even a section of the monied people entrenched in commerce, shipping and in certain trades like the chemical and optical industry.

Lord Vansittart reveals, in his *Black Record*, some interesting personal experiences with Germans; these experiences are also significant. He had studied at German Universities; and he

describes something of student life. "If you were any good at all, you had to be a member of the Fighting Students' Club and insult anyone who wasn't a reactionary", he records, absolutely correctly. And it is also true when Lord Vansittart goes on: "In this quarrelsome crowd there were two codes: a Code of Honour, or fighting, and a Code of Drinking. If you lived up, or down, to both you became a Colour Student; you got your colours, as we should have given them for football or cricket. For boozing and slashing you earned a coloured ribbon which, with the angry sword-scars across your face, composed the German Old School Tie. It was a passport to a job when you left, just as membership of the Hitler Youth is the passport to a job now. The Civil Service and the Law Courts were full of this material." Quite right.

But it may be remembered that in Vansittart's student days there were about a hundred thousand students at the German Universities; yet at that time the Fighting Students' Clubs were said to total hardly more than ten thousand members. The fact that the Nazi authorities had, up to 1937, replaced as suspect about a quarter of the University teachers,* refutes Lord Vansittart's assertion that *the* German student has always been a butcher bird. Between the outlook of those ten thousand in the Fighting Clubs and that of the ninety thousand who were not colour students there was a formidable gulf.

It is perfectly true that the ten thousand disgorged every year from the Universities afterwards crowded the staffs of the Army, the Civil Service and the Law Courts. But it is equally true that the others, and with them the great multitude in the towns and villages, despised, derided and ceaselessly opposed them. The ten thousand colour students reflected faithfully the Prussian tradition; the ninety thousand the tradition of the "Other Germany".

Lord Vansittart recalls Arthur Schnitzler's delightful story of *Leutnant Gustl*, in which he ridicules with biting wit the duelling code. "The blood-mongers were so angry with Schnitzler for making mock of duelling", he says, "that he was boycotted." Yes, Schnitzler was indeed boycotted—but by whom, pray? He was boycotted by the ten thousand colour students and their papas and mammas and sisters; those who had once been colour students, and those who wanted to become colour students; the officers in the army and a number of judges in the courts—in short, by the ruling class. They boycotted Schnitzler even before he wrote his *Leutnant Gustl*. They hated him as representing a spiritual force which disintegrated the tradition of spiritual reaction, just as they hated the author of the *Biberpelz* and the author of *Deutschland—ein Wintermärchen*. But the "Other Germany" en-

* According to Julian Huxley's *Argument of Blood*.

joyed Schnitzler's story immensely. I still remember when that novel came out, and how we lads eagerly seized upon a copy of it, kindling anew our hatred of militarism with Schnitzler's sparkling irony. Schnitzler's novels were read by hundreds of thousands; Heinrich Heine was the most popular German poet; Schiller's glorification of liberty stirred up each successive German generation. To deny that powerful stream of liberal, cosmopolitan and humanitarian ideas is to deny palpable facts.

ANTI-SEMITISM

How little the spirit of the ruling classes affected the mind of the great mass of the people can be strikingly demonstrated by an interesting phenomenon. Anti-Semitism is a dominant feature of the German nationalist tradition. It was, however, before 1914, nowhere stronger than in Vienna. It originated, in its modern shape, in fact, from Vienna, where it even grew into a popular movement. In Berlin the Prussian Court preacher, Stöcker, attempted even earlier to engineer such a movement. He failed. In Vienna, Schönerer, a pan-German politician, and Lueger, the leader of the Viennese Christian Social Party, succeeded. In Vienna anti-Semitism had a palpable object. There were many Jews, some of them prominent in finance, in industry and commerce, and also in the professions and in cultural life. In particular, the Stock Exchange and the banks were almost entirely dominated by Jews. So it was easy to fight Jewry as the embodiment of capitalism. As Bebel once said: "Anti-Semitism is the Socialism of the fool". The anti-Semitic movement in Vienna became so strong that Lueger was even elected Mayor of Vienna, though, it is true, by a franchise which excluded the workers. At any rate, anti-Semitism was a powerful movement, embracing the whole lower, and a considerable section of the upper middle classes. Hitler was strongly impressed by it; he received, as he says in his book, from Lueger the first impulse to anti-Semitism.

But the Viennese Catholic workers did not fall into the trap of anti-Semitism; they followed enthusiastically the leadership of Viktor Adler, who was of Jewish origin. They venerated his son, Friedrich Adler, whose self-sacrifice in his heroic battle for peace and the purity of Socialism, made him the most popular figure in my country; they faithfully followed Otto Bauer, also of Jewish origin; they admired the Jewish financial genius Hugo Breitner, the creator of Red Vienna. The Viennese Social Democratic movement was strong before the Great War; it commanded the support of two-thirds of the whole population after the last war; it was relatively the strongest Labour movement in the world, and

was led, until its destruction by force, by men of Jewish origin as well as Gentiles. And that in Vienna, the stronghold of anti-Semitism!

Anti-Semitism by no means vanished from Vienna. It remained, as before, the ideology of mainly the lower middle classes. But the people in the middle classes were comparatively few. The working-class people were the majority. When the working class was forcibly subdued, anti-Semitism in Vienna again came into its own; in a more beastly way than anywhere in Hitler's realm. Were we inclined to judge a people as they appear in the light of the actions of their rulers, we should today be justified in indicting the Viennese as abominable anti-Semitic brutes. As a people they certainly are not, though many of them individually are. Their whole history protests against such summary condemnation.

The same observation applies to the German people. It is certainly true that traces of anti-Semitism can easily be detected in many German writers. But the literature of almost every European nation is tainted by anti-Jewish feelings: the Spanish literature, the French, the Russian (to name only Dostoevski), and even the English, from Chaucer and Shakespeare to Burke and Chesterton. The Jews are depicted by the most glorious English poet as sacrificing Christian blood—in Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale* the little Christian sings most devoutly after his throat is cut from ear to ear: "Slain with cursed Jewes, as it is notable"; the Jews are branded as merciless usurers (by Shakespeare), as the parasites of ordered Christian society (for instance, by Burke in his *Reflections*), as greedy scoundrels (in Dickens's *Oliver Twist*), as clever money-makers (in Chesterton's *Tales of the Long Bow*). And yet, no people is less permeated by anti-Semitism than the English.

Nevertheless, the mind of the German people was undoubtedly more deeply influenced by the anti-Semitic trend in literature and propaganda than that of the English. But it was not an ingrained feature of their character, as was manifest, for instance, when the Bavarian peasants and workers raised the Jew Kurt Eisner to power and millions of German workers adored as their idol Rosa Luxemburg, a woman of Polish-Jewish origin. When Lord Vansittart, however, urges that "the *German* is often a moral creature; the *Germans* in the plural never", he condemns the many for the few, the German people for the sins of their political and spiritual rulers.

THE SPIRIT OF WARRIORS

Because the German rulers were eager for war and conquest, many people regard all Germans as warriors and conquerors. Lord Vansittart reminds us that Julius Caesar, about 2,000

years ago, observed that in Germany "robbery has nothing infamous in it", when committed upon a neighbour. Julius Caesar was probably right. But 2,000 years ago even the highly civilised Romans considered war, conquest and robbery as a convenient means of enriching themselves. Every year they sent their Legions into the remotest corners of the world for that noble end. Josephus, for instance, recorded: "Now Crassus, as he was going upon his expedition against the Parthians, came into Judaea and carried off the money that was in the Temple, which Pompey had left, being 2,000 talents, and was disposed to spoil it of all gold belonging to it, which was 8,000 talents. He also took a beam, which was made of solid beaten gold, of the weight of 300 minae, each of which weighed two pounds and a half. . . ." * And soon afterwards, Vespasian pillaged the Temple again—for the third time—stole the seven-armed candelabrum from the Holy of Holies, and then laid the Temple in ruins. Only the rock-like piece of the outer wall remained. But when I stood before this Wailing Wall, looking at the huge, mysterious hieroglyphic letters, carved into the withered stone, and brooding over the history of that relic, not for a moment did the idea enter my mind that the amiable Italians of today, who are, after all, the descendants of the greedy Pompey, Crassus, and Vespasian, and their rough soldiers, were still to be held responsible and have probably inherited the rapacious inclination of their ancestors to attack their neighbours in order to pillage them. I felt no bitterness against them, though their forefathers had indeed desecrated and destroyed the most venerated national and religious monument of my forefathers.

We need not go so far back in history. More than 1,500 years later most people still regarded robbery by war as a legitimate and honourable occupation. "In Europe, during the Middle Ages, war was a very lucrative profession, owing to the custom of exacting heavy ransom for the liberty of prisoners", observed Buckle. † Even the English people were no exceptions to that rule. Barrington asserts that in the reign of Richard II "a war with France was esteemed as almost the only method by which an English gentleman could become rich". ‡ It can therefore be assumed that the French historian Froissart was probably right when he wrote at the close of the fourteenth century: "The English take delight and solace in battles and slaughter: covetous and envious are they above measure of other men's wealth."

The "bald lust of battle", which Lord Vansittart ascribes to the Germans, was, as could easily be shown by the history of many

* Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*.

† Buckle, *Civilisation in England*.

‡ Barrington, *Observations on the Statute*.

peoples, by no means of exclusively German origin. In his endeavour to prove his psychological theory, he points, for example, to Tilly's sacking of Magdeburg in the Thirty Years War, in which 30,000 people were butchered—"rather less than were butchered at Rotterdam in 1940". But the former Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the British Government must surely be acquainted with historical facts of similar ferocity, committed by warlords of many nations. The Spanish King Charles V had, according to the testimony of Grotius, in the Netherlands alone beheaded, or burned alive, or buried alive, 100,000 men, women and children; and his son, Philip II, another 50,000. In Somerville's *Memoire of the Somerville* we read the account of the English war against Scotland by an old Scottish writer, who says: "The year 1296, at which tyme, the bloodyest and longest warr that ever was betwix two nationes fell out, and continued two hundredth and sextic years, the slaughter of a million of men". In that war the fate of Magdeburg was the lot with which were visited nearly all the Scottish cities. Berwick, Aberdeen, Elgin, Perth and St. Andrews—every one of these towns, and Edinburgh, Dunfermline and Dundee too, were reduced to ashes, and their inhabitants slain. Nor can it be said that the treatment meted out to the Irish at Drogheda by the English war-lord Cromwell was more gentle than the treatment of the Germans of Magdeburg by the Flemish warlord Tilly. Cromwell—whom I, for one, profoundly venerate as a great champion of freedom—even ordered the deportation to Jamaica of 1,000 Irish boys and as many Irish girls and their sale as slaves.

Lord Vansittart conjures Tacitus from his grave as witness that the Germans "hate peace". And consequently they were anxious, says Lord Vansittart, to have a war every year; five in the last seventy-five years. What conclusions, then, should we, according to Lord Vansittart's biological and psychological methods, draw from Macaulay's observation * that there was a time in English life—twelve centuries after Tacitus!—when "the passion for conquest spread fast from the prince (Edward III) to the people. Every yeoman from Kent to Northumberland valued himself as one of a race born for victory and domination"? I recall also an observation by Cato, who, 200 years earlier than Tacitus, said of the French: "Gaul pursues two things with immense industry—military affairs and keeping silent". Since then they have at least improved in the former. As far as military matters are concerned, they waged four wars in the eighteen years of the reign of Napoleon III; eleven wars in the twenty-three years of the First Republic and under Napoleon I; three wars, with a

* Macaulay, *History of England*.

total duration of about sixteen years, in the reign of Louis XV : four wars of a duration of about twenty years under Louis XIV. And these wars were by no means petty ones. Louis XIV devastated the Palatinate no less deliberately and even more thoroughly than Herr Hitler devastated the Ukraine. It should perhaps also be remembered that it was France—France of Louis XIV and France of Napoleon I—which strove in uninterrupted wars for the domination of Europe. The nationalist ambitions of France have been to England from the days of Louis XIV down to 1903 a gloomy nightmare. Are the French in the plural, like the Germans in the plural, because of that black record, butcher birds?

Or take Italy. That Kingdom has been in existence for barely seventy-five years. But it has already waged eight wars. Or Russia. She has to account for twelve wars within the last seventy-five years, thus beating the German record by seven. Japan has spent a full third of the last thirty-six years of her history in warlike campaigns; and the end of that blood-mongering business still cannot be foreseen. Even such small countries as Hungary and Bulgaria have waged many wars with enthusiasm. And as far as Great Britain is concerned, "Our own empire, the greatest in history, was not constructed by men wearing kid gloves", remarked the English historian G. P. Gooch once. "As regards aggression," says Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, "the years 1870-98 are only equalled by the age of Ghengis Khan. Between 1870 and 1900, Great Britain acquired 4,754,000 square miles of territory . . . between 1884 and 1900 France acquired 3,583,580 square miles . . . and in these same years Germany, a bad last, gained 1,026,220 square miles." * In the face of such a record of international wars, robberies, bloodshed and imperialism, I would ask with Hamlet: "Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?" A comparative method of historical research makes it abundantly clear that wars for conquest have been waged not by the rulers of Germany alone, but by rulers all over the world since the dawn of history. It is therefore extremely difficult to believe in the modern theory that it has been the Germans who have wantonly invented wars. I, for one, prefer to doubt the soundness of Lord Vansittart's method as suitable for research into the psychology of peoples.

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE MULTITUDE

However, the English historian F. J. C. Hearnshaw thinks it possible to explain characteristics of the psychology of whole peoples not only by their history of wars, but even by the psy-

* Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, *War and Western Civilisation*.

chology of some of their individual rulers. At any rate, he applies this method to his research into the minds of the German people.

He reveals that in the thirteenth century there was a German Emperor, the Hohenstaufen Frederick II, whose personality clearly shows "that the characteristics of Nazidom are not novelities in the German character, not evil elements superimposed upon a mild and innocent . . . German nation, but ingrained features which displayed themselves as prominently in the thirteenth-century Frederick . . . as they do to-day in Hitler".* Frederick, like Hitler, Mr. Hearnshaw points out, fought the Church in order to secure supremacy of the State over the Church; he claimed, like Hitler, to be above the law—think, as early as in the thirteenth century! He was, like Hitler, cruel and perfidious.

Good. But if, in science at least—in the science of history as well as in every other science—there were one criterion, as there should be, we should be entitled to apply Mr. Hearnshaw's scholarly methods not only to the research into the German character, but also to research into the character of other peoples. We could, accordingly, hardly ignore the fact that the thrones of many nations have been occupied by cruel and despotic princes.

The notion, for example, that the King is above the law was not a novelty introduced by a German prince in the thirteenth century. Frederick II was not the first, and not the last, despotic ruler. In England, for instance, even about 400 years after Frederick's time, "the claim of the Crown, disputed from 1603 to 1640, was a claim to disregard law whenever, in the King's judgement, it was best, in the general interest, that this should be done", writes Professor J. W. Allen.† This dispute arose from James I's concept of the divine rights of the kings. "Kings are justly called gods", he declared in his speech to Parliament in 1609. For, he said, "they exercise a manner of resemblance of Divine power upon earth. For if you will consider the attributes of God, you shall see how they agree in the person of a king. God hath power to create or destroy, make or unmake at His pleasure, to give life or send death, to judge all and to be accountable to none. And the like power have kings. They make and unmake their subjects; they have power of raising up and casting down; of life and death; judges over all their subjects and in all cases, yet accountable to none but God. They have power to exalt low things and abase high things and to make of their subjects like men at chess." It is to the credit of the French thinker Bodin and the English thinker Hobbes that the royal claim to despotism was, for the first time, vindicated in classical theories.

* *National Review*, August, 1942.

† J. W. Allen, *English Political Thought 1603-1660*.

Nor is the dispute between the conflicting claims of State and Church for supremacy a characteristic German feature. This dispute dominated the history of England for almost 200 years, from Henry VIII's usurpation of the control over the Church and his spoliation of the monasteries down to William III's settlement. Even wars against the Pope were not a German privilege. True, Frederick II waged them. So, however, did also, about 200 years later, a Spanish prince, Charles V. His troops under the command of the Duke of Bourbon stormed Rome, after they had sacked the Papal palace in the Leonine city, then pillaged the Eternal City itself for eight days, slew bishops and prelates, and besieged the Pope Clement VII in the Castle of St. Angelo, and finally dragged away the representative of Christ on earth as a captive. The sufferings of Rome, brought on her by the Spanish king, were, as Erasmus wrote to Sadoletto, more cruel than those brought on her by the Goths and Gauls. Revolting to all Christian feelings, they remain to this day a terrible memory for all Italians.

Cruel and perfidious Frederick certainly was. But cruel and perfidious also were the Russian Czars, Ivan the Terrible, and Paul II, and Philip II of Spain, and many of the Turkish Sultans, and not a few of the Chinese Emperors—to name only the former rulers of some of those peoples who are now our allies and, perhaps, might become our friends. But it occurred sometimes that even the English crown was worn by one or the other bad man.

I am a villain . . .
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree:
Murder, stern murder, in the dir'st degree. . . .

Such is the picture of Richard III that Shakespeare presented to posterity. Of James II Macaulay records that he "amused himself with hearing the Covenanters shriek and seeing them writhe while their knees were beaten flat in the boots", while his "Highland Host", provided with "good store of iron shackles, as if they were to lead back vast numbers of slaves, and thumb-screws", haunted the people and "tortured them by scorching their bodies at vast fires". *

Professor Hearnshaw thinks that because Frederick II as well as Hitler murdered their best friends, perfidy must be an ingrained feature of the German nation. But it could not have escaped an English historian that perfidy played its own part also in the

* Woodrow's *History of the Church of Scotland*.

history of Great Britain. Think, for instance, of the story of the Earl of Douglas. He was a boy of fifteen when he and his younger brother were most cordially invited to visit James II in Edinburgh. Scarcely had the two boys arrived when they were seized, subjected to a mock trial, declared guilty, dragged to the courtyard, and the heads of the children cut off. A few years later the trick was repeated with the Earl's uncle. He also was lured to the Court, even with a safe conduct, signed by the King and issued under the great seal. On the same evening of his arrival, after supper, he was stabbed to death by his host, James II.

However, in spite of the perfidy and cruelty of some of their kings, the conspicuous feature of the English and Scottish character is, as far as I can judge from personal experience and the English literature, precisely the opposite—namely, gentleness, sincerity and kindness. How monstrous it would be to see in the psychology of, say, Ivan the Terrible the psychology of the Russian people, or in the psychology of James II the psychology of the Scottish people! But the method which appears inadmissible in respect to the English, Scottish, Russian, Chinese and Turkish people can, justly, and scientifically as well, not be admissible in respect to the German people.

THE FEW AND THE MANY

All critics of the German people—British as well as Belgian, or Czechs, or Dutch, and Socialist as well as conservatives—are in agreement as to the fact that, regardless of the character of the individual German, the “good ones” have “hitherto not been numerous enough to turn the scales”. At any rate, the fact remains that “the programmes of their leaders always *have* been executed”.

I do not believe that the riddle of German history can be deciphered by arithmetic; it can only be solved by a study of Germany's internal “actual power-relations”, to use Lassalle's words. This investigation might also explain why a certain set of ideas, common to all European nations, became predominant in Germany, while the ideas which constitute “Western civilisation” failed to obtain ascendancy in Germany.

Germany was not, until 1918, a democracy. She was a military autocracy; and became a Fascist dictatorship in 1933. In autocracies and dictatorships the fate of nations is decided not by the many, but by the few. However numerous “the good Germans” may be, a comparatively small army would be sufficient to subdue them. In Vienna two-thirds of the whole population were, in February, 1934, “good ones”: they were even armed, but not so

well as the police and the army. And 20,000 of the latter were quite enough to subdue 1,200,000.

THE LEGEND OF DOCILITY

Now the question arises why actual power-relations remained throughout German history—apart from the short interlude of the Weimar Republic—in favour of the autocrats and tyrants, and why the Germans have never “turned the scales”.

It is asserted that the German people will never “turn the scales”, because their docility is as much an ingrained feature of their mind as perfidy, cruelty, covetousness and aggressiveness.

The Spanish Socialist Luis Araquistáin presents two historical explanations for this psychological phenomenon. In the first place, he says, “German modernity is purely technical, external, superficial. The great economic change”, he proceeds, “which Germany has undergone is scarcely a century old—too short a period to be reflected in the structure of the State and, what is more important, in the consciousness of men. . . . Serfdom was not abolished in Germany till the first half of the nineteenth century. . . . That is the tragic dissonance between Germany and the rest of Western Europe.” *

But this specious theory is somehow refuted by history. Russia, for instance, does not belong—at least, graphically—to Western Europe. She was a semi-feudal despotism until the Revolution of 1917. There serfdom was formally abolished only in 1861, about two generations later than in Germany; but it was for all practical purposes in force until Stolypin’s agrarian reform after the first revolution of 1905. Industrially and culturally, Russia was of all the major European countries the most backward; surpassed in superstition and darkness of mind of her people only by the people of Spain.

Yet the same Russian people rose in two glorious revolutions against century-old authorities. Suddenly the spell of Czardom, of the orthodox clergy and the lords whose lands it tilled, broke over-night. The same submissive people, who yesterday were still despised serfs, whose bodies were still marked by scars of the knout, crushed Czarism and the authority of the orthodox Church, and abolished not merely the remains of feudalism, but liberated themselves from the bondage of capitalism.

The example of Spain disproves the theory of the learned Spanish Socialist still more strikingly. I do not know whether Mr. Araquistáin is prepared to include his own country in the orbit of Western civilisation. At any rate, the sinister spirit of the

* *International Socialist Forum*, November 1941.

Inquisition prevailed more strongly, more exclusively, and longer, in Spain than in any province of the Catholic Church. It kept the people in a spiritual serfdom and an actual obedience to the authorities which were perhaps more devastating to the mind than the serfdom on the feudal estates. In Spain the Inquisition was not suffered and hated as in other countries; it was welcomed by the Spanish people as the true expression of their mind. The Spanish people never questioned the domination by the clergy; they wholeheartedly accepted it. In the age of Erasmus, Luther, Bacon, Descartes, the spiritual leaders of the Spanish nation were proud to count themselves members of the ecclesiastical profession. Cervantes, three years before his death, became a Franciscan monk. The poet Lope de Vega was an officer of the Inquisition; and so were the playwright Montalvan and the poet Villaviciosa. Calderon was, as Sismondi said, "the true poet of the Inquisition".* The finest brains of Spain devoted through centuries the strength of their intellect to defend the absolutism of Church and Crown. They were devoutly exultant when about a million *Moriscoes*—who were the descendants of the Mohammedans, converted to Christianity—were hunted out from Spain like wild beasts, and 100,000 of them suffered death in its most frightful forms within a few months after their expulsion. In the age of Leibniz, Kant, Spinoza, Goethe, Humboldt, the most famous university of Spain—the University of Salamanca—prohibited the teaching of the magnificent discoveries of Newton half a century after his death, because Newton's system was condemned as being at variance with the revealed religion and the system of Aristotle. Even the discovery of the circulation of blood was in Spain still denied 150 years after Harvey had proved it.

Thus, more than any other country of Europe, Spain remained closed to the philosophy of liberty and culture, a country pre-eminently mediaeval and scholastic. Through many centuries the Spanish people were taught by fire and sword and torture to believe and to obey. Submission to the ecclesiastical and secular authorities was deeply inculcated in their mind and soul. In 1812 the Spanish people rose in the whole of the country against the French importers of rationalised civilisation, and in defence of the Bourbón Ferdinand VII. When he returned to the throne he had deserted, he immediately (in 1816) annulled the Constitution of Cadiz (of 1812) and restored the Holy Office of the Inquisition which had only recently been abolished. The re-institution of the Inquisition was, as an eye-witness records, "hailed throughout Spain with illuminations, thanksgivings, and other rejoicings",

* Sismondi's *Literature of the South of Europe*.

and "the multitude overturned the constitutional stone, and uttered the most atrocious insults against the Constitution, the Cortes, and the Liberals".*

In 1812, in 1820, and in 1836, a few enthusiastic reformers attempted to secure liberty for the Spanish people. The constitution, enforced by revolts mainly of officers of the army, was soon afterwards overthrown by the people themselves. "Public opinion hurled the Cortes from their seats in 1814; and in 1823 they were overpowered, not by the arms of France, but by the displeasure of their own countrymen", observed a contemporary historian.†

In all the vicissitudes of Spanish history, from 1812 right down to 1931, whether or not there had been parliamentary institutions, "her politics were directed by the King, who leaned on the army and the clergy ... while the world of culture had no authority or strength and remained in great part academic and rhetorical", said Benedetto Croce.‡ No people in Europe was subjected to a severer spiritual servitude and was mentally so mediaeval as the Spanish people.

But we have witnessed the heroic revolutionary rise of the same Spanish people, of the wretched Spanish peasants and workers who only a short time before endured in "docility" the despotism of mediaeval Powers.

Were Luis Araquistáin's theory true, that the space of a century—during which Germany underwent the great economic change—is "too short a period to be reflected in the structure of the State and in the consciousness of men", what, then, should we think of the significance of the grandiose struggle which the Spanish people waged in 1931, 1934, and again in 1936 to 1938, for liberty against the *ancien régime*? The economic changes in Spain during the last century were incomparably smaller and slower than in Germany; in fact, there were hardly any changes. Spain remained on the whole primarily an agrarian country with a semi-feudal structure; her working-class was small in number, and her middle-class smaller still. Does, according to Araquistáin's theory, the régime of Franco, and not the régime of Negrín, reflect the consciousness of the Spanish people?

I should perhaps recall that—to choose another example from the domain of my personal experience—the Austrian or Czech peasants also were liberated from serfdom no earlier than the German peasants. Thomas G. Masaryk's father was still a serf on a Hapsburg estate in his youth. But there was not the faintest

* Quin's *Memoirs of Ferdinand VII.*

† Walton, *Revolution in Spain.*

‡ Benedetto Croce, *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century.*

vestige of a submissive mentality in the fine mind of the founder of the Czechoslovakian Republic. And it is, after all, the spirit of Masaryk, and not the spirit of obedience of the serfs of yesterday, which inspired the Czech people in their fight for liberation since 1848.

As far as the Austrian people are concerned, it must be remembered that they belonged as much to the "First German Reich" as those people who today are called German people. In fact, Austria was the very heart of the German Reich, and the Austrian Emperor was for centuries (until 1806) also German Emperor. Now Mr. Araquistáin asserts that "at the bottom the third Reich is mentally as mediaeval as the first Reich . . . and most Germans are still as submissive as they were a hundred years ago". The Austrian workers are as much descendants of the German people of the first German Reich as the workers of the Rhineland, Bavaria and Prussia. However, the brilliant bearing of the Austrian working-class obviously refutes Mr. Araquistáin's allegation. How, then, can it be upheld in respect to the Rhenish, Bavarian and Prussian workers?

The enigma of the consciousness of a people is not easily explained alone by its history; it is far more complex than that.

That immediately becomes plain when we look a little closer at Mr. Araquistáin's second "historic explanation" for the docility of the German people. "Germany was", he says, "the classic land of the *lansquenets*—the mercenary soldiers who from the sixteenth century were hired by all the European Powers", and these mercenary habits have "debased" the character of the Germans.

It must, in the first place, be noted that Mr. Araquistáin's history is not quite accurate. Of the almost 300 independent States which composed Germany of those days, only in half a dozen of the smallest was there a trade in mercenaries; in Prussia, for instance, there was none (but the Prussians are regarded as the most obedient people). It is therefore not perfectly correct to assert that "Germany was the classic land of *lansquenets*"—only a splinter of it was.

But apart from this typical case of generalisation, there was in Europe another "classic land of *lansquenets*", which has significantly escaped the attention of Mr. Araquistáin; that is, Switzerland. But there was still a difference between the German and the Swiss mercenaries. The German mercenaries were mercenaries under duress; they were sold by their princes like cattle. The Swiss mercenaries sold themselves of their own free will to the French kings, to the Pope, to every warlord of Europe who desired their military services. It can, however, hardly be maintained

that the "mercenary habits" of a few thousand Swiss have debased the character of the freedom-loving people of Switzerland. Now, the proportion of the German people who were sold as mercenaries was far smaller than the proportion of the Swiss who volunteered as mercenaries. Why, then, should this "historical stigma", which has not in the least influenced the character of the Swiss people, have ruined the character of the German people?

The docility of the Germans is a legend. It might perhaps be recalled that the German nation produced the two greatest revolutionaries in modern history: Martin Luther—"the father of all later revolutions", as R. H. Tawney* said of him—and Karl Marx. The German people, now stigmatised as "the eternal subordinates", fought for 400 years for their spiritual and political liberation from tyranny. They rose, for the first time in their history, in 1525; for the second time in 1849; for the third time in 1918. They fought Prussianism under Bismarck, German imperialism under Wilhelm, German Fascism under the Weimar Republic. They were outlawed by Bismarck for twelve years; they were ostracised as "enemies of the fatherland" and as a "foul mob unworthy to bear the name of Germans" by Wilhelm. They plotted in the Navy in 1916; they mutinied, again in the Navy, in 1918; one million munition workers, braving martial law, rose in strikes in January, 1918. Under Bismarck and Wilhelm their leaders were imprisoned, while thousands were driven into exile. Later, after 1918, their leaders were assassinated—Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Kurt Eisner, Leviné, Landauer, Haase, Jogiches, to name a few at random. But they fought the armed Nazi gangs relentlessly in almost daily street fights throughout Germany for six years. The number of working-class martyrs in that half-century struggle for freedom is legion. Many thousands of German Socialists have been, merely during the last nine years of Hitler's rule, tortured in concentration camps.

There are, surprisingly enough, British, and even German, Socialists of the opinion that the number of those who suffered at the hands of the Nazis is still too small to prove the assertive existence of the "Other Germany". For instance, Mr. James Walker, one of the most prominent British Trade Unionist leaders, and for a time Chairman of the British Labour Party, observed that the number of Socialists and trade unionists thrown into jail by Hitler "did, after all, not comprise a very large section of the population".† Mr. Walter Loeb, on the other hand, is of the opinion that even the 1,500,000 Germans estimated to have

* R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*.

† Letter to the Editor of the *International Socialist Forum*, September, 1941.

passed through the concentration camps must not necessarily be regarded as active opponents of the régime of concentration camps.* It is indeed rather difficult to ascertain the exact figure required of Socialist and Communist Germans beaten up by the Nazis in order to convey the impression that, after all, an "Other Germany" does exist.

Of those 1,500,000 I know only seven intimately. They were my personal friends. Four of them died in the camp—God knows in what circumstances—the other three may perhaps still be living. These seven comrades were perfect Socialists, devoted heart and soul to our cause. For that cause they have struggled for a quarter of a century, have spoken at thousands of meetings, have written hundreds of articles. The death and sufferings of those seven Socialists alone seem to me testimony enough that the spirit of international brotherhood still lives in Germany.

Other Socialists, however, think that the struggle of those seven, of their comrades now and those who have fought and suffered for the sake of humanity in the past 400 years, merely shows its failure. Admitted. But do these historical facts mean that the German people are a hopeless case, that they are simply unable to emancipate themselves, to gain freedom and democracy by their own strength?

It means, in my opinion, nothing of the kind. Even the French, the revolutionary people *par excellence*, sustained similar experiences. They rose in 1789 to establish democracy; after a century and a half, during which they had three more revolutions, they have now achieved the semi-Fascist dictatorship of Pétain. They produced in Cavaignac a French Prince Schwarzenberg; in Napoleon III, a French Hitler (Victor Hugo, indeed, regarded him in much the same light as we see Hitler now); in Galliflet, a French Himmler; in General Boulanger, a French General Schleicher; in Marshal Pétain, a French Marshal Hindenburg. Remember also that the republican constitution of France was carried in the National Assembly in 1872 by a majority of one vote only.

With that record, are the French a hopeless case? No more than the Germans. The French are, psychologically, no less capable of achieving democracy than the English. A coincidence of geographical, historic and economic factors in England has accelerated the processes of transforming her feudal society into a capitalist democracy. The French were less favoured by destiny; the Germans less still. But perhaps the same circumstances which once retarded the stabilisation of a capitalist-democratic society in France and Germany may even accelerate there the process

* Letter to the Editor of the *International Socialist Forum*, December, 1941.

transforming capitalist-Fascist society into a democratic-Socialist. It may happen that Germany, today so utterly an outcast, in less than a generation will be far ahead of Great Britain and France in her social civilisation.

CHAPTER THREE

THE TWO NATIONS IN GERMANY

"I can conceive of no people more dismembered than the Germans."—HÖLDERLIN, *Hyperion*.

THE SOCIAL FORCES OF GERMAN IMPERIALISM

WHAT ARE the social forces which have retarded the development of democracy in Germany?

It may seem strange to connect Germany's present troubles with events which took place 400 years ago. Nevertheless there is a historical relationship between Hitler's advent to power and the failure of the German imperial might to subdue the feudal princes in the sixteenth century. The results of that failure were the Thirty Years' War, in which two-thirds of the population of Germany perished; the consolidation of 287 petty principalities on German soil; the strangulation of the economic development of all the German principalities; and, consequently, the crippling of the middle class, which is, socially and historically, the torch-bearer of democratic revolutions. Two hundred years later, in 1848, the middle class, in alliance with the working class, endeavoured to "hammer anew the German State" in a revolutionary rising all over Germany and Austria. But, after some initial triumphs, it was defeated. The cannons of Prince Schwarzenberg which pounded revolutionary Vienna, and the army of the Prussian king which chased home the members of the revolutionary Frankfurt Parliament, prevailed over a middle class still too weak as a social and economic force and over a working class in its infancy. Feudal Germany won the day.

Feudal Germany in 1848 mainly meant Prussia, just as it does today. She was ruled by a military aristocracy, some of whose ancestors had conquered the Slav lands east of the Elbe, about 600 years before. This aristocracy persisted through the centuries as an exclusive caste of landowners, ruling the State through its master, the King. By devastating wars Frederick II had vastly enlarged Prussia by the end of the eighteenth century. She was second only to Austria among the German States. It was this

aristocratic Prussia—the Prussia of the Junkers—which defeated the revolutions of 1848 and 1918.

Now a strange thing happened. The revolution of 1848 proclaimed two aims: the unification of the German principalities in a German nation-State, and a democratic constitution for all the German countries and for the Reich itself. The revolution failed to achieve either object; but Bismarck, the embodiment of Prussianism, accomplished the national aim of the revolution in the course of a cunning plan to defeat its political aim. He united the German States, with the exception of Austria, in the Reich; at the same time he imposed a constitution on Germany which secured the predominance of the Junkers in Prussia and the predominance of Prussia in the Reich. The Junkers thus became virtually masters of the Reich, through their unimpeded power in Prussia.

The Reich had, it is true, a parliament based on a universal and equal franchise. But the Government was appointed at the pleasure of the Prussian King, who was also Emperor of Germany. The Ministers were King's servants, and not responsible to the Reichstag. It was the King's prerogative to decide on the question of peace and war, to negotiate with foreign Powers, either personally or through his Ministers, and, as the commander-in-chief of the German army, to appoint its officers, apart from his prerogative to appoint the officials of the Civil Service. Particularly in military and foreign affairs, the Parliament had no power whatever. Its members were allowed to talk; but all important questions of State were decided by the King and his Chancellor. If the parliament refused to vote money—as the Prussian Diet did in 1862—the Government continued to spend it without parliamentary consent. In a similar situation in England, the people beheaded their King. Friedrich Wilhelm, however, could safely afford to be extravagant; he could challenge his people with impunity, since he could rely on an army commanded by the Prussian aristocracy. Even as late as 1910, one of the prominent Prussian Junkers, Elard von Oldenburg-Januschau, publicly stated that the Kaiser could "chase home the Reichstag" with ten soldiers" at any time he pleased.

Such were the actual power-relations in Germany up to October, 1918.

The Reich was forged with "blood and iron" by Bismarck. But his semi-absolutist military aristocracy met with the strongest opposition from the country. The "Iron Chancellor" himself despairingly admitted that *Reichsfeinde* (enemies of the country) were emerging everywhere within the national frontiers; he even complained that they commanded "an assured and dominating

majority over the Kaiser". These *Reichsfeinde* were at different times either the Catholic Centre Party, or the Progressive Liberals, or the national minorities (Poles, French and Danes), but throughout the history of imperial Germany they always included the Social Democrats. Bismarck outlawed the Social Democratic Party, dissolved its organisations, suppressed its Press and sent hundreds of leading Socialists to prison. The Party, nevertheless, grew stronger from election to election. He even contemplated a *coup d'état* against the Constitution in order to get rid of parliamentary institutions altogether. Only his conflict with Wilhelm II, who still believed he would be able to alienate the workers from the Socialist Party, frustrated his plans.

On the other hand, Bismarck was at pains to rally as broad a section of the middle class as possible behind the régime. He represented his political system as being the most effective one available for the protection of property against the rising revolutionary tide of the Socialist movement. In the eighties he won the support of the peasant masses and of the landowners with agrarian tariffs, and that of the industrialists (mainly in heavy industry) with industrial tariffs. It was his protectionist policy which favoured the development of monopoly capitalism and the merging of heavy industry with banking capitalism in Germany.

The real power-relations in Germany before 1918 were, thus, something like this. At the head of the Reich was the Kaiser. His power rested on three pillars: firstly, on the Army; secondly, on the class of the big landowners; and thirdly, on the class of the heavy industrialists, merged together with a large section of the financiers. The real power of the State was, however, wielded by the Prussian nobility.

The Prussian nobility dominated, firstly, the Army. In the tight grip of the Prussian aristocracy, the army formed a State within the State. Through a special court office—the Imperial Military Chancellory—the Prussian generals decided all military matters. The Reichstag, and even the Prime Minister himself, had practically no influence whatever over the Army.

It wielded, secondly, economic power as owners of the great estates. As small a number as 30,000 Junkers owned more than a third of the whole arable soil of Germany within her pre-1918 frontiers, while the remaining two-thirds was split up among 2,500,000 peasants. The big estates formed the economic basis of the Prussian aristocracy.

It dominated, thirdly, the State machine by its preponderance in the bureaucracy. All the posts in the Diplomatic Service and in the higher ranks of the Civil Service were reserved for the aristocracy and their sons, just as were commissions in the Army.

It wielded, finally, political power through the instrument of the Prussian Diet. The Diet was elected by a three-class franchise according to property and income. The working of this system may be illustrated by a few figures: in 1908, at the last election before the war of 1914-18, the Social Democrats polled 600,000 votes and gained six seats, while the Conservatives polled 480,000 votes and held 212 seats. Constitutional devices thus prevented the working class from obtaining any power in, or exerting any influence on, the Diet. The aristocratic landowners enlarged the basis of their political power still more by an alliance with the well-to-do peasants, organised in the League of Farmers. Thus unfettered, they ruled Prussia. The leader of the aristocracy, Oldenburg-Januschau, was until 1914 called the "uncrowned King of Prussia". Bismarck ensured Prussia's hegemony in the Reich. By dominating Prussia, which constituted about two-thirds of Germany, the Junkers dominated the Reich.

Yet, however strong the foundations of their power, the Prussian nobility would still have been unable to resist the transformation of the semi-absolutist system into a democracy if the middle classes had remained faithful to their ideal of 1848 and had continued the struggle for its realisation in alliance with the working class. But the middle classes became alarmed at the rise of the politically independent working-class movement with social aims of its own. They dreaded the advent of democracy, in which Labour might come to power. After the abrogation of the anti-Socialist laws in 1892, the Social Democratic Party won 1,000,000 votes; in 1912 it polled more than a third of all the votes cast. Saxony had a Socialist majority, and all the five constituencies of Berlin returned Socialists. A Socialist majority in the Reichstag was within reach. Would Germany not turn Socialist if she became a parliamentary democracy? The reactionary bulwark of the Prussian Diet must be preserved; the privileges of the Crown must be kept intact. The middle class was haunted by the spectre of the social revolution.

Nevertheless, there was still a large section of the urban middle class which at least opposed Prussianism and which fought German imperialism. But there was, on the other hand, a small though most influential section of the middle class—the owners of heavy industry and the big financiers—which resolutely allied itself with the Prussian nobility. The cannon manufacturers were highly interested in rearmament; the owners of the steelworks, in Wilhelm's naval policy; the bankers, in overseas investments. And all of them in keeping the working class in its place.

There you have in a nutshell the social forces of German imperialism: the King; the landed aristocracy; the owners of heavy

industry; the big financiers. All these sections of the German people were indeed impregnated with the Prussian spirit, with the Prussian tradition, and with the complex of thoughts and habits which culminated in National Socialism.

There were also, as might be expected, considerable forces making for Conservatism and traditionalism among the peasants and shopkeepers, a section of the white-collared proletariat, and a small section of the professional classes. If the patriotism of the peasants was on the whole passive, that of the other groups was all the more vociferous. It was this section of the lower middle class, impoverished by the crisis, which later turned National Socialist and carried Hitler to power.

However, the mass of the people, and particularly the working man, continued the struggle of 1848 for the achievement of democracy. Prussian traditionalism stood for imperialism; the majority of the German people for pacifism. Prussian traditionalism stood for autocracy; the people for democracy. Prussian traditionalism stood for chauvinistic nationalism; the working class for Socialism and the brotherhood of nations.

THE SOCIAL FORCES OF GERMAN PACIFISM

If the "Other Germany" exists, it must be the people working in the factories and on the land. It has been asserted that the German workers are no less chauvinist and imperialist in spirit than the rest of the population. If this were true, then there would indeed be no hope for Germany.

The gravity of this problem justifies an honest and impartial examination, in the first place, of the thought and policy of the German Social Democratic Party, because it represented the bulk of the German working men before the last war and until the advent of Hitler. But it must be remembered that there was also a strong Catholic Labour Movement.

Up to August, 1914, the Socialist parties of all countries acclaimed the German Social Democratic Party as the *avant garde* of the international labour movement. It was praised by Friedrich Engels as the "jewel of the class-conscious proletariat". In his hour of deepest disappointment with the Party, after the 4th of August, 1914, Friedrich Adler could still say of it: "Definitely, for all the Socialist Parties of the International, the German Social Democratic Party was the very ideal. . . . Even in Parties with older traditions, such as the French, the reputation of German methods was ever increasing. This was not alone due to the success of its methods, although the tremendous and irresistible rise of the Party, the growth of its newspaper circulation, of

Trades Union membership and membership of the Party itself, as well as the extraordinarily flourishing state of its institutions, did much to impress the other countries. The chief reason why the German Social Democratic Party became the model for all the other Socialist parties was because it was regarded as the incarnation of the purest, most sublime force of Social Democracy. The German Social Democratic Party brought to life what others visualised as an idea. 'This magnificent movement, consciously striving for the realisation of its historic mission to the world, undeflectible, irresistible and unconquerable in its progress, concentrated all its strength and thought on one single goal: the emancipation of the working class. . . . By its mastery of the technique of the class struggle, it aroused the greatest admiration as the *avant garde* of the International.' *

Such was the reputation of the German Socialists. Was the world deceived? Was the internationalism of the German Socialists no more than a screen behind which was concealed German nationalism?

THE SPIRIT OF THE GERMAN SOCIALISTS

The first ordeal which the international creed of the German Social Democrats had to face came during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. By skilfully twisting the *Emser Depêche*, Bismarck had created the impression that Napoleon III had provoked the war; nevertheless, the Social Democratic members of the Reichstag refused to vote for the war credits. Bebel's statement on behalf of his Party is significant: "As Social Republicans and as members of the International Workers' Association, we are basically opposed to any war in the interests of a dynasty. The International Workers' Association fights against all oppressors, regardless of their nationality; it aims at uniting all the oppressed in a great League of Nations. We cannot, therefore, give our consent to the present war, whether actively or inactively."

This was not merely an expression of the unsullied faith of a new movement, as one might assume. As much as forty years later, Bebel remarked in his autobiography that if the Party had known the real causes of the war, the Socialists would not merely have abstained from voting: "we should have been bound to vote against the credits". After Sedan, they did, in fact, table the following motion in the Reichstag: "That the Reichstag, while rejecting the credits demanded for the prosecution of the war, requests the Chancellor to renounce all annexation of French territory and to conclude peace speedily with the French Republic."

* F. Adler, *Die Erneuerung der Internationale* (*The Revival of the Internationale*).

And in his speech, supporting the motion, Bebel stated: "I protest against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. I consider the annexation to be a crime against International Law; I regard it as a stain on German history." Meanwhile the German workers were fraternising across the battle-fronts with the French workers, who were then fighting for their newly proclaimed Republic. For these acts of "high treason", Bebel and Liebknecht were both tried and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. In Heinrich Ströbel's highly critical book, *The German Revolution*,* he testifies that the attitude Bebel took up in 1870 was that of the Labour Movement up to 1914, by which time it had won the support of a third of the German people. "Indeed, before 1914", Ströbel observes, "the attitude of Bebel and Liebknecht was self-evident to the overwhelming majority of the German Social Democratic Party; a vote for the war credits would have been a monstrous thing."

Such was the international attitude of the German Social Democratic Party up to 1914. Relentlessly and unswervingly, they opposed militarism, imperialism, chauvinism. "The most odious attacks and abuse levelled at the German Empire and its institutions—at royalty and the army, whose glorious history it slandered—stamped the Socialist propaganda in this country as specifically anti-national. It had estranged the minds of the people from our native customs and from the Fatherland." With this statement—an unintentional testimonial to the international spirit of the German Socialists—the German Imperial Government vindicated the "Act against the aims of Social Democracy which are dangerous to the Reich", outlawing the Socialists.

The German Socialists, however, did not let themselves be intimidated; they went on fighting. The ruling classes, above all their lord the Kaiser, were apoplectic with fury. They branded the Socialists as traitors and enemies of the Reich. They accused them of being in league with the foreign enemies of Germany. The Kaiser himself took part in a hunt for the "Reds", cheerfully collaborating with the national Press, the Church, the Army and all the State and municipal officials down to the humblest policeman in the smallest village. Wilhelm II publicly reviled the Socialists as "unworthy to bear the name of German"; he exhorted, in an election speech, the people to "crush the Reds to the earth"; he also appealed to the soldiers to shoot the Reds, even if it meant firing on their own fathers and mothers. He built a highly fortified barracks (the Alexanderkaserne) near his castle in Berlin and addressed the guard in the following provocative words: "Your new barracks tower to the sky in close proximity to the Royal Castle. You must always be ready to defend it.

* Published in 1920.

Your duty as a bodyguard is to hazard your life-blood day and night, if the need should arise, for the protection of your King and his House. If the people of Berlin ever again became as insolent and insubordinate as they were in 1848, you will, I am sure, deal thoroughly with their recalcitrance towards your royal lord." The Churches, particularly the Protestant Church, approved the persecution of the Socialists. It had "entirely accepted the militaristic and social ideals of Prussianism", observed the German sociologist, Ernst Troeltsch; it considered "democracy, Socialism and pacifism to be indecent, plebeian conceptions of an insubordinate mob". Thus, there was a never-ending strife between the Socialists, on the one side, and the Emperor, the Church, the Army and the bureaucracy, the imperialists and the nationalists, on the other.

THE GERMANS IN THE PLURAL

If the allegation be true that the Germans, in the plural, are nationalists and chauvinists, how can we explain the fact that the stigmatised and ostracised Social Democratic Party grew stronger, by leaps and bounds, from election to election? In 1890 the German Social Democratic vote doubled, rising from 750,000 to 1,500,000; in 1903 it reached 3,000,000 out of a total of 9,000,000 votes cast; and finally, in 1912, it increased to 4,250,000 out of a total of 12,000,000.

From 1903 till the eve of war, the Kaiser, the German Government, the national Press, the Protestant Church and the national parties were working with all their might to stir up the chauvinistic instinct of the masses. That was at the time of the Morocco crisis, of Tangier and Agadir and of Bülow's threat of war on Russia.

How did the German people react to the chauvinistic stimulus? More than a third of them backed the one party which steadfastly refused to vote for the Army and Navy Estimates and which unswervingly fought the imperialist policy of the German Government. Over a third of the German people voted for these despised Socialists, who were branded as anti-patriots, as enemies of the Fatherland, "unworthy to bear the name of German".

It must also be recorded that the Social Democratic Party was not alone in its fight against the imperialist policy of the Reich Government. It was, in fact, supported in crucial matters by the majority of the Reichstag, and, consequently, by a majority of the German people. Striking proof of this is the incident of the Kaiser's famous interview with the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent in 1908. When the Kaiser suggested that the German people rather disliked the English, such a storm arose all over the country that

he was compelled to climb down by giving a solemn pledge to cease sowing discord between the nations, particularly between Germany and Britain. This incident is enough in itself to refute Lord Vansittart's assertion (in the House of Lords 18th of March, 1942) that "the German nation . . . has developed in the last three or four generations into a nation of fierce, organised and savage aggressors, bent on the total destruction of the people of this country".

To any one who knew the German people before 1914, the allegation that the Germans, in the plural, were aggressive-minded is fantastic. Nothing is farther from the truth. The Kaiser and the Army were aggressive and imperialistic; so, perhaps, was the Navy; heavy industry certainly was, Big Business possibly—in short, the ruling classes. A stratum of the lower middle class was also permeated with the Prussian spirit. But the overwhelming majority of the German people, like the overwhelming majority of the English, French, and Russian peoples, wanted to preserve peace, both in 1914 and in 1939.

THE 4TH OF AUGUST, 1914

It is, however, contended that the event of 4th August, 1914, nullifies the vindication of the German people and, particularly, of the German Social Democrats. The critics maintain that although the German Government unleashed the war, the German Social Democrats voted for the war credits and supported the prosecution of a war of conquest; they insinuate, further, that the attitude of the Social Democrats during the war revealed their true sentiment, which demonstrated that the nationalist tendencies of the working class were stronger than their international creed.

My own view of this matter might, perhaps, be regarded as not quite impartial, since I hated the German Social Democratic Party for what it did during the war as much as I had admired it for what it did before. The 4th of August was for me a day of the deepest humiliation and utter despair. When I learnt from my Socialist paper that the Social Democrats in the Reichstag had declared their intention of voting for the war credits "notwithstanding their basic attitude towards war", I was dumbfounded. It is true that the declaration read out by Hugo Haase, leader of the Party in the Reichstag, contained some international Socialist sentiments. The war was stigmatised as "the sequel to the Government's imperialist policy", and the responsibility for it was laid at the door of the "trustees of that policy". The declaration also recalled that the Social Democratic Party had "fought to the

last . . . in intimate collaboration with their French comrades, for the preservation of peace". But the declaration went on to say that since "we are threatened by the horror of an enemy invasion", and since "the destiny of our people and its future as a free people will be imperilled if the Russian despotism should triumph . . . we must therefore ward off this menace". The declaration further proclaimed that the Socialists, in supporting the war, felt "in accord with the International, which has always recognised the right of every people to national independence and self-defence"; and it ended by demanding "the termination of the war in a peace which must not frustrate the friendship between the German people and their neighbours". This demand, the declaration says, is not only in the interests of "international solidarity, which we have always stood for; it is also in the interests of the German people". However, I could read in this declaration only the resolve of the German Socialists to unite with the ruling classes in waging a detestful war.

What happened after this painful manifesto is too well known to need re-telling. But the new accusations levelled against the German Socialists necessitate an honest re-examination of its attitude during the war.

THE QUESTION OF WAR GUILT

It would be well, perhaps, to begin this examination with a discussion of war guilt. If the responsibility of the German people for the last war were an established fact, a plea of "Not Guilty" for this war would be futile.

I have observed that most of the Anglo-Saxon historians are inclined to think that war guilt cannot be assessed. But however much I was impressed by the impartiality and sense of justice in their research work, as for instance by G. P. Gooch's *Before the War* and E. D. Morel's *Secret History of a Great Betrayal*, I was convinced neither by Mr. Gooch's attempt to prove that war guilt could not be ascertained with any certainty nor by Mr. Morel's attempt to demonstrate that the Western Powers ought to bear the main responsibility for the war. Even as early as August, 1914, we Austrian Socialists held the view that the war guilt, in the first place of the Hapsburg's Government, and in the second place of Wilhelm II's Government, was an undeniable fact.

Before August, 1914, only one of the relevant diplomatic documents was known to the public: the Ultimatum which the Austro-Hungarian Government tendered to the Serbian Government on 23rd July. The wording of this document made it abundantly clear that the Austrian Government was resolved to go to war,

whatever concessions the Serbians might make. Serbia in fact agreed to all the demands of the Ultimatum except the one which involved the loss of her independence. We only learned after the war, in 1919, when the *Diplomatic Documents concerning the Origin of the War* were published by the Socialist leader, Otto Bauer, then Foreign Secretary to the Austrian Republic, that as early as 7th July, 1914, the Austro-Hungarian Government had decided to seize the opportunity of the nationalist murder in Sarajevo to declare war against Serbia and subdue her at all costs. The published Minutes reveal that a Crown Council assembled on that day concurred in the opinion "that a merely diplomatic success, even if it were to effect the resounding humiliation of Serbia, would be to no purpose; and that, in order to reach a decisive solution by military means, the demands made on Serbia must be so far-reaching that their rejection could with certainty be expected". Count Berchtold, then the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, reported to the Emperor on 8th July that the Crown Council thought the "present opportunity of a belligerent action against Serbia ought to be seized"; and Count Tisza, the Hungarian Prime Minister, in a note to the Hapsburg Emperor on the next day, confirmed the fact that the Crown Council were resolved "to provoke war with Serbia in order to deal once and for all with the arch enemy of the (Austro-Hungarian) Monarchy".

In fact, a war of conquest against Serbia had been the definite programme of the Austro-Hungarian Government, or at least of the military party, since 1907. As early as 1907, in a Memorandum submitted to the Emperor, Conrad von Hötzendorf, Chief of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff, advocated the conquest and the "incorporation of Serbia, including the essential territories of Nish", into the Hapsburg Empire, as "an independent Serbia is a permanent centre of fomentation for intrigues and aspirations designed to sever the Southern Slav territories" from the Empire. In 1912, when Conrad von Hötzendorf and the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, successor to the throne, renewed the proposal to conquer Serbia, Count Aehrenthal, then Foreign Minister, only replied that it would perhaps be advisable still to "wait for a more favourable European situation" in which to execute this plan; the plan itself was, however, never abandoned. In the opinion of the Hapsburg Court, this "favourable situation" arose when a young Serbian nationalist assassinated the Archduke Franz Ferdinand. This was the pretext for the war of conquest which had been plotted by the Archduke himself years before.

Our forebodings before the outbreak of war were further confirmed afterwards, when we learned from the *German Documents*

Concerning the War, published by Karl Kautsky, that Wilhelm II had encouraged the Austrian Government in their designs against Serbia. Tschirschky, the German Ambassador to Vienna, stated on 8th July, 1914, "he was commanded" by Wilhelm II to emphasise most strongly that "Berlin expects an action by the (Austro-Hungarian) Monarchy against Serbia, and that it would not be understood in Germany should (Austria) let this opportunity to strike the blow pass". When Grey proposed mediation by the four disinterested Powers—Germany, France, Italy and Great Britain—the German Government rejected the suggestion. After Grey's final proposal of direct negotiations between Austria and Russia, Moltke, the German Chief of Staff, as revealed in his *Memoirs*, wired on 30th July to Conrad von Hötzendorf, the Austrian Chief of Staff: "Austria must at once mobilise against Russia; Germany will mobilise". On the same morning also the Austrian military attaché wired from Berlin: "Moltke says the situation is critical unless Austria mobilises at once against Russia. Refuse England's offer [direct negotiations with Russia] . . . Germany unconditionally with you." And on the same afternoon Moltke cabled: "Will Austria leave Germany in the lurch?"

It is true that Wilhelm II wavered at the last moment and instructed Bethmann-Hollweg to urge the Austrian Government to accept Grey's final proposal; but Conrad and Berchtold, knowing very well who held the real power in Germany, and fearing that direct negotiations might frustrate their scheme to subjugate Serbia, preferred to accept the advice of Moltke.

No one was in any doubt about the consequences of an Austrian attack on Serbia. "Such an attack on Serbia", Count Tisze wrote to the Emperor three weeks before the outbreak of war, "would, as far as anyone can foresee, entail the intervention of Russia and, consequently, a world war". It is possible that Wilhelm II and Bethmann-Hollweg assumed that they would simply intimidate Russia, as Bülow succeeded in doing when Austria annexed Bosnia in 1909. Wilhelm may have expected that Russia would give no support to Serbia when she learned that Germany would back Austria with all her might. This is the opinion prevailing among British, American and German historians. The American Professor Sidney Fay, in his monumental work, *Origins of the World War*, stressed this point particularly.

Also the French historian Elié Halévy is by no means inclined to accept the theory that it was Germany which had instigated war for the domination of Europe. He points to the community of purpose which bound together the Hohenzollern and Romanoff dynasties. "Nobody in St. Petersburg dreamt of conquering German territory; neither did anybody in Berlin dream of aggrandis-

ing Germany at the expense of Russia".* In his opinion there were two collective anonymous forces that in the end caused the war: the force of Socialism and the force of nationalism. The towering tide of Social Democracy in Germany profoundly alarmed the ruling class. In the general election of 1912 the Socialists had collected 4,000,000 votes—more than a third of the total cast. The contradiction caused by the paradoxical structure of a highly industrialised country, subjected to a political régime of semi-feudalism and absolutism, was bound to lead to social upheaval. "It is legitimate for historians to ask", Halévy observes, "whether one of the reasons—we are far from saying the main reason—why the German military aristocracy decided, in July, 1914, to run the risks of a great European war was not a growing sense of discomfort under the increasing pressure of Social Democracy, and a surmise that a bold attempt to give a set-back to Socialism, by asserting themselves once more as the party of war and victory, might prove the wisest course." But nationalism proved to be a far stronger force than Socialism: for this force threatened the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy with dismemberment; it was this force which was, in Halévy's view, the real cause of the Great War.

Noteworthy also, for instance, is the argument of the German historian Arthur Rosenberg. A relentless opponent of the imperialist policy of the German Government, he fought the war policy of the majority Socialists from the camp of the Independent Social Democratic Party, and joined the Communist Party after the war. In his excellent book, *The Origin of the German Republic*, he maintains that if Wilhelm II had really wanted war in order to secure German ascendancy over Europe, he would have attacked France during the Russo-Japanese War or during the first Russian Revolution. Russia was then militarily helpless, and Germany would probably have been victorious over an isolated France. Rosenberg goes so far as to say: "The peaceful attitude of the German Government in 1905 is sufficiently clear to settle the question of war guilt once and for all". But it is difficult to contest the war guiltiness of the Austrian Government, which deliberately provoked the war, or that of the German General Staff, to say the least, since they encouraged and even urged the Austrian Government to seize the opportunity for war.

It should be recorded that the Executive of the German Social Democratic Party, which had supported the prosecution of the war, formulated its opinion on the question of war guilt in a memorandum submitted to the International Socialist Congress

* Elié Halévy, *World Crisis*, 1914-18.

at Geneva in 1920. The memorandum states: "The war which broke out in 1914 can be characterised, as far as Germany's part in it is concerned, as a criminal war of prevention. It was not, to be sure, directly willed; but a frivolously irresponsible risk was taken. . . . While the determining causes of the World War are to be found in the imperialist tendencies at work in all countries, and in the unfortunate grouping of the Powers, its immediate cause—the main but not the only one—was the heedless and unscrupulous conduct of the German and Austrian rulers, since overthrown."

It should also be noted that the Socialists in the other war camp took up a rather similar attitude. The Inter-Allied Conference of the Socialist Parties of Great Britain, France, Belgium and Russia, which met on 14th February, 1915, stated with regard to war guilt: "This Conference cannot ignore the profound general causes of the European conflict, itself a monstrous product of the antagonism which tears asunder capitalist society, and of the policy of colonial dependencies and aggressive imperialism, against which international socialism has never ceased to fight, and in which every Government has its share of responsibility. . . ." And at another Conference they declared: "That whatever may have been the cause of the outbreak of war, it is clear that the people of Europe, who are necessarily the chief sufferers from its horrors, had themselves no hand in it."

I think the least that can be said about war guilt is expressed in the Manifesto of the Labour and Socialist International on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the outbreak of the war. The Manifesto declared that "the project of instigating the war was already decided upon at the beginning of July 1914" and "that Wilhelm II became the accomplice, and afterwards the ring-leader, of the cold-blooded and calculating band of criminals who kindled the war". The Manifesto goes on to state: "We know that the war was the unavoidable outcome of the imperialist policy which the capitalist states have pursued for a generation. We personally are in no doubt that the Russian Czar, whose General Staff was the first to order mobilisation, and M. Poincaré, as well as many other statesmen, were capable of committing the same crime as soon as they considered that the 'right moment' had arrived."

There was general agreement among the Austrian Socialists at any rate as to the indisputable war guilt of the Austro-Hungarian Government. The publication of the *Diplomatic Documents* after the war only hardened us in the conviction which we announced on the eve of war. I, for one, remained unconvinced by the theory advanced by Mr. Gooch, Professor Sidney Fay, and

Mr. Garvin that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was compelled to make war in order to save the Monarchy from disintegration; and that Germany, on the other hand, was bound to support Austria in this operation in order to keep her only powerful ally in being. There was, however, a valid alternative to war, as a means of stopping the process of disintegration—the alternative which the Austrian Socialists had advocated for two decades—namely, a peaceful, structural transformation of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy into a democratic federation of nations within the Hapsburg Empire.

If the war guilt, at any rate, of the Austrian Government was clear, that of the German Government was less apparent, at least in the early stages of the war. The German people were certainly not told about the war conspiracy between the Austrian and German General Staffs, nor did they know of the secret Notes which were exchanged between the Chancelleries of Vienna and Berlin. Bell, a member of the Reichstag, stated before the Investigation Commission: "The facts about the historical events and the diplomatic negotiations between the murder in Sarajevo and the outbreak of the war in August, 1914, were not made known to the Reichstag until August 4th. . . . The Reich's Government . . . did not even confidentially inform the leaders of the Party. . . . On August 4th we were faced with a *fait accompli*."

The German Government pointed to the general mobilisation of the Russian Armies on the German frontier. But they took care to conceal the fact that the German Army was, according to the testimony of the Lieutenant-General Count Waldersee—as was revealed after the war—"ready" to strike by 31st March, 1914; they concealed, further, their diplomatic manoeuvre, designed to frustrate Grey's last attempt to save peace; and, finally, they of course concealed the continuous pressure they had exerted on Vienna not to flinch from war.

GERMAN LABOUR AND THE WAR

However, I am not concerned with the war guilt of Wilhelm II and his generals; I am concerned with the alleged war guilt of the German people and, particularly, that of the German Socialists.

The principal questions in any investigation are these: is it true, as it is now asserted, that the attitude of the German Social Democratic Party, in 1914 and later, showed the German working class to be deeply imbued with an aggressive nationalist and imperialist spirit? Has German imperialism been throughout a genuine "peoples' imperialism"? Was the war of 1914 (or that of

1939) welcomed by the whole German people, including the working class, as the great opportunity to win German ascendancy over Europe?

To begin with, it has been pointed out that Wilhelm's appeal to the German people to take up arms in August, 1914, met with an enthusiastic response. The German mobilisation of 1914, it is said, was like a rising of the masses in favour of war, the "rising of the German spirit".

It is incontestable that the German people—workers, peasants and industrialists alike, Socialists, Catholics, Conservatives and Liberals—rushed to the barracks, eager to take up arms. But why? Because they felt they had to defend their country against an imminent Russian invasion. A cry resounded through the country: "Russia has ordered general mobilisation! The Russian Steam-roller is on the move! The enemy is at the gate! Rise and defend your country!" The German people rose indeed: the Socialist workers with more determination, perhaps, than any other section of the population. In their eyes, Russia in 1914 was the Russia of the bloody Czar, which had mown down 2000 workers in front of the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg; a Russia who had quelled the first rising of the workers in streams of blood; a Russia who tortured the best of her sons in the Katorga of Siberia and who had unleashed abominable pogroms against the Jews; a Russia of ruthless counter-revolution and most barbaric reaction. In his memorandum to the First Congress of the International in 1866, Karl Marx recognised "the dark Asiatic Power in the background as a last recourse against the advancing tide of working-class ascendancy". His view was still shared by the German Socialists of 1914; they regarded Czarist Russia in much the same light as we regard Hitlerite Germany today.

It was clear that the German Socialists would have to fight in the vanguard in a war against Russia, even if they became involved in a simultaneous war against France. No one disputed the idea, and the German working-class movement was deeply imbued with it. In Friedrich Engels' *Politisches Testament*,* published in 1891, after the conclusion of the Franco-Russian alliance, he states the argument as follows: "If the French bourgeoisie should start (a war) and should for this purpose serve the interests of the Russian Czar, . . . then it would betray the revolutionary mission of France; . . . it is the duty of us German Socialists, who will ascend to power in ten years time if peace can be maintained, to defend our position as the *avant garde* of the (international) labour movement. . . . If Russia wins, we shall be annihilated.

* *The Political Testament of Friedrich Engels.*

Therefore, if Russia begins a war, let us march against the Russians, and their allies, whoever they may be!"

Apart from the hatred of Czarist Russia, which determined the attitude of the German Socialists, the right of the working classes to defend their countries against aggression was never contested in the International itself. The more intensely the International discussed the question of war, the stronger grew the prevailing opinion that the workers would at any rate support a defensive war, even if the responsibility for instigating it were obscured. "The Social Democrats are obliged to defend their country in a great historical crisis," Rosa Luxemburg wrote during the war; * and Wolfgang Heine, speaking at the International Socialist Congress at Stuttgart in 1907, said: "If it is ever a case of the German nation being in peril, we socialists cannot take the line of refusing to repel this peril because we have not provoked it. . . . We must not let the German people and German civilisation suffer because the German ruling class has brought them into danger. We too should have to take up arms, not in order to secure the power of the Government and the ruling classes, but on behalf of our people and its best inheritance,—an inheritance which would be the real prize of the conflict, even if, as usually happens, our rulers are once more clever enough to appropriate the immediate profits of the repulse of the enemy." And Vandervelde, speaking for the Commission on Militarism which the International had set up to investigate the attitude of the working class to a possible war, said that opinion was almost unanimous that the working class had the right of legitimate defence against illegitimate attack.

BRITISH LABOUR AND THE WAR

The determination of the German Socialists, on 4th August, 1914, to exercise the right of national self-defence was shared by nearly all parties of the Socialist International.

Very significant, for instance, was the attitude of the British Labour Party. It fought the foreign policy of the British Government unswervingly. At its 12th Annual Conference, held at Birmingham in January, 1912, it declared: "That this Conference, believing the anti-German policy pursued in the name of the British Government by Sir Edward Grey to be a cause of increasing armaments, international illwill, and the betrayal of oppressed nationalities, protests in the strongest terms against it. The Conference is of the opinion that this diplomacy has led the present Government to risk a war with Germany in the interest of French financiers over Morocco, to condone the Italian outrage in Tripoli,

* Rosa Luxemburg, *Crisis in Social Democracy*.

the Russian threat in Mongolia, and in joining hands with Russia in making an assault on the independence of Persia."

British Labour thus indicted the foreign policy of the British Government with the utmost vigour. And even after the outbreak of war, on 7th August, 1914, the Executive of the Labour Party issued a letter to its affiliated organisations stating: "That the conflict between the nations of Europe in which this country is involved, is owing to foreign ministers pursuing diplomatic policies for the purpose of maintaining a balance of power; that our national policy of understanding with France and Russia only was bound to increase the power of Russia, both in Europe and Asia, and to endanger good relations with Germany. Further, that Sir Edward Grey, as proved by the facts which he gave to the House of Commons, committed, without the knowledge of our people, the honour of the country to support France in the event of any war in which she was seriously involved, and gave definite assurance of support before the House of Commons had any chance of considering the matter."

But although the British Labour Party was of the well-considered opinion that the British Government must share responsibility for the war, it eventually decided to support the prosecution of the war, since the future of the nation was at stake.

FRENCH LABOUR AND THE WAR

The cause of the French Socialists was much stronger, because their country was threatened by an immediate invasion; the response of the French working class to the Government's call for unanimity was, therefore, all the more passionate. Yet even before the French Chamber had met on 4th August, the Socialist daily paper *Humanité* declared that "the war credits to be asked for by the Government will be granted unanimously". The French Socialists, like their comrades in Germany, voted accordingly for the war credits, and *Humanité* wrote next day about the meeting of the Chamber: "Never has there been a more magnificent manifestation of national unity in an imperilled country". Soon afterwards the Socialist leaders, Jules Guèsde and Marcel Sembat, joined the Government. *Humanité* on 28th August published a joint manifesto of the Parliamentary group and the Party Executive, declaring: "The future of the nation, the very life of France, is at stake: thus our Party has not hesitated. . . . We are as certain today, after the first trials, as we were in the great enthusiasm of mobilisation, that we are fighting not only for the existence of the Mother Country and for the greatness of France, but for Freedom, for the Republic, for Civilisation."

WAR OF DEFENCE—FOR EVERYONE

The manoeuvres of the German Government to stir up war enthusiasm influenced the German Socialists as little as similar manoeuvres on the part of the French Government influenced the French Socialists. These manoeuvres were none the less significant.

Both Governments were at pains to convince the people that their country was attacked by malicious enemies. The German Government created a scare with the bogy of Russian invasion; the French Government with the bogy of German invasion. The German Government's battle-cry was: "Defend yourselves against Czarism!" That of the French Government: "Defend yourselves against Prussian militarism!" While the German Press in the days immediately preceding the declaration of war excited the people with news about the Russian mobilisation, the French Press was spreading accounts of the German invasion of Luxembourg. While the German Government proclaimed: "*Das Vaterland in Gefahr!*" the French Government proclaimed: "*La Patrie en danger!*" Each Government was obliged to present its country as the one being attacked and the war as a *war of defence*.

If it had been true that the Germans as a people are imbued with aggressive nationalistic feelings, then it would be difficult to explain why Wilhelm II or Bethmann-Hollweg did not appeal to them directly for a *war of conquest*. Why did the rulers not proclaim their resolve to take the opportunity of Germany's conflict with Russia and France to conquer world power, promised by Providence to the German people, to make Germany greater than she had ever been in history, to bestow upon the German people the riches of the earth, and so forth? Because the German people would have risen in revolt against the Kaiser and the war. It is significant that even in the later stages of the war, when German troops had occupied the Ukraine and Rumania as well as Belgium, and the German Government and the High Command had made up their minds to annex as much of the occupied territory as possible, they anxiously hid their annexationist designs from the people. When a majority in the Reichstag proclaimed in 1917, as their aims: "Peace without annexation and indemnities—a peace of understanding and the permanent reconciliation of the peoples", they expressed the trend of feeling predominant in Germany. It seems to me to be entirely irrelevant whether the authors of the famous "peace resolution" in the Reichstag were sincere or not; relevant is alone the fact that public opinion in the mass—the "man in the street", the workers and the peasants—was sincere about it.

THE CRITERION OF WAR ENTHUSIASM

If the minds of the peoples be judged according to the degree of enthusiasm with which they responded to the decree of mobilisation of August, 1914, we should be bound to indict the French, and perhaps the British too, as well as the Germans. *Humanité*, which I quoted above, testified to the enthusiasm of the French, and Romain Rolland, to take one witness among many, described, in his beautiful *Clerambaults*, the war fever sweeping France with irresistible force like a tempest. There are similar descriptions of the characteristic features of patriotic mass sentiment to be found in English literature, for instance in H. G. Wells' *Bulphington of Blup*.

The same phenomena occurred in 1870. Just as in 1914, the German people, as well as the French, rushed to take up arms when war was declared. "The struggle for national existence has absorbed everything", observed Friedrich Engels in a letter to Marx; "the whole (German) people marches as one. . . ." Franz Mehring, commenting on Engels' letter, says: "There is no mistaking the fact that the determination (of the German people) to beat back the Bonapartist attack with arms in their hands prevails among the proletariat as well as in every other class. . . . The war was popular in so far as it was meant to repulse the Bonapartist attack. The German authorities", he concludes, "hastened to proclaim the defensive character of the war and to maintain that it was waged against the French Government, not against the French people." *

On the French side, although the war of 1870 was waged—as *Humanité* recalled once again on 4th August, 1914—"for dynastic interests", the enthusiasm of the French masses was at least as great as that of the Germans. Emile Zola describes in *La Débâcle* the excitement that engulfed the masses: "A great tremor swept through Paris," he relates, "the boulevards were thronged with crowds waving torches and crying 'To Berlin, to Berlin!' In front of the Town Hall, a beautiful woman with the face of a queen, draped in a flag, stood on the box of a coach and sang *La Marseillaise*. Wasn't that the heart of Paris beating?"

The war temper of Paris was the same in August, 1914, as that of Berlin. What was it like in August, 1939?

THE WAR MOOD OF 1939

It is well known that the French went to war in a gloomy mood. What, however, was the war temper of the German people? If it be true that the Germans are inherently war-like,

* Preface to the *Letters of Marx and Engels*.

as many people say, they must have rejoiced at the dawning of a new war. Here, at last, was the opportunity they had longed for since 1918—as it is asserted by some critics. Never in Germany's history had the prospect of victorious aggression seemed brighter. Austria, that indispensable bridgehead of Central Europe, was in Hitler's hands; Czechoslovakia, that natural rampart of forest and mountain, "a fortress built by God Himself", as Bismarck once said, had been incorporated into the orbit of the Reich; the Soviet Union, a perennial menace to Germany's rear, was neutral; the blockade threat, always a nightmare, was countered by the promise of Russian supplies; and the humiliations inflicted on Britain and France by Hitler in Berchtesgaden had proved convincingly enough that neither Empire was militarily prepared to withstand the German drive. The great opportunity for revenge for 1918 and for the conquest of Europe had at last arrived.

But did the German people seize it eagerly? Lord Vansittart recalls that Julius Caesar regarded the Germans as a rapacious people. Here was the great opportunity, the unique opportunity, to pillage the riches of the earth. Did the German people welcome it? Was the Germany of August, 1939, really stirred by an enthusiasm for war and conquest and by lust for robbery? I was not in Berlin at the time, but scores of impartial and neutral observers, newspaper correspondents and diplomats, all registered the same impression: the mood which swept Germany was a mood of dejection and utter despair. William Shirer, in his *Berlin Diary*, testifies that the reaction of the Berlin people to the war "has been the most striking demonstration against war I've ever seen".

What is the explanation of this amazing contrast between the German war mood in 1870 and 1914 on the one hand, and in 1939 on the other hand? In 1870 and 1914 the German people believed, rightly or wrongly, that war had been forced on them by enemy Powers and that it behoved them to defend their country against the threatened invasion; in 1939, on the contrary, the German people in general felt that Hitler had wantonly provoked the war. In 1870 and 1914 they took up arms of their own free will; in 1939 only under duress. It is significant in this connection that the mood of the mass of German people changed in the war of 1914-18 as soon as they realised that the war was no longer one of national defence but a war of conquest.

THE GERMAN SOCIALISTS IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

In 1914 the Social Democratic Party represented more than a third of the German people. We may consequently assume that

their attitude during the course of the struggle reflected the temper of the majority of the working class.

It is very important that we should be clear on this point; did the German working class (as it is sometimes asserted) support the war only while it appeared to be a war of defence and turn against it when they perceived it to be a war of conquest? Or did they (as some critics of the German Socialists maintain) back the imperialist Government to a man even when it became clear that it aimed at conquest? Is it true that the German working people were no less dominated by nationalistic sentiment than the rulers of Germany? And is it, then, true that the "Other Germany" is a myth? We must also be clear as to whether it is true that Germany is and always has been at heart a warlike, aggressive, imperialist nation, whatever the structural pattern of her society—feudal, capitalist, democratic, Fascist or Socialist.

I think the German Socialists have a right to demand, in the face of such serious allegations, a calm and impartial re-examination of their case, in an atmosphere of true Socialist brotherhood.

I have already referred to the attitude of the German Social Democratic Party on 4th August, 1914, and to the unanimous vote of the Socialist members of the Reichstag for war credits under the impression that a Russian invasion was imminent. It has been recorded that a seventh of the Socialist deputies—fourteen out of 111, to be exact—voted against an unconditional vote in the group meeting which took place before the Session of the Reichstag. They wanted the vote to be conditioned by a Government pledge that the war would be entirely defensive and that no territories would be annexed in the event of victory. The fourteen members, including Karl Liebknecht, whose courage and tenacity were beyond question, obeyed the Whip simply because they believed their country to be in danger; also, because the Socialist International had recognised the right of the workers to support a defensive war; and, further, in order that their fellow-workers who were streaming to the battle-front as soldiers should not be left in the lurch.

The attitude of the German Socialists was strongly influenced by French Socialist opinion. On 31st July, when Austria-Hungary and Russia had already ordered full mobilisation and the German Government had presented Russia with an ultimatum with a twelve-hour time limit, the Executive of the German Social Democratic Party and the representatives of the Socialist members of the Reichstag met and decided to send Hermann Müller to Paris to discuss joint action with the leaders of the French Socialist Party. Müller informed the French Socialist leaders—Jaurès had been assassinated the day before—that the German

Socialist Deputies would probably vote against the credits; they might perhaps abstain, but in no circumstances would they vote in favour. The French Socialist leaders, however, objected that the war was, from the French point of view, clearly a war of defence, and that they would, therefore, vote in favour of war credits. The Belgian representative, Camille Huysmans, then Secretary and now President of the International, was endeavouring to "persuade Müller that the German Socialists ought not to vote against the war credits, but ought merely to abstain from voting".* The attempt at joint action had failed.

THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL AND THE WAR

The war came suddenly, like a hurricane. It swept the earth and engulfed the Socialists of all countries. They had discussed the problem of preventing war at national and international congresses; but they had been unable to decide on the tactics to be pursued in the case of actual war. The International Socialist Congress held at Stuttgart in 1907 had adopted the famous resolution drafted by Lenin, Martov and Luxemburg (which was confirmed by the subsequent Congresses at Copenhagen and Basle), declaring: "In the event of war being imminent, the working classes and their representatives in the countries concerned shall be bound, with the assistance of the International Socialist Bureau, to do all they can to prevent the breaking out of war, using for this purpose the means which appear to them the most efficacious, and which must naturally vary according to the acuteness of the class struggle, and the general political conditions. In case war should break out notwithstanding, they should be bound to intervene for its speedy end and employ all their forces for utilising the economic and political crisis created by the war, in order to rouse the masses of the people and to hasten the breakdown of the predominance of the capitalist class."

It was clear that no Socialist Party was strong enough to rise against the war. Lenin's suggestion (at the Conferences of the left-wing Socialists at Zimmerwald in September, 1915, and at Kienthal, Easter, 1916) that an appeal should be made to the workers of the belligerent countries to enforce peace by means of revolution, was completely rejected. Even Rosa Luxemburg's group and the French Left voted against Lenin's resolution, because they considered it to be "tactically wrong".† The scheme for an armed insurrection to prevent war or enforce peace was impracticable.

* Paul Frölich, *Rosa Luxemburg*.

† *Spartacusbrief*, November 1915.

The tragedy arose when the Socialist Parties, not content merely with abstaining from actions designed to impede the national war effort, took definite sides in the war and justified their attitude by invoking Socialist aims. The German and Austrian Socialists claimed to be fighting for freedom against the threat of Czarist despotism; but at the same time they actually fought against the democracies of France, Britain and Belgium also. Conversely, the French and British Socialists claimed to be fighting Prussian militarism, but they, too, knew that a victory for the *Entente* would equally mean a victory for Czarism. The German Socialists, conjuring up Friedrich Engels from his grave, claimed that their movement "had conquered a position as no other Socialist Party in Europe", and that, therefore, it was "in the interests of the European revolution" to defend the strongest movement in the International. The French, on the other hand, said they were defending the France of the Great Revolution, and thereby saving the whole of Europe from Prussian despotism. Thus, the International was shaken to its foundations. It was clear that all Socialist Parties, with the glorious exception of the Russian, Serbian, Italian and American, had erred disastrously. But wherein lay their error?

Let us consider the attitude of Rosa Luxemburg, the most illustrious Marxist among the German Socialists. In a pamphlet published in 1915, which I have mentioned before, she confirmed the right of Socialists to support a defensive war. "It is the duty of the Social Democrats to defend their country in a great historical crisis," she said, and she accused her comrades of grossly neglecting this duty. "The Social Democratic members of the Reichstag have solemnly stated in their declaration of 4th August, 1914: 'We will not desert our Fatherland in the hour of peril'. At the very same moment, they disowned their pledge. That is their great fault." Rosa Luxemburg added: "The Social Democrats, in fact, abandoned the Fatherland in the hour of direst need. Their supreme duty towards the Fatherland in that hour was to expose the imperialist background of the war; to tear in pieces the web of patriotic and diplomatic lies, which veil this crime against the Fatherland; to proclaim throughout the country that victory would be as fatal for the German people as defeat . . . and finally, to counter the imperialist aims of this war with the old, truly national aim of Marx, Engels and Lassalle: the Great United German Republic." This objective, she said, was "in accord with the best traditions of Germany, as well as with the international class policy of the proletariat".

Rosa Luxemburg's strategical concept answered, perhaps, the question of a revolutionary war concept of German

Socialism. It was no answer to the war problem of international Socialism.

THE PROBLEM OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

What was the core of the problem? Friedrich Adler, with his profound sense of Socialist internationalism, has analysed it in a Manifesto and in a number of essays collected in two volumes.* These essays were written at various dates between the beginning of the 1914 war and the imprisonment of Adler for shooting the Austrian Prime Minister. It is much to be regretted that they have not yet been translated into English. They are forceful and classics of Socialism.

To Friedrich Adler the solidarity of the working classes of all countries in their struggle for the transformation of the capitalist class society into an international classless commonwealth is the essence of Socialist internationalism. Therefore, international Socialists have to subordinate the national interests of their own countries to the interests of the international Labour movement whenever necessary; for the destiny of the working class of every country is involved in the destiny of the working classes of all countries—as we once more experienced in 1933.

The war of 1914 was, in its deeper sense, an imperialist war. The tension which exploded into war was caused by the imperialist rivalries between the great Powers. The ruling classes of Germany, Britain, Russia and France, once entangled in the war, fought for the aggrandisement of their political and economic empires. International Socialism had no stake in the war.

In the present war against Hitlerism and Fascism, clearly the future of Socialism is involved. If Hitler wins, the whole world will go Fascist, and the very idea of Socialism will vanish from the earth for centuries to come. In 1914, however, the war was imposed upon the working class of all countries for ends which were not theirs.

Friedrich Adler, therefore, maintained that the working classes of all countries should refuse to accept responsibility for the war and its prosecution, and should continue to fight for their own ends. He did not appeal to the workers to sabotage the Government's war effort. But what he considered as "the sin against the spirit for which there is no forgiveness" was the abandonment of the principles of internationalism, and support of the war by the Socialist Parties for nationalist ends: that they sided with their imperialist Governments, and that they substituted the national

* *Die Erneuerung der Internationale* (*The Revival of the International*) and *Vor dem Ausnahme Gericht* (*On Trial*).

unity of all classes in their own countries for the international unity of the working classes of all countries.

There were Socialists everywhere who proclaimed the national war to be a war in the interests of democracy and Socialism. "The cause of democracy and Socialism is intrinsically bound up with the destiny of Germany," wrote Paul Lensch.* Robert Blatchford, Hyndman, Dan Irving and H. W. Lee preached the same gospel for Great Britain; Gustav Herve, for France; Plekhanov, for Russia; Renner, for Austria; Mussolini, for Italy. "Not only the immediate interests of international Socialism, but also its future interests, imperatively require the victory of Germany," said Conrad Hänisch. Vaillant wrote in the same vein about France nearly every day in *l'Humanité*. All wanted victory for their own country; they had become patriots, but ceased to be international Socialists.

Surely this attitude corresponded with the current mood, that "agitated, turbid, uncharted sea of popular opinion", aroused by the tremendous dread of defeat. "The justified wrath of the people would have swept away all those who dared to resist (the prosecution of the war)", wrote Friedrich Stampfer.† "Hundreds of thousands of Social Democrats would never have understood or forgiven the Social Democratic members of the Reichstag had they voted against War Credits. They would have reproached them: 'You failed us in the hour of need'." Adler once said: "We cannot expect the mass of the working men to take up the cross". But individuals can; and Socialist leaders ought to. (Friedrich Adler, for one, did.) Most of the Socialists in all countries failed to make history by going against the current. They failed to ride the whirlwind and direct the storm. Thus they lost their decisive battle in history.

Adler conceived clearly that this failure was inherent in the past policy of the Socialist Parties in all countries. "During the last few decades", he said, "the Socialist movement was dominated by a dialectic contradiction; it stood for an international policy against war in time of peace, and for a national policy of defence in time of war." On the rock of this contradiction the International was wrecked.

The history of the post-war Labour movement proved the truth of Adler's thesis. By deserting the cause of Socialist internationalism, Socialism lost its splendour and its soul: the universal ideal of the brotherhood of man. This desertion entailed the split of the Labour movement all over the Continent, a split which smote

* Paul Lensch, *Die Internationale und der Krieg* (*The International and the War*).

† Friedrich Stampfer, *Sozialdemokratie und Kriegskredite* (*Social Democracy and War Credits*).

the German working class with most disastrous consequences. For it paralysed it when the great opportunity arose in November, 1918; it prevented the consolidation of the Weimar Republic; it encouraged the forces of reaction in Germany and ultimately provided Fascism with its great chance. We are paying today with the second world war for the failure of international Socialism during the first world war.

THE REVOLT AGAINST THE WAR

It would, however, be unjust to ignore the fact that the abandonment of the international Socialist principle by the majority of the party leaders was resolutely contested by some leaders of the Party as well as by the rank and file. Immediately, the processes of self-criticism and the struggle of the opposition against the war policy of the majority Socialists set in. In Germany, the Socialist opposition was led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg of the Left, Karl Kautsky, Hugo Haase, Rudolf Hilferding and Gustav Eckstein of the Centre, Kurt Eisner and Eduard Bernstein of the Right. In Austria it was led by Friedrich Adler, Therese Schlesinger, Robert Danneberg, and, later, when he returned from Russia where he was a prisoner of war, Otto Bauer.

I have referred to the division of votes on war credits by the German Socialists in the Reichstag; on 4th August, 1914, one seventh of the members voted against. In Austria the Government refused to summon Parliament; so the Austrian Social Democratic Party was relieved of the painful necessity of declaring its attitude. But the Austrian Socialist Press took the same line as the German majority Socialists. Friedrich Adler, in protest, as early as 8th August, tendered his resignation as secretary of the Party and editor of the *Kampf*. In March, 1915, already more than a quarter of the Social Democratic Members of the Reichstag (thirty-two out of 111) refused to vote for the war credits. In June, 1915, in an *Open Letter*, signed by nearly 1,000 well-known members of the German Social Democratic Party, the war policy of the majority Socialists was publicly denounced. A few weeks later, Haase, the Socialist leader in the Reichstag, together with Bernstein and Kautsky, published in *Vorwärts* their famous appeal, "The Duty of the Hour", which urged the Party Executive to reverse its policy. In January, 1917, the majority of the Social Democratic members of the Prussian Diet submitted to the House a declaration, demanding a public undertaking by the *Reichskanzler* renouncing clearly and without reserve all annexations. "Faithful to our principle as international Social Democrats," the declaration, which was read out in Parliament, states, "we

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are resolved never to take a hand in subduing other peoples or infringing their political or economic independence. We feel the sufferings of the workers in the enemy countries as much as we feel the sufferings of our own workers. . . . We demand, moreover, the unrestricted restoration of Belgium's independence as well as the redress of the wrongs done to that country. . . . Nowhere has this war been willed by the peoples. Everywhere the masses are demanding the end of this horrible carnage, with more and more impatience. . . . Are those who unleashed the horror of war aware of their responsibility towards their own peoples? . . . We insist", the declaration concludes, "that the German Government, renouncing all intention of conquest, shall be the first to offer peace negotiations to the other Governments. . . . Not through the power of bayonets or through conquest, but only by the solidarity of the workers of all countries can peace and civilisation be secured."

The German Social Democratic Party had, in fact, already split by December, 1914. The split became apparent only in January, 1917, when the opposition separated into another group which later became the Independent Social Democratic Party.

The new Party made rapid headway among the munition workers and the crews of the Fleet. Already in the early summer of 1917 the sailors of the Fleet at Kiel joined the Independents in great numbers. The movement spread from the flagship *Friedrich der Grosse* to all the men-of-war. Riots were reported on the warships *Prinz Regent Luitpold*, *Posen* and *Pillau*. On 13th July, 1917, 400 men from the warship *König Albert* signed a declaration stating their allegiance to the Independents and demanding "a peace without annexations or indemnities, and the speedy termination of the war"; expressing the hope "that the Stockholm Conference of the Socialists of all countries may succeed in bringing about a peace based on the right of self-determination of all peoples, thus making an end of fratricide". The movement in the Navy was ultimately crushed by mass arrests and mass trials. Ten sailors were sentenced to death, and many others to altogether 361 years hard labour.

Still more powerful was the movement in the factories. On 28th June, 1916, the very day of Karl Liebknecht's arraignment, 50,000 workers in Berlin downed tools in a protest strike. In April, 1917, 200,000 workers in Berlin and many thousands in Leipzig, Halle, Braunschweig and Magdeburg, struck for several days. In January, 1918, 1,000,000 workers in Vienna, in other Austrian industrial centres, and in the State arsenal of the sea fortress of Pola, and tens of thousands of workers in Budapest, and 1,000,000 in Berlin alone, laid down their tools for a week. The

strikes spread from Berlin to Kiel, Hamburg, Leipzig, Braunschweig, Breslau, Nuremberg, Mannheim, Magdeburg, Halle, Bokum and Dortmund. Five thousand sailors of the Austrian Fleet at Cattaro rose in a powerful mutiny to protest against Brest-Litovsk and the continuation of the war. The sailors in the Navy and the workers in the factories had to face martial law. Hundreds of strikers were in fact arrested, and many thousands were sent into the forces as a punishment. Seven of the biggest Berlin plants were put under the control of the military authorities. At Cattaro four sailors were sentenced to death by court martial and shot on the spot, and about 800 were imprisoned. In view of this courageous resistance to an imperialist war, can it honestly be maintained that the Germans are an imperialist people?

From the very beginning of the war, the Social Democratic Party was willing to support a war of national defence, but made clear its resolve to oppose any war of conquest. During the first year of the war no responsible person in Germany dared to refer in public to annexationist designs. The German Government was anxious to maintain that the war was purely defensive. After his resignation in January, 1918, Bethmann-Hollweg stated in a confidential letter to his successor, Count Hartling: "Never during the whole course of the war have I submitted to the High Command a general programme of war aims or suggested that the war be continued until such a programme be achieved. On the contrary, I have always emphasised the necessity of seizing any opportunity for peace negotiations, and of obtaining by means of such negotiations whatever is recognised to be possible and useful for Germany, taking the political and military situation into account. I have never suggested details, only outlines; such as, the return of our colonies and, in the West, measures to prevent Belgium becoming a belligerent invasion gate; the acquisition of Longwy-Briey, if possible, perhaps in exchange for frontier adjustments; and, in the East, the Kingdom of Poland and the correction of Prussia's strategical frontiers by as few annexations as possible; and also, if possible, the establishment of Kurland and Lithuania as buffer states. I have always resisted the annexation of any Polish territory worth mentioning." *

Although Bethmann-Hollweg's intentions, as conveyed to his successor in office, were far removed from aspirations similar to those of Hitler, they were nevertheless imperialist and annexationist: they aimed at the inclusion of Poland and the Baltic States in the German-Austrian orbit and the depriving of France

* Published after the war in *The Work of the Investigation Committee of the Reichstag*.

of Longwy-Briey, which, in view of its rich deposits of coal and iron ore, is the main industrial war potential of France. However, Bethmann-Hollweg concealed his real intention and insisted in public that the war was one of self-defence.

The German Nationalists, however, in the second half of the war publicly discussed annexationist aims, and there were also a number of Socialist writers who tacitly connived at them. But the Social Democratic Party definitely repudiated this annexationist policy. Its Annual Conference in the autumn of 1916 adopted a resolution stating: "Social Democracy resolutely opposes all attempts to transform this war into a war of conquest. It basically renounces such a policy. It condemns it most strongly." But even this resolution was regarded as not strong enough by the opposition members of the Conference; they insisted upon a clean break with the policy of national unity and a return to the policy of the international class struggle. It is interesting to recall that the opposition at this Congress was as high a proportion as nearly two-fifths (169 out of 445), although the Executive controlled the party machine and saw to it that as few oppositional delegates as possible were elected. It can therefore be said with fair accuracy that not less than half of the rank and file of the Socialist movement consciously refused to support the war.

They opposed it not in words only, as the strikes, riots and mutinies in the factories and the fleet showed. They resisted the war in its most critical stage. Just when Ludendorff was preparing his gigantic last thrust against France—his spring offensive, designed to secure the final victory for Germany—the German workers, in hundreds of thousands, downed tools. If it had been true that the German workers were as determined to win the war as the ruling classes, they would naturally have responded to the appeals of the Government to give all their strength for the last decisive blow. To the man in the street, who knew nothing about the strength of the *Entente*, a speedy victory in the spring of 1918 seemed almost certain, for the Russian front had collapsed and the Italians had been pushed beyond the River Piave.

But the workers did not care about winning the war. They wanted peace, immediate peace, and a peace of reconciliation for all peoples. They staged strikes; they unfurled red flags in the fleet; they defied prison and the firing-squad. And perhaps they did paralyse the last effort of the German High Command. At any rate, Ludendorff, Hindenburg, and the entire nationalist Press, justified their condemnation of the German Socialists on the ground that they had, by the January rising, "stabbed the Army in the back".

SOME CONCLUSIONS

We must now leave this bitter chapter of history. It was as inglorious for humanity as it was distressing for all Socialists. It was a grievous exhibition of "the downslope of the lunatic".

In making this record I have paid particular attention to the mentality and moods of the German people, especially among the workers who throng the towns and toil on the land. I think the following propositions may fairly be stated:

(1) The German workers and peasants were as little responsible for the war of 1914 as were the Russian peasants or the English miners.

(2) When the war, suddenly and unexpectedly, broke out around them, the German people acted in exactly the same way as the people of the other nations involved in it. The peoples believed that the very existence of their nations was in peril, and that their countries were menaced by an imminent invasion. The French workers believed it as much as did the German workers, and one and all wanted to protect their native soil from devastation.

(3) The Germans were no more, and no less, patriotic than the English and the French.

(4) The German people (not their ruling classes) were as little imperialist as the British, French or Russian peoples. There can have been hardly a single German peasant or worker who yearned for the subjugation of Belgium, for the annexation of the Longwy-Bricy basin (of which he had probably never heard before) or for the dismemberment of Russia. On the contrary, when the German Government attempted, in Brest-Litovsk, to dismember Russia, hundreds of thousands of the workers rose in protest strikes.

(5) The German Social Democratic Party behaved in exactly the same way as the French Socialist Party and the British Labour Party. All the Socialist Parties committed the same "sin against the spirit": they all abandoned international class solidarity for the sake of national unity. All the Socialist Parties, however—in Britain and France as well as in Germany—worked for the speedy termination of the war in a peace of understanding and reconciliation. No Socialist Party supported imperialist aims. Support of imperialist aims by individual German, French or British Socialists is irrelevant to our thesis, as none of them succeeded in carrying the Party with him—neither in Germany nor anywhere else—and they were all repudiated by the rank-and-file of the Socialist movement. The state of mind of the German workers was reflected not only by the attitude of Ebert and Scheidemann,

Hänisch, Noske and Heine, but also by that of Kautsky and Bernstein, Liebknecht and Adler, Rosa Luxemburg and Therese Schlesinger. Equally, the state of mind of the German middle class was reflected not only by the attitude of Ludendorff, Vögler and Naumann, but also by that of Quidde, Walter Schücking, Professor Förster, Professor Nicolai, Professor Einstein and Hellmut von Gerlach—courageous pacifists who struggled resolutely against overwhelming odds for a peace of reconciliation.

There was certainly an "Other Germany" in 1914.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE LOST BATTLE OF THE "OTHER GERMANY"

The great error of the Treaty (of Versailles) was the harsh treatment of the new German Republic. It would have been the first object of England and France to enable it to survive as a peaceful democracy. But the German nation was humiliated by the dictation of terms on the hardship of which she was not even permitted to plead before the victors; she was kept disarmed while the other nations (though not England) remained armed to the teeth; she was forbidden to unite with Austria; she was excluded from the League of Nations; in the matter of Reparations she was treated in a manner so fantastic as to help to ruin her without benefitting her creditors. . . . The outcome has been the Germany of Hitler that we know.—G. M. TREVELYAN, *History of England*.

THE GERMAN REVOLUTION—A MYTH?

THE "Other Germany" came into power in 1918. The political school which denies the existence of the "Other Germany" asserts that the revolution of 1918 was a myth. In support of this thesis it is said that the transformation of the semi-absolutist régime of the Reich into a parliamentary democracy was devised, and even commanded, by Ludendorff, simply in order to obtain more favourable peace terms and to stave off revolution when he recognised that the war was lost.

It is true that Ludendorff harboured such ideas. But it is equally true that his action did not prevent the revolution which broke out in spite of his attempt to forestall it.

In fact, the disruption of the Hohenzollern monarchy began not as late as in November, 1918; it had already begun in March, 1917, when the first Russian revolution overthrew the Romanoffs. It is significant that as early as 25th May, 1917, the German War Ministry called a conference, under the presidency of Colonel von Wrisberg, to deliberate on "the hostile anti-monarchic tenden-

cies" among the German people and to discuss counter-measures, since, according to the minutes of the conference, "the urgency of the menace (to the monarchy) is not yet recognised (by the authorities of the State and the Army) everywhere in the country". The Russian revolution had already in March, 1917, cast its shadow over Germany, and had heralded the coming of the German revolution.

That was in 1917. In January, 1918, came the first wave of a revolutionary rising on a national scale. At the end of October, 100,000 sailors mutinied at Kiel; the mutiny spread to the garrisons of Hamburg, Bremen, Hanover, Braunschweig, Munich and Berlin. That was the open outbreak of the latent revolution.

The German revolution of November, 1918, was precipitated by a rising of the German Army and Navy; its immediate aim was the termination of the war. It gathered momentum, and became a political and social revolution, when the workers joined it. It aimed then at the destruction of the political system of military aristocracy, which had hitherto ruled the Reich, and at the transformation of the class-relations of society. It deprived the forces of old Prussian feudalism—the dynasties, the caste of the officers and bureaucracy—of their power in the State, and conferred it upon the common men: the workers, the peasants and the middle classes. Like the French revolution of 1789 and the Russian revolution of 1917, the German revolution re-defined in its Weimar Constitution the purpose of the commonwealth. The Reich had hitherto been virtually a federation of the estates of a score of reigning royal houses, of 30,000 landed gentries and a few thousand industrial and financial magnates; it was now proclaimed a social service-State.

The political school, which holds that the Germans are incapable of rising in revolutions, argues that the revolution of November, 1918, was merely a collapse, caused by the collapse of the German Army, which, in turn, brought about the collapse of the machinery of the State.

This thesis is refuted by history. It was not the German Army, but the Austrian Army, which collapsed. The German Army was, to be sure, compelled to retreat under the ceaseless pressure of Foch's offensive; it suffered a serious, though not a crushing, setback at Amiens on 8th August; but it was never routed. It still held the Antwerp-Maas line in November, when the Armistice was signed. At the moment when the revolution broke out the German Army had experienced only the first rumblings of defeat; not yet *the* defeat. The Army was still intact; and, according to the judgment of French generals, it would have been able to resist for a few months longer. Arthur Rosenberg, discussing this

point, refers to an interview in which Marshal Foch suggested that if the German revolution had produced a Gambetta, it would have continued the war.

Soldiers, as well as workers, wanted to end the war at any price. When the Fleet at Kiel was commanded to leave for an action on 3rd October, 100,000 sailors mutinied and refused to obey orders. The signal of the revolution was sounded at Kiel, and the Army and the people instantly and enthusiastically responded. It was a spontaneous revolt of the soldiers and the working men against the military and civil authorities which ended the war.

It is further asserted that the rulers of Germany were overthrown not by the German people, but by the *Entente*, which demanded (in Woodrow Wilson's Note) the abdication of Wilhelm II as a condition of the Armistice. It is true that the *Entente* insisted on Wilhelm's abdication, and, eventually, on that of the Crown Prince; but it did not demand the deposition of the House of Hohenzollern—let alone that of the South German Princes. The French Government would, on the contrary, have liked to preserve the Bavarian Kingdom as a counterweight to the Prussian dynasty. The historical truth is that the German princes were simply swept away by a rising of the people. The state of affairs at that time in Germany is strikingly revealed in a letter which the Kaiser wrote after his abdication, on 9th November, to the Crown Prince:

“DEAR BOY,

Since the Field Marshal is unable to guarantee my security, and to guarantee the reliability of the troops, I have resolved after a bitter heartrending struggle to leave the Army. *Berlin is in the hands of the Socialists and entirely lost.*

“Your heartbroken father,

“WILHELM.”

Wilhelm did not complain of Woodrow Wilson's Note; he complained, instead, that the Socialists, his arch enemies, held Berlin, and that the Army refused to protect him against them.

To the multitude, it was completely irrelevant that Woodrow Wilson had also demanded the abdication of Wilhelm II. The people were resolved to discard, not only Wilhelm, but all the princes and institution of monarchy altogether. The German monarchy was shattered by the determination of the German people, not by Woodrow Wilson's request. No serious student of German history is likely to deny that Germany would have become a republic in any case, whether the *Entente* had insisted on Wilhelm's abdication or not. In Bavaria, the Republic was pro-

claimed on 7th November, two days before Kaiser Wilhelm's abdication, although Woodrow Wilson had by no means demanded the deposition of the House of Wittelsbach as well. Before 9th November the Government of the German Reich had not even considered deposing the House of Hohenzollern; it merely expressed, vaguely and very reluctantly, its desire that Wilhelm and the Crown Prince should abdicate. It was the storm in the streets of Berlin which made the proclamation of the German Republic imperative. Had Scheidemann, defying Ebert's displeasure, hesitated any longer to proclaim it, the people themselves, who thronged the square before the Royal Castle in Berlin, would have proclaimed it.

"Revolution" is the conventional nomenclature of historiography connoting a violent change in the constitution and in the class-relations of a nation. The American Professor of Political Science, Harold D. Lasswell, defines revolution merely as a "rapid and extensive change in the composition and the vocabulary of the ruling few".* English historians termed even the flight of James II in 1688 and the legitimate ascendancy of his daughter and his son-in-law to the Throne the "glorious revolution". Even Burke, the philosopher of the counter-revolution of 1789, could not help paying homage to the revolution of 1688 by calling it paradoxically a "revolution of stability". It is all the more surprising that a learned English peer should have refused to class as revolution the sequence of events in Germany, when twenty odd reigning dynasties were deposed and the power of the feudal aristocracy was broken. There was no revolution in Germany, says Lord Vansittart, implying that no revolution which can overthrow and uproot the Nazi régime is ever to be expected.

THE REVOLUTION IN THE MINDS

The German revolution in 1918 was primarily a revolution in the minds of the German people; fantastic in its suddenness and equally fantastic in its depth.

The State, the schools and the churches had taught and preached to the German people for hundreds of years the idea that kingship is a divine calling, and the first duty of the subject loyalty and obedience to the reigning dynasty. For hundreds of years the Prussian people and most of the Germans had accepted the social and political privileges of the Prussian aristocracy and military caste. Century-old traditions had developed in the Prussian, and later in the German, Army a discipline severer than that of any army in the world. The Germans were used to regarding

* Harold D. Lasswell, *Politics and Personal Insecurity*.

the officer caste, even if it were represented by a mere lieutenant of nineteen, with as much awe as the Indian pariahs felt for the Brahmins, as though they were higher beings endowed with divine charism.

For one and a half centuries the German people were, according to the testimonies of Mr. Butler, Mr. Rowse and Mr. Wickham Steed, impregnated with patriotic aspirations, with nationalistic passions and with a belief in the magical supremacy of the State. Suddenly, however, this magic spell of belief in an inherited monarchy and aristocracy, in State authority, in castes, in privileges and social superiority, was dissipated overnight. Political and spiritual traditions, national and patriotic sentiments, century-old loyalties and customary allegiances were suddenly swept from the minds of the German people. The peasant-soldiers of those Divisions of the German Army which were recruited in the rural district dropped their princes as eagerly as the soldiers of the Divisions recruited in the industrial centres. They all acted in the same way, spontaneously, without consultation, without a signal from anywhere. There were millions of them, dispersed over hundreds of miles, at the frontiers, and in the garrisons of half Europe; yet the same thing happened, at the same moment, everywhere. The soldiers first removed the badges of rank from their officers, to symbolise the end of their old allegiance to the princes and their military caste; secondly, they donned red arm-bands or unfurled red flags, to symbolise their allegiance to the Revolution; thirdly, they set up councils of soldiers in all parts, thus creating the new instrument of State to carry on the revolution; and, finally, in a solemn Act of Declaration, they pledged themselves to support the Republican Government which had been elected by the Assembly of the Berlin Workers' and Soldiers' Councils on 10th November, 1918.

THE BAVARIAN PEASANTS—A REMARKABLE EXAMPLE

How profoundly the German mind had changed can be strikingly illustrated by the events in Bavaria.

Bavaria is a predominantly agrarian country with a peasant population living in comparative comfort. They are Catholics, stubbornly Conservative and pronouncedly anti-Socialist by tradition, while their emotional antagonism to Prussianism was expressed in conspicuous loyalty to the reigning House of Wittelsbach.

And yet, two days before the overthrow of the House of Hohenzollern, the Bavarians deposed the House of Wittelsbach. At the beginning of November, the peasants set up peasant councils in

every village, large or small, like the councils of the workers and soldiers. When the news of the mutiny at Kiel reached Munich on 7th November, thousands of workers, soldiers and peasants gathered on the Theresia Heath and spontaneously and enthusiastically proclaimed the Bavarian Republic. Irresistibly, like a powerful river, the crowd streamed to the town in a gigantic procession, which was joined by thousands of soldiers from barracks passed on the route, and occupied the Royal Castle and the seat of the Diet. That same night the Council of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers elected Kurt Eisner as its President and as Prime Minister of the Bavarian Republic. Hermann Müller-Franken, Social Democratic Reichs-Kanzler in 1928, describes his impression of this event in a volume of Memoirs: "After four and a half years of war sufferings, the masses recognised him (Eisner) as their veritable saviour from war misery and from distress at home".*

The Eisner Government would not have lasted a fortnight if it had not been wholeheartedly supported by the peasants. It was, however, the most stable government among the German States—free from unrest, civil strife, dissension among the working class—until Eisner was murdered by Count Arco, three and a half months later. The Government derived its strength from a sincere alliance between the workers and peasants, and the soldiers, who were mostly farmers' sons. The League of Peasants, under the leadership of Ludwig Gandorfer, at once joined the Revolution and secured the stability of the Eisner Government. Bavaria was the only German State in which Soviet institutions—the Council of Peasants, side by side and in co-operation with the Council of Workers and Soldiers—were established in the villages as well as the towns. Ludwig Gandorfer strongly supported Eisner's proposal to graft Soviet institutions on to the constitution of the Bavarian Republic, in conjunction with the Diet. Politically speaking, the Bavarian Revolution was a complete success, largely owing to the powerful personality of Eisner—a genuine international Socialist, an idealist with a strong sense of reality, inspired by a powerful vision of the new society, the only creative statesman who emerged from the Revolution.

The revolutionary rising of the Bavarian people is a striking illustration of the great awakening all over Germany in November, 1918. The spell of century-old traditions was suddenly broken, and the people became aware of a new destiny. Their whole scale of values changed; they were ready to accept a new way of life.

The rising is also an example of the vacillation of the public

* H. Müller-Franken, *Die deutsche Revolution (The German Revolution)*.

mind under the impetus of changed circumstances. In 1918 and 1919 the Bavarians were the most whole-hearted revolutionaries. But soon afterwards, Bavaria—and not Prussia—became the strongest fortress of reaction and counter-revolution.

THE RIDDLE OF THE FAILURE

The revolutionary mood was naturally still more passionate and determined in the industrial centres of the Reich than it was in Bavaria. The new Government of the Republic, which represented both wings of the Socialist movement, was supported by the vast majority of the nation, by all the soldiers in the army, by the working class and a large part of the peasantry. And yet the failure of the Revolution was as complete as it was inglorious. The power of the revolutionary Reich Government was absolute; but they did not succeed in transforming a revolution in the minds into a revolution in the class-structure of society.

How are we to explain this failure? It would be absurd to suspect one or other of the Socialist leaders in power of deliberately betraying the revolution. Arthur Rosenberg's comment has certainly a good deal of truth in it: "If one really wished to look for the guilty men, it would be historically much more justifiable to name August Bebel than Ebert or Scheidemann".*

THE PETRIFICATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT

As Rosenberg points out, the German Social Democratic Party, which had been built and led by Bebel until 1912, was undoubtedly sincere in its belief in the necessity of the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society into a socialist society. August Bebel was in mind, aspiration and determination no less a revolutionary than Lenin.

But after the collapse of the Paris Commune in 1871, the prospects of a victorious revolution appeared to have vanished from the European horizon; at any rate from the German. The German *bourgeoisie* had joined the anti-revolutionary camp; the country was prospering as never before; and Bismarck had strengthened the bulwarks of the ruling classes so powerfully that it would have been suicidal for the Labour movement to venture an armed insurrection.

The Social Democratic Party, on the other hand, grew stronger from election to election. It had already gathered the support of more than a third of the electorate. Most of the Socialist leaders believed that the Socialist Party would in a few decades gain a

* Arthur Rosenberg, *History of the German Republic*.

majority in the Reichstag and would be able by Parliamentary methods to wrest constitutional reforms from the ruling class, one by one, if only the constitutional foundations of the Reich remained unshaken and if war could be prevented. This concept also suited the Trades Unions well. In a period of expanding trade, the combination of Parliamentary and industrial tactics had considerable success in improving the standard of living of the workers. The machinery of the Party and of the Trade Unions grew stronger by leaps and bounds. The Party counted hundreds of thousands of members, the Trade Unions millions. They published dozens of dailies and weeklies; they amassed huge funds; they owned vast enterprises. The Party and the Trade Unions became ends in themselves.

The Social Democrats still professed their faith in revolution; but at the bottom of their hearts they did not believe in its possibility. Karl Kautsky, Otto Bauer, Rosa Luxemburg and Rudolf Hilferding analysed in their writings the tremendous tensions caused by the imperialist tendencies of the great Powers, tensions which were bound to explode in war, generating revolution; their findings were discussed, but not heeded. The very idea of a world war, prosecuted with the weapons and methods of modern science, seemed so monstrous that nobody took it seriously. Thus, the reality of war and revolution caught the Socialists unprepared. The implications of their failure were so far-reaching that it became a real world disaster.

It is, however, legitimate to ask whether any of the other big European Labour Parties, except the Bolshevik—which was, however, a very small Party of professional revolutionaries—was better prepared for the advent of war and of Labour to power. The historical facts showed that none was, and that the intellectual inadequacy of the 1918 revolutionaries, at any rate, was not peculiarly German. It was symptomatic of the immaturity of the working classes of almost all countries.

THE UNSOLVED PROBLEMS OF THE GERMAN REVOLUTION

Ferdinand Lassalle taught the German workers that the distribution of power in the State depended on the actual power-relations, and not on the sheet of paper on which the Constitution happens to be recorded. He taught them, further, that the decisive power in the State rests upon the control of the Army, of the means of production, and of the financial resources of the nation. He made it plain to the workers that a re-division of power could not be effected merely by re-writing the Constitution on a new sheet of paper, but only by a transfer of control of the actual sources of

power. In his famous speech on the Constitution he recalled the history of the failure of the German revolution in 1848. Its task should have been, he said, "to transform the real power-relations". It would therefore, he said, have been necessary to transform the machine of State so that it could "never again be able to oppose the will of the nation"; it would, also, have been necessary to reorganise the army so that it could "never again be used as a power instrument of the princes against the nation"; finally, it would have been necessary, he pointed out, that the peoples themselves should have taken possession of the guns, which are, as he stressed, an "important part of the Constitution". Because the revolutionary middle-classes in 1848 wasted the "victorious moment" in discussions about a new written Constitution, instead of making a really new Constitution by transforming the essential power-relations, the revolution inevitably failed. When, however, the counter-revolutionary Prussian Government chased away the revolutionary National Assembly, they did not waste their time in re-writing a Constitution; they disarmed the people. From this historical experience follows the lesson, Lassalle emphasised, that, should a "victorious moment" of a revolution arise again, its "primary task will be to disarm the defeated" and to acquire effective control of the real sources of power. Mr. Butler insists that German Socialism had assimilated Lassalle's power theory; in fact, even its leaders did not, unfortunately, heed it.

Karl Marx taught the workers that the political structure of society is determined by the actual class-relations, and that political equality, as manifested in political democracy, is of small value in the presence of social and economic inequality. He urged the workers, should they ascend to power, to change, and ultimately to abolish, the class-structure of society and to realise the deeper meaning of political equality by abolishing social and economic inequality. But the Socialist leaders—those in power, at all events—did not heed Marx's teaching either.

The power of the former ruling classes in Germany rested, roughly speaking, on four pillars: the Army, the State machine, the land, and the heavy industry. Consequently, as Lassalle had shown, the leaders of the revolution were confronted with four main problems. In the first place, it was essential to create a republican army, faithful to the principle of the Revolution, in order to provide the Socialist Government with a reliable instrument for carrying out the will of the people as manifested in the Revolution. Secondly, it was essential to nationalise heavy industry, mining and smelting, in order to deprive the coal and iron magnates of their gigantic economic power over the resources of the nation. Thirdly, it was essential to break up the large estates

in East Prussia in order to deprive the hereditary rulers of the Reich of the material basis of their political power. Fourthly, it was essential to replace the counter-revolutionary judiciary and higher ranks of the Civil Service by a Republican administration.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

The entire nation expected that the Socialists, once in power, would without delay interpret their ideals in deeds and realise their aims. The Council of the People's Commissars, which had become the legitimate Government of the Reich, stated in its proclamation of 12th November: "The Socialist Government established by the Revolution recognises its task to execute the Socialist programme". The nation did not doubt for a moment that the Government would carry out its programme. The peasants expected that the large landed estates would be partitioned among the landless; they had fervently welcomed such an agrarian revolution; they would in return have accepted the nationalisation of the heavy industries of the Ruhr basin. The Junkers and industrial magnates thought it inevitable that their economic power would be abolished. They dreaded that event intensely; but they felt so helpless that they did not dream of resisting. The urban middle class expected the transformation of society; and, although most of them were not Socialists, they were so deeply stirred by the revolutionary atmosphere that they would have accepted a fundamental change as a necessity. The working class naturally wanted it.

Such was the psychological situation of the German people in the first months of the Revolution. They were prepared for enormous changes. But, surprisingly enough, nothing in the sphere of the real power-relations was altered. The pattern of capitalist society remained almost entirely intact. The German working class was the master of its choice for one or two months. It did not choose.

THE RÔLE OF LEADERSHIP IN THE REVOLUTION

Revolutions need, as Lenin once said, "a great, mighty, all-powerful '*regisseur*' who is, on the one hand, in a position to accelerate the course of history on a grand scale and, on the other, to produce world-wide crises of unheard-of intensity—economic, political, national and international". This "*regisseur*" was the world war. But revolutions need, also, a great personality, clear in vision, commanding the imagination of the revolutionary classes and the nation in ferment. Neither revolution nor war can

be won without a great leader. The German Revolution never found its leader. This is certainly one of the reasons for its failure.

What leadership in revolution means was strikingly demonstrated by Lenin himself. With his amazingly acute sense of revolutionary strategy, he conceived that, if the Bolshevik Party did not seize power by an armed insurrection at a certain moment, it would miss its opportunity altogether, and the revolution would be lost for generations in sheer chaos, ultimately to be conquered by the counter-revolution. Lenin's advice was determinedly contested (except by Trotsky) by the Central Executive of the Bolsheviks. The Sinovjev-Kamenov group feared that an insurrection would lead the Revolution, and the Bolshevik Party as well, to disaster. But Lenin's strong personality overruled their resistance. Thus Lenin probably saved the Revolution.

Marxists who perceive the revolutionary dynamics in their context of social conditions are apt to neglect the personal factor in history. But however much truth there is in Marx's thesis that in human society "laws which work with iron necessity" operate, laws which "with the necessity of a process of nature"* disintegrate the capitalist and ultimately produce the socialist society, there is also as much truth in Engels' comment on Marx's determinism that "Men make their own history". But the historical action of the millions require the inspiring thought and the political leadership of the great individual. There is no doubt, as Professor Harold J. Laski observed, that "our lives would be definitely different if Luther or Napoleon or Lenin had never lived".† An historical emergency may create its great men; but it does not necessarily do so.

The German Revolution of 1918, at any rate, failed to produce a leader who could exploit the right moment in the revolutionary situation. Harold Butler, distinguished Director of the International Labour Office at Geneva, has some interesting reflections on the German Revolution. He suggests what might have happened if the *Anschluss* had been concluded in 1919 and if the Austrian Socialist leaders had been chosen to steer the course of the German Revolution. "Some people believe", he says, "that the inclusion of Austria and the influence of the Austrian Socialists might have changed the history of the German Revolution. No one would fail to respect Bauer's brilliant intellect or Renner's strong character. . . . Both were convinced democrats, who fought Communism and Fascism alike sternly and constantly. In vigour and vision, they were the superiors of the German Socialist leaders, and might have breathed the spirit of democracy into the

* Karl Marx, *Das Capital*.

† H. J. Laski, *The State in Theory and Practice*.

German Revolution. . . . The German Revolution, led by men like Bauer and Renner, might possibly have become a reality.” *

THE SCOPE OF REVOLUTION

Marx's thesis that the scope of the revolutionary transformation of society is limited by the economic and social conditions from which the revolution emerges, obviously requires a re-examination in the light of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. The Bolshevik revolution transformed a virtually semi-feudal society into a virtually Socialist society, and “skipped” the capitalist *bourgeois-liberal* stage of the historical processes. Had it lacked the leadership of Lenin, the Russian Revolution of March, 1917, would probably only have had the historical significance of the French Revolution of 1789.

It is true that Germany before 1918 had not yet consummated the political principles of 1789. She was not yet a political democracy. But economically and socially she had created the conditions for a Socialist revolution. About three-quarters of the German people belonged to the class of wage-earners and salary receivers. The level of industrial development was higher than in Great Britain, and the chemical, the electrical, and the heavy industries were concentrated in fewer hands. The collapse of the power machinery of the old régime created the power conditions for the Socialist transformation of society. The collapse of the moral foundations of the old régime created the necessary psychological conditions for the Socialist transformation of society. But the creative and inspiring force of leadership was lacking.

THE TIME FACTOR IN REVOLUTION

In revolutions, as in wars, the time factor is of supreme importance. “The hours of revolution count for months in history, and their days for years”, Rosa Luxemburg once wrote. The success of a revolution depends in no small degree on the exploitation of a given psychological situation at the right moment. Trotsky † maintains that if the Executive of the Bolshevik Party had not yielded to Lenin's pressure by choosing 25th October (7th November according to the European calendar) as the day for the rising, selected because the All-Russian Soviet Congress assembled on the same day, the right moment would probably have been missed altogether. A revolution, like war, requires a leader with intuition for the choice of time and means to effect its ends; it

* H. Butler, *The Lost Peace*.

† Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*.

also needs a personality with the power to impress and to fascinate the potentially revolutionary section of the nation.

Looking back on the German Revolution of 1918, we can now see that the time margin for its successful execution was wider than was the time margin for the execution of the Russian Revolution of 1917 (according to the testimonies of Lenin and Trotsky). The state of mind in which the property-owning classes in Germany would have accepted fundamentally Socialist transformations without serious resistance lasted at least two months. But the men at the helm of the revolution had no clear vision of its possibilities. The leaders who had – Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, Rudolf Hilferding – had no power and were not, though outstanding, of the stature needed to carry the working class with them in their conflict with the established machinery of the Social Democratic Party.

THE MALADY OF WILL

The Socialist Government were at the beginning undoubtedly inspired by revolutionary intentions. As early as a week after the proclamation of the Republic, they appointed a Commission to study the problem of the partition of the large estates. The Commission, however, reported that since the available resources of fat would last for no more than two months, flour for three, and potatoes for five, the experiment of agrarian reform would, in their opinion, seriously aggravate the supply situation. Hilferding had, as early as 16th November, 1918, urged the Government to seize the coal mines, the iron pits and the plants of heavy industry immediately and to declare them national property. "Our worst enemy is the fear of our own courage", he wrote; "the Government ought to decree the confiscation of the important industries without delay. The question of compensation can be dealt with later." * However, Hermann Müller, who was then a member of the Social Democratic Executive, refers scornfully, in his disagreeable book, to "the masses who believed it would be easy to socialise the key industries simply by revolutionary decree". A Commission was again appointed, and the verdict was again negative: the nationalisation of large-scale industry would increase the economic difficulties with which Germany was confronted.

These difficulties were indeed terrifying enough: they were in fact as great as Russia's difficulties in 1917, or even greater, as two-thirds of the German people depended on industry and commerce, whereas the proportion in Russia at the same time was

* *Freiheit*, the leading newspaper of the Independent Social Democrats.

hardly a fifth. The German people would undoubtedly have had to pay for the liquidation of the feudal estates and the nationalisation of heavy industry with a temporary serious decline in their standard of living, already dangerously low in consequence of the war.

It is plain in retrospect, however, that no price would have been too high. The German people must pay with the frightful sufferings inflicted by Fascism and war today for their failure to deprive reaction of its economic resources in 1918. There were many German Socialists who apprehended the danger of counter-revolution, if the economic power of the old régime was not swiftly destroyed. But the men in power were paralysed by the fear of immediate difficulties. Their "native hue of resolution was sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought". Their attitude was: "We must feed the people first, and get them back to work today; it's no use worrying about tomorrow".

REVOLUTIONARY POWER POLICY

Lenin taught the workers that "No great revolution has happened, or can happen, without a disintegration of the army. . . . The new social class which aspires to power has never been able—and is even today unable—to assure and maintain its authority without the complete dislocation of the old army".* But the leaders of the German Revolution seemed—strangely enough—simply unable to grasp this fundamental tenet of revolutionary strategy. After the breakdown of the Hapsburg Monarchy in 1918, when the Austrian Socialists entered the Government, their first condition was that a Socialist should become State Secretary for the Forces; and Julius Deutsch, who was appointed, disarmed the imperial Army completely the moment its units crossed the frontier, and organised a people's army. I had the privilege of collaborating with him as his Adjutant during the two years of the Socialist Coalition Government, and I remember how conscious we were of the importance of disbanding the old Army and building up a new one out of reliable trade unionists and Socialists. We promoted lance-corporals experienced in the war to lieutenants and captains, and strengthened the Soldiers' Councils as an additional means of controlling the armed forces. The Austrian soldiers, in fact, proved to be loyal Republicans many years after we had left the Ministry. Yet Julius Deutsch, distinguished by a strong sense for the essentials of power, held the opinion that the Army, controlled perhaps by a counter-revolutionary Government, might be misused for counter-revolutionary ends. So he

* Lenin, *On the Road to Insurrection*.

suggested, and immediately organised, in addition to the Republican Army a militia composed of trades unionists and Socialist workers with war experience, to defend democracy if necessary against the latent counter-revolution. The Austrian Socialists were aware that, as Laski says, "counter-revolutions leave ghosts behind them which haunt the stage of their action long after their ideals have lost their power to destiny".*

The *Republikanischer Schutzbund* (Republican League of Defence), built up by Julius Deutsch, was an army like the British Home Guard. It was about 40,000 strong, and was very well trained, although, unfortunately, not well enough for modern conditions of street-fighting, as was shown by the events of February, 1934; it had uniforms and was excellently armed with rifles, machine-guns and hand grenades. When Dollfuss, pressed by Mussolini, and encouraged by the failure of the German workers to resist Hitler, attacked the *Republikanischer Schutzbund*, it was naturally defeated by superior arms. But the mere presence of an armed body of workers had deterred the counter-revolution from striking until it had triumphed in Germany.

THE MILITARY POLICY OF THE GERMAN REPUBLIC

The revolutionary Government of Germany however entrusted Hindenburg and Gröner with the task of demobilising the army. The old Imperial General Staff retained the supreme power over the millions of soldiers who crossed the German frontier with imperial flags unfurled. The soldiers themselves rallied to the Revolution heart and soul. The delegates of 220 divisions of the field army, assembled at Ems on 1st December, almost unanimously pledged its allegiance to the Republic and the Council of People's Commissars. The sailors of the Navy and the soldiers in the home garrisons were the driving force of the Revolution from the beginning; but they remained under the command of the officer caste, and their chief was Field Marshal von Hindenburg.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE OFFICER CASTE

The officers hated the revolution mortally—how could it be otherwise?—since the revolution was about to deprive them of their social and political privileges and of their economic basis. The Government had issued a statement declaring: "Red flags and arm-bands are symbols of the Republic. . . . Actions directed against the unfurling of red flags or the wearing of red arm-bands

* H. J. Laski, *Democracy in Crisis*.

are prohibited". But Hindenburg declined to issue the declaration to the Army. Officers frequently tore down red flags or prohibited the wearing of red arm-bands, and thereby provoked riots and shooting. The Reich Congress of the Councils of the Workers and Soldiers, which was the supreme representative body of the nation, passed a resolution conferring the command of the Army and Navy upon the Government, under the control of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. Hindenburg, however, protested in a note to the Government and refused to recognise the resolution. His action precipitated an open conflict between the Revolution and the officer caste. Hugo Haase, the representative of the Independent Social Democrats in the Government, urged the dismissal of Hindenburg. But the majority of the Social Democrats insisted on keeping him in office, because they feared his dismissal would complicate the demobilisation of the Field Army and worsen relations with the victorious *Entente*. The Allied commanders certainly disliked the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils intensely. In a letter to the Workers' and Soldiers' Council of Kreuznach, Marshal Foch announced that he was not prepared to recognise the institution. On 19th December, the British Governor of the Rhineland issued a decree at Cologne warning the Councils in the territories occupied by British troops against interference in State or municipal affairs.

THE ARMING OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

However, since the officers had strikingly demonstrated their hatred of the Revolution and the Republic—as if such a demonstration were necessary—the need for a reliable republican army commanded by faithful republicans was all the more urgent.

Smitten by blindness once more, the majority of the Social Democrats left that job, too, to the old officer caste. Worse still, when riots broke out in Berlin—as naturally happened in the tense atmosphere of revolution—the Government appealed for help to the Free Corps, recruited from the lowest type of mercenaries and adventurers among the disbanded soldiery, and commanded by the most spiteful enemies of the Republic. Instead of drawing from the Army in the course of demobilisation a military force of carefully selected old soldiers with genuine republican and Socialist convictions, strong enough to protect the young Republic, the Majority Social Democrats entrusted this task to Prussian aristocrats of the most reactionary kind: von Lüttwitz, von Roeder, Erhardt and von Hoffmann. I shall not easily forget a talk I had with Noske at the beginning of 1919 in his headquarters in Berlin, protected, as it was, with barbed wire and machine-guns. I was

representing the Austrian Socialist State Secretary of the Forces and the National Executive of the Soldiers' Councils, of which I was a member, and I came to tell him, privately, between comrades, that we in Austria were deeply disturbed at the development of military affairs in Germany and at their repercussions in Austria. Since Austria had proclaimed her *Anschluss* with Germany, we felt entitled to represent our point of view in confidence. He replied rather angrily that he was not interested in Austria, he was only interested in Germany; and, further, that nothing had happened in military affairs in his country which warranted anxiety anywhere. I reminded him of the existence of armed counter-revolutionary gangsters under the command of officers of the worst Prussian type, and predicted that "they will break the neck of the Republic". At this he exploded, pounding his desk with his powerful fist. "It is the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils who are breaking the neck of the Republic, and not the officers!" he shouted, and went on: "I am responsible for order in Germany. Order must be restored at any price. I take the men from wherever I can get them." He restored the "order" for which he yearned. It was the order of the counter-revolution.

ORDER FIRST!

"Orderliness" was what they wanted first: the return to normal conditions. In consequence, they did not dare to upset the balance of society by a bold attempt to seize the machinery of State. P. G. Hamilton once observed, "It is a deplorable waste of time to leave fortresses untaken in our rear". The German Social Democrats did not even touch the fortresses; and they wasted a quarter of a century. The old Prussian bureaucracy in the higher ranks of the Civil Service was as powerful as ever behind the scenes. The high officials hated the Republic and despised the workers who were promoted above them as Ministers and provincial Governors. But the Socialists were afraid, as Otto Braun, for many years Socialist Prime Minister of Prussia, asserted,* that their removal would have disturbed the smooth working of the public services, since trained substitutes were lacking. They left unimpaired the very core of the old ruling class, the real seat of German imperialism, the military and administrative caste. But they loathed the genuine revolutionary forces as they were organised in the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils as a disorderly, troublesome novelty, smelling of Bolshevism—in short, as an institution which simply did not fit into the old democratic scheme. They wanted to get rid of the Councils as quickly as possible, and

* Otto Braun, *Von Weimar zu Hitler*.

failed altogether to realise that these Councils, which had emerged from a disintegrated society, were the indispensable instruments of a Socialist revolution in its transitory stage. They thought, to use a phrase of Ortege y Gasset, "to save reason, and yet they destroyed life".

Ebert, Scheidemann, Noske and Hermann Müller were obsessed with the nineteenth-century concept of parliamentary democratic Socialism. They had striven for decades to achieve Socialism solely by parliamentary means. They were primarily democrats, but only secondarily Socialists, and not one among them was a Robespierre. "There are many echoes in the world, but only few voices," Goethe once remarked. Their actions were inspired by the echoes of voices raised half a century before. They were terrified of using the power they actually held to change the internal balance of power or to secure its real springs. They wanted, at the bottom of their hearts, to get rid of the fearful burden of responsibility; or, at least, they wanted the representatives of other classes to share it. They urged the convocation of the National Assembly; but again they neglected the time factor. Instead of convoking the Assembly at once, they arranged the elections at least a month too late, when the revolutionary impetus had spent its strength. The real nature of this revolution has not, I think, been understood by the great majority of those who concurred in it. They were endeavouring to realise the ideas of the twentieth century with the means of the nineteenth. They were bound to fail. Thus the German people missed their great opportunity. Of the German Revolution of 1918 it can aptly be said what Heinrich Heine wrote about the French Revolution of 1848: "The lamentable course of the Revolution is to be ascribed to the faithless mandates of the people, who frittered away, through their clumsiness, their cowardice or their duplicity, the great act of popular sovereignty which vested them with the most unlimited power. . . . Never has the people, the great orphan, pulled more miserable blanks out of the lucky-bag of the Revolution than those persons who formed the Provisional Government. Among them were wretched comedians who resembled to the colour of a hair those heroes of amateur theatricals whom Shakespeare introduced to us so delightfully in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*. These brave comrades, in fact, were afraid of nothing so much as that they might be taken seriously, and Schnock, the carpenter, assured the people in advance that he was no real lion, but only the provisional lion, only Schnock the carpenter, that the public need not tremble at his roaring, as it was only a provisional roaring."*

* Heinrich Heine, *Deutschland*.

· UNDER THE RULE OF THE DEAD MIND

It should, however, be remembered that the history of the human race is, broadly speaking, a history of missed opportunities. The exceptions to this rule are rare, because it is so extremely rare that the men in power—like men in general—are actually able to grasp the historical significance of the current of the times they are called upon to mould. They are swayed by ideas, beliefs and aims of past generations; they are, as Leonard Woolf comments so ingeniously, subject to the “psychological law of the dead hand”, controlled by “the thoughts and aims of dead men”, and, as he adds, “very often themselves dead and rotten”.* King George III was swayed by Charles I’s conception of royal power. Although Charles I’s abrupt death on the scaffold had, after all, demonstrated that even in his own time this theory was out of date, George III was unable to accept the judgment of history; it was simply beyond him to understand that the idea of democracy, current at home, had somehow filtered into the minds of his subjects beyond the seas. For the sake of a small duty on tea, which he was stubbornly determined to impose, he risked the American colonies: he lost them, and broke up the political unity of the English-speaking peoples. The Austrian Emperor, Francis Joseph I, haunting the sparkling Habsburg Court like a ghost from the spiritual world of the Empress Maria Theresa—who had died nine years before the outbreak of the French Revolution—was completely unaware that the minds of the peoples had changed in the meantime and that the ideas of 1789 had, after all, a hundred years later become an irresistible force among his Slav subjects. Stubbornly he refused his consent to the transformation of his semi-absolutist Empire into a Commonwealth of Free Nations; he preferred to risk a world war. The French, British, and American statesmen who were offered a unique opportunity to reconstruct Europe and the world after 1918, were unable to see that the problem of lasting peace was as insoluble in terms of the old concept of power politics (however disguised in its new dress as a League of Nations) as the problem of economic distress was insoluble in terms of the old concept of liberal capitalism. “We failed in our job after World War I,” complained Henry A. Wallace, Vice-President of the United States. “We did not know how to go about it to build an enduring world-wide peace. . . . We did not strive wholeheartedly to create a world where there could be freedom from want for all the peoples.” French diplomacy after 1918 reverted to the policy of alliances, with the encirclement of Germany and the exclusion of the Soviet Union

* Leonard Woolf, *After the Deluge*.

from Europe as their objects; British diplomacy reverted to the policy of the balance of power; American diplomacy reverted to isolationism. And the rulers of the economic life of the world hastened to return to the "normalcy" of the nineteenth-century economy. These outworn concepts necessarily collapsed, in less than a quarter of a century, engulfing the world once more in war. "Of all tyranny, the most relentless is that of the dead", observed Bentham.

In the light of history's universal record of lost chances, it is, therefore, not surprising that even Socialists (from whom the revolutionary dynamics of society are supposed to originate) were unequal to their opportunity; that they, also, although inspired by historical vision, were as spellbound by old traditions as the leaders of the old world. They did not grasp the essentials of a revolution in the twentieth century; they sincerely believed that the real task was to accomplish in 1918 what the revolution of 1848 had failed to accomplish. Consequently, they were incapable of solving the problems of the revolution of 1918.

German Socialists, blamed for their failure to comprehend the real nature of the Revolution, could, however, retort that, perhaps with the exception of the Bolsheviks, the working classes of all countries failed too in comprehending the nature of the upheaval which the war of 1914 has caused. They might point to the British working class, half of which thought it even hardly worth the trouble merely to go to the polling-booth, in the fateful general election of 1918, while two-thirds of the voting half cast their votes for the Conservatives, so providing the vested interests with the mandate to "squeeze" revolutionary Germany. They might point to the French working class, of which the majority confirmed in a general election before Clemenceau went to Versailles their resolve to treat Germany, however revolutionary she was, not too leniently. They could, perhaps justly, complain that they had been deserted by the great mass of the individual workers of Europe in the hour of direst need.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE REVOLUTION

After the Socialist revolution had been crushed in 1919, Germany became a capitalist republic. The Social Democrats adopted now the principles of reformism according to the pattern of the British Labour Party's policy. They were anxious to maintain and defend democracy and to improve by gradual reforms the social status and the economic standard of the working men.

It would indeed be unjust to minimise the achievements of the German Socialists within the framework of a capitalist society.

Germany was, in fact, far ahead of the other capitalist democracies, including Great Britain, France, and the United States, in her social legislation and social welfare institutions (such as working-class housing, working-class education, and social insurance) and in the social position which the working class occupied in the State and in the municipalities. And although the Revolution failed to break up the feudal estates once for all, the later republican governments pursued a vigorous policy of piecemeal reallocation. Until 1933, Germany was a real social-service State and her political system was genuinely democratic.

THE ODDS AGAINST THE REVOLUTION

It would, also, be unjust to exclude the tremendous odds against which the Social Democrats were wrestling.

The Revolution was from the very beginning frustrated by the hostility of the victorious Powers. They refused to recognise the revolutionary Government elected by the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils; they refused to negotiate peace with the representatives of the German Revolution; as a preliminary condition for peace negotiations they insisted on the election of the Government by a duly elected National Assembly. They further prohibited the maintenance of diplomatic relations between the German Republic and Soviet Russia. When, in November, 1918, the Soviet Government proposed an exchange of ambassadors, the German Government felt itself bound, under the pressure of the *Entente*, to reject the Russian suggestion. The blockade against Germany was still in force; the country was threatened by famine and chaos, and, worse than that, by an armed intervention by the victorious Powers, hostile to a Socialist revolution.

Germany was utterly exhausted by the war. The Treaty of Versailles increased her economic difficulties enormously. The territories she had lost (13 per cent of her pre-war territories) were particularly rich in agricultural and mineral resources. They comprised more than 14 per cent of the arable land of Germany, nearly three-quarters of her iron ore, and more than a quarter of her coal production; and, in addition, Germany had to hand over to the *Entente* all her merchant ships exceeding 1,600 gross tonnage and half those between 1,000 and 1,600 gross tonnage, a quarter of the fishing fleet, 5,000 railway engines, 150,000 railway waggons, and 5,000 lorries. She was finally presented with a bill for reparations amounting to £11,300,000,000. This amount was later reduced to £6,600,000,000, but Germany had to pay £1,050,000,000 by May, 1921.

This burden caused a catastrophic deterioration in the balance

of payments. Large food imports became necessary. Minerals hitherto mined in Germany had to be purchased abroad, and the export of others had to be reduced. The national income, formerly derived from the carrying trade, disappeared with the loss of the merchant navy. The currency became inflated and the mark gradually lost its purchasing power. In January, 1919, the dollar was worth nearly nine marks; in January, 1920, its value had increased to seven times that number of marks, and in another year to twenty times that number.

But the worst was still to come. During 1922 the value of the mark sank from about 500 to the dollar to 18,000. Then came the French occupation of the Ruhr and the Ruhr struggle. The value of the dollar jumped from 18,000 marks to 4,200,000,000,000 marks! There were months when German housewives had to pay some million marks for a loaf of bread. The worker received his wages on Saturday; by the following Monday the money had already lost a quarter of its purchasing power. In Arthur Rosenberg's *History of the German Republic* he quotes an expert calculation that in October, 1923, a pound of margarine was worth as much as nine to ten hours' work; a pound of butter two days' work; a pair of shoes six weeks' work, and a suit twenty weeks' work. The Mayor of Berlin stated in an official report: "For many children, a drop of milk is entirely unobtainable. They arrive at school without having had a hot breakfast: they get a slice of bread smeared with mashed potatoes instead. Frequently the children go to school without a shirt or even pants." The stratum of the middle class which lived on monthly salaries or pensions was in even worse plight. Since the purchasing power of the currency diminished rapidly from day to day, there was simply no machinery to raise their incomes correspondingly. The pension a retired officer received at the end of the month would pay for only a single meal. The savings of the middle class evaporated overnight. The few thousand marks a shopkeeper might have put into the bank or invested in war loans were worth a box of matches. Within six months a large section of the middle class was completely expropriated; and when the inflation was stopped by the stabilisation of the currency in the second half of November, 1923, millions of workers suddenly lost their jobs. Unemployment had actually disappeared during the period of inflation; but now, in December, 1923, only thirty out of a hundred workers organised in Trades Unions were still in full employment. On the other hand, the bankers and big industrialists amassed fantastic fortunes owing to the inflation, and thereby strengthened their political power in their struggle against the Republic. The first counter-revolutionary rising, in March, 1920 (the *Kapp Putsch*), was defeated by the

working class; the second rising, in 1923 (the *Nazi Putsch*) failed too; but Big Business and the military caste had virtually regained their power.

THE GERMAN PLEBISCITE AGAINST GERMAN NATIONALISM

I do not aspire to writing a history of the German Republic. All I want to do is to examine the allegation that under the Republic the German people became nationalist and imperialist once more.

Before the German Republic was stabilised, economically and politically, under the leadership of Stresemann, the multitude attributed their misery to the Treaty of Versailles and reparations. By the time that German economic life had begun to prosper again—in consequence of the settlement of reparations by the Dawes Plan in September, 1924, and the flow of foreign loans—the mass of the people had become entirely indifferent to nationalist aspirations. When the Swiss historian, Jacob Burckhardt, said of the French in 1893: "This nation is melancholy, because of the terrible blow to their self-respect", the same cannot be said of the Germans when once the horror of the economic distress had vanished.

There is plenty of evidence for this. Only fifteen months after the Ruhr struggle, when the misery and national hatred had passed their climax, a plebiscite for the election of the new President of the Reich fell due through Ebert's death. The Nazi candidate was General Ludendorff, who fought in the forefront against the French invaders of the Ruhr and embodied the alleged imperialist will of the nation more markedly than anyone else. But the German nation made it abundantly clear that they were sick of imperialist ambitions and national hatred. The Dawes Plan had been in operation for six months; the economic recovery of Germany had begun, and the people desired to live in peace and prosperity. When they went to the polling-booths, only 300,000 out of 27,500,000 votes were cast for Ludendorff, and 15,500,000 Germans voted for definitely anti-imperialist candidates (Communists, 2,000,000; Social Democrats, 8,000,000; Democrats, 1,500,000; Catholic Centre, 4,000,000). At the second election the Left could not agree on the choice of a joint candidate, and, in default of another outstanding personality, unfortunately Hindenburg was ultimately returned, but only by a minority of the votes cast.

That was in March, 1925. Three years later another plebiscite took place: the general election of May, 1928. The Social Democrats and the Communists together polled 12,500,000 votes,

1,500,000 more than in the previous election; while the Nazis altogether collected only 800,000 votes, and the German People's Party (*Deutsche Volkspartei*, which was the former imperialist Pan-German Party, fighting Versailles, the League of Nations and the policy of understanding with France) lost about a third of its previous total (1,800,000 out of 6,200,000). This plebiscite proved once again that the German people wanted to consolidate the Republic, in peaceful co-operation with Europe.

THE SEETHING CAULDRON

A sudden change occurred in the autumn of 1929, when the holy temple of Wall Street burst asunder with a terrific detonation. The repercussions of this event were devastating in Germany. In the four previous years the regenerated economic system had on the whole absorbed the unemployed; the country seemed prosperous and there was hope for the future. The experiment of the German Republic had apparently been a success. Though Germany was not a Socialist commonwealth, there was reasonable security for the workers and the standard of living was comparatively high and on an upward trend.

Suddenly, however, this agreeable world was shaken to its foundations. Big banks collapsed, factories closed down, and thousands of workers and black-coated workers were dismissed every week. By March, 1930, six months after the collapse, the number of unemployed had risen to more than 1,250,000; the figure rose to 6,750,000 during the next two years. In the winter of 1932 less than a quarter of the Trade Unions' members were fully employed, and their wages were cut by two-fifths of the 1929 wages. The decline in purchasing power and the fall in agricultural prices in the world market brought disaster to the peasants, the shopkeepers and the professional classes. The lamps were extinguished; a gloomy void had opened: a mood of utter despair swept the soul of the people. They had lost their faith in democracy, in the Republic, in freedom. Political murder, riots, and civil war raged in the streets of German towns. It appeared as though a great people had gone mad. They were haunted by the spectre of inflation and collapse, that horror which had visited them only a few years before. They had just emerged from the terrific ordeal of famine and repression. Now the catastrophe had returned.

It may be said that after all the economic crisis shook the whole world, not Germany alone; yet the Germans alone went mad. It is certainly true that every country was hit; but Germany was hit harder than any other country. In 1932, the worst year of

economic depression, unemployment among the non-agricultural population in Great Britain amounted to 16·8 per cent,* in Germany to 34·0 per cent—more than twice as much. The German workers, moreover, had much smaller means to fall back on than the British and American workers, because the standard of living was much lower in Germany than in the Anglo-Saxon countries. The average income per head of the working population from 1925 to 1934 (according to Colin Clark) was \$1,368 in the United States, \$1,069 in Great Britain, and only \$646 in Germany. The German workers' income was thus less than half that of the American and lower by a third than that of the British workers. Unemployment, on such a fearful scale, without emergency reserves, meant destitution for millions.

The utter dejection of the masses created a vibration between rebellious dissension and infatuated credulity. The distinguished German writer, Rudolf Olden, has described the mass-psychosis to which destitution drove so many Germans: "It made their minds eagerly receptive to Messianic promises. Hunger, fear and desire made them an easy prey for anyone who felt no scruples in exploiting them. There were not a few strange characters who profited by this state of affairs. A silly and disgusting old man called Weissenberg founded a new church near Berlin, performed miraculous cures, and called himself Christ Incarnate. He found 100,000 people to swear that he was. In a small town in the centre of Germany, a commercial lawyer called Winter promised that he would revive at face value the 'red thousands', a bank-note which, having become completely worthless at the inflation, had been called in. A hundred thousand people believed him and voted for him in the election for the Reich Presidency. There were clairvoyants, graphologists, mediums, spiritualists, fortune-tellers, parapsychologists, and horoscope experts in masses. No fewer than 3,000 men and women were counted in Berlin who earned their livelihood by these arts. How many there must have been who were not counted! It was at this time that a report of the Hamburg Church complained that belief in witchcraft was again gaining ground. Old women, even if they were regular church-goers, were revered, and sometimes persecuted, as witches. When men or beasts fell ill, witches or wizards were called in to examine the case in place of doctors and veterinary surgeons."† In his *History of the German Republic*, Arthur Rosenberg tells the story of a man called Schmalix of Erfurt, the publisher of a small paper living by the exploitation of scandals, who stood in the municipal election at the end of 1929. At one stroke he won nearly

* According to the figures of Colin Clark in *Conditions of Economic Progress*.

† Rudolf Olden, *Hitler, the Pawn*.

as many votes as the Social Democratic candidate. In the town of Osnabrück another obscure journalist stood as candidate; he secured a tremendous victory.

THE GERMAN JACK REEDY

I should recall, perhaps, the story of Jack Reedy in A. J. Cronin's *The Stars Look Down*, which may give English readers an idea of the kind of despair which swept the German soul. "The disaster (in the pit) had shaped Jack, and the war and the peace—the degradation and misery of the dole, the pinching and shifting, pawnings, the brutality of one, the desolation of the soul that is worse than hunger". Such was the mood of millions of Germans after the economic collapse of 1930, and they reacted to the disaster in the way Jack Reedy reacted to the news that a new Mines Bill had frustrated all his hopes.

" 'Comrades', Jack Reedy then cried, in a speech to the miners, 'we've just got the news. We've been swindled. They've twisted us, like they always do. And in spite of everything they promised!' He drew a panting, tortured breath, his eyes glittering towards them. 'They're not going to help us! Nobody's goin' to help us. D'ye hear me? Nobody! We've got to help ourselves. If we don't we'll never get out of the bloody gutter where Capitalism has shoved us. Christ Almighty, can't you see it, lads? the whole economic system's rotten as dung. They've got the money, the motor cars, fine houses, carpets on the floor, an' it's all bled out of the likes of us. We do the slavin' and sweatin' for them. An' what do we get? We don't even get food, lads, nor fire, nor proper clothes, nor boots for our kids. The minnit things go wrong we're chucked out on our necks! Chucked on to bread and margarine, and not enough of it to feed the missus and kids! Don't tell me it's because there's no food. They're throwin' fish back into the sea, burnin' coffee and wheat, slaughterin' pigs to let them rot, and us here goin' half-starvin'. If that's a proper system, lads, then God Almighty strike me dead.' "

Such was the feeling of bitterness and despair which sickened the sober minds of millions of Germans. Like Jack Reedy, they could see no way out. The Revolution had failed, democracy had failed, the Socialists had failed, the Communists had failed. But here were Hitler and the Nazis with a new gospel of hope and a panacea for all ills. Small wonder that millions fell into the trap.

If 100,000 people, in one district of Berlin alone, could believe in the miraculous power of Herr Weissenberg as the Christ Incarnate, and tens of thousands in Schmalix as an avenger for all their wrongs, it is not surprising that millions believed in Adolf Hitler

as their saviour from misery. "National Socialism", Rudolf Olden says, "was a symptom of Germany's distress. Its tide rose with the tide of bankruptcy, unemployment, starvation. Those whom misery made dizzy and senseless voted for Hitler."

"This, of course, does not suit the heroic legend," he remarks. Nor, if I may add, does it suit the legend of the Vansittart School either, which pretends that National Socialism is a normal expression of in-born German nature.

Rudolf Olden continues: "It would be more honourable (for the Nazis) to have been elected by men contented and clear in their minds. But we have a classic witness to prove which version is correct. Dietrich, Hitler's Reich Press Chief, who accompanied him on all his propaganda tours, naively gave away the truth. He noted in his diary: 'It has been our experience that everywhere in Germany where economic and mental distress had reached the highest pitch, where it seemed to be least bearable, confidence in the *Führer* grew and spread to the whole people'." At the election in 1930, the Nazi vote in fact increased from 810,000 to 6,400,000.

According to the theory of Mr. Rohan D'O Butler which I have mentioned before, "National Socialism is . . . naturally German . . . for the Nazis would never have won the devotion of the German folk by imposing upon it a régime wholly alien to the German outlook". In that case, why did the Nazis fail to win the devotion of the German people when they were living under normal conditions, economically and mentally? Only two years before the Nazis came to power, a mere 800,000 out of an electorate of 30,000,000 had testified their devotion to National Socialism, while 29,200,000 flatly rejected the Nazi creed. Mr. Butler says the Nazis won the devotion of the people "by calling up the German spirit from the depths". May we ask, what kind of depths? Hitler's Reich Press Chief himself admitted those depths to be "economic and mental distress". It is not usual, and hardly fair, to judge the character of individuals; still less that of nations, by their behaviour in a state of aberration inflicted by disease. The German people cannot be judged by their reactions in a moment of bewilderment, frustration and delirium.

THE DAUNTLESS RANKS

The working class withstood the wave of mass hysteria like a rock. Valentin Gitermann recalls a saying current at the time: "Those who were unemployed for three years turned Communist; those, on the other hand, who were unemployed for five years, turned Nazi".* Nevertheless, Gitermann's statistics show that the

* Valentin Gitermann, *Die historische Tragödie der sozialistischen Idee* (The Historical Tragedy of the Socialist Idea).

number of disappointed Communists who went over to the Nazis was very small indeed. In July, 1932, at the height of the economic crisis, the Social Democrats and Communists together won 800,000 more votes than at their triumphant elections of 1928 (May, 1928: 12,408,000 votes; July, 1932: 13,229,000 votes). When Hitler was appointed Chancellor, the Nazis held only 197 seats out of a total of 647, and even when his power was established and the bloodhounds of terror had been unchained against Social Democrats and Communists after the Reichstag fire, the Social Democrats lost only one seat out of the 120 gained in the previous election, and the Communists 19 out of 100. The Catholic Centre even won three new seats; and Hitler collected less than 44 per cent of the votes and 288 seats out of 647. This was a time, remember, when hundreds of Socialist and Communist leaders and propagandists had been murdered or imprisoned, when the Press was stifled and the Left had no chance whatever of stating its case. It was not the entire German people that went mad.

Forty-four per cent of the votes cast—that is, just 2 per cent more than the Austrian Socialists polled regularly in four subsequent general elections. No one in this country or anywhere else has proclaimed that “the Austrians were Reds” just because 42 per cent of the Austrian electorate time and again voted Socialist. The British Conservatives have, indeed, been particularly anxious to distinguish between the Austrian Social Democrats and the Austrian Catholics. If I had boasted at the time that “the Austrians are Socialists”, it would have been a gross misrepresentation of the facts, although two-thirds of the people of Vienna were in fact “Reds”. Then why refuse the German people the justice of a distinction between Nazis and anti-Nazis, between “bad” and “good” Germans?

BELIEF IN HITLER'S PROMISES

In March, 1933, rather more than two-fifths of the German people wanted Hitler in power, or at any rate they voted for him. Another tenth (the electorate of the German People's Party) wanted a similar régime, but without Hitler. Thus, a small majority of the Germans, it is true, desired to replace the democratic Republic by an authoritarian régime, no doubt because they attributed their personal miseries to the inefficiency of democracy. They did not understand the complicated mechanism of capitalist economy, which had ruined the small farmers in Holstein as well as other small farmers in the Middle West of America, and which let loose an avalanche of unemployment in Berlin as well as in Pittsburg. They did not understand that the economic

crisis in Germany was merely part of a world economic crisis, generated by the anarchy of capitalist economy.

Hitler promised to sweep away the economic crisis, to create prosperity, to provide everyone with work and bread. Half the German people believed him, so they voted for him. He did not promise to overcome the crisis with rearmament and war; on the contrary, he protested that peace was his highest aim. In his very first statement in the Reichstag, in March, 1933, he made a solemn pledge to maintain peace; and in May, 1935 (also in the Reichstag), he even stated: "National Socialist Germany desires peace from its deeper inner creed and conviction. . . . If leaders and rulers only desire peace, the people themselves have never wanted war".

About half the German nation took Hitler's words at their face value. But so did the majority of statesmen in Britain and the United States. The repeated warnings of the German Social Democrats that "Fascism means war! Hitler means war!" went unheeded. The German Socialists appealed to the world not to tolerate Hitler's rearmament of Germany. On 13th January, 1934, the Executive of the German Social Democratic Party issued in a manifesto once more the following warning: "The Labour Parties of all countries should be careful not to underrate the danger of German National Socialism. Equal rights for the democracies, but no armaments for the dictatorship eager for war. . . . In order to secure peace and to protect the freedom of the nations, it is not military concessions which are required, but disarmament and especially the disbanding of the S.S. and S.A. formations."

But the rulers of Britain and America did not believe the German Socialists; they believed Hitler. They treated the warnings of the German Socialists as the sound and fury of war-mongers; Hitler however was, in their view, an honest man. He rearmed Germany in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles; he scrapped Locarno; he intervened in Spain with armed force; he annexed Austria with armed force, yet they still thought him an honest and well-meaning man. "Peace in our time!" rejoiced Mr. Chamberlain, believing sincerely in the success of his mission to Hitler in September, 1938. And the majority of the British and French peoples shared his confidence in Hitler's word.

Since even responsible British and American statesmen, with wide political experience and sources of information at their disposal which the average man in Germany lacked, trusted Hitler, was it surprising that the average German also trusted that wizard? The common people in Germany were not burdened with political responsibility; they knew nothing of world affairs

and were unaccustomed to looking ahead. In their ignorance they voted for Hitler and looked to him for guidance in bewilderment and salvation from despair. They erred as much as the British and French people erred in trusting him.

WHY NO GERMAN REVOLUTION?

The German people became the victims of their credulity. Hitler won supreme power by deceiving them. But once a people is caught in the iron claws of Fascism it is lost.

British Socialists wondered in all the nine years of Fascist rule in Germany why there was never the slightest indication of an attempt by the German workers to overthrow the tyranny. I remember a talk I had with a prominent member of the British Labour Party a few days after the outbreak of war. He wanted to know whether I thought the German workers would at least revolt now. I replied that I thought it impossible that they could, unless the Fascist war machine had disintegrated. "Do you think, then," he asked impatiently, "that the German workers will go on working in the munition factories just as they did before?" "Yes, I think so," I said, "for they cannot do otherwise." My friend replied most emphatically: "If that is really so, then I tell you that the German workers are every bit as responsible for the war as their Fascist Government."

Such an opinion reflects a considerable under-estimation of the power of any modern State, and still more that of a totalitarian dictatorship. Henry H. Champion, active in the Social Democratic Federation, as early as 1885 called attention to the conditions of armed insurrection in an age of modern weapons. "Some of our comrades seem not to have realised the full meaning of modern improvements in weapons of war", he wrote in *Justice*. "In previous times barricades may have been successful. In the face of modern arms of precision and quick-firing guns, barricades are of no use. To be successful in street fighting we must have either better weapons or the positive assurance that the soldiers will refuse to obey their officers. If we should attack notwithstanding", he concludes, "we are just like savages who, with their arrows and bows, array themselves against Gatling and Nordenfeldt guns. The rôle of street fighting is over." *

Since Champion's day, the development of weapons of destruction has made enormous strides. Those simple rifles and old-fashioned guns have been replaced by the modern machine-gun, by the field-gun with its tremendous firing-speed, by tanks of all descriptions, by bombers and fighter planes with their machine-

* Quoted in M. Beer's *History of British Socialism*.

guns. "In general it may be said", Harold Laski observes, "that under modern conditions no revolution has any serious prospect of success so long as the loyalty of the armed forces to the Government has not become a matter of doubt." *

THE FASCIST MACHINERY OF COERCION

If this is true for any modern State, it is all the more true for a totalitarian dictatorship. Modern tyranny has devised and accomplished a technique and a machinery of oppression more redoubtable than its military weapons. It atomises the whole fabric of society; it dissolves especially the working class into its constituent parts. By abolishing the rights of assembly and discussion and by suppressing freedom of speech and of the Press, it prevents any organisation of the workers as a political and social force, any shaping of their minds, any possibility of taking decisions in common. It threatens all who challenge the system, or even who appear to disagree with the ruling hierarchy, with utter destruction, with confiscation of their livelihood, with concentration camps, and with torture and death not only for themselves, but also for their families. Finally, in order to defend its system of thralldom against organised resistance, Fascism has forged the machinery of police into a most subtle instrument of spies. There are spies in every street, in every workshop, in every dwelling-house, even in many families. Like a monstrous spider with millions of legs, the Fascist State power embraces every individual and sucks his mind and strength and paralyses him. It is indeed a "deadly power that fixes its seal upon the lips of truth". Individual anti-Fascists in Germany, even if they number many millions, must, in the face of the terrific apparatus, remain utterly helpless in their hatred of the system, so long as no big cracks begin to show in the Nazi edifice.

CONDITIONS OF INSURRECTION

The experience of the Austrian Socialists may perhaps illustrate this thesis. The Fascist régime of Dollfuss and Schuschnigg, imposed by armed force upon the Austrian workers, was the weakest régime among the totalitarian dictatorships in Europe. It was attacked by the Socialists and the Nazis as well. It was supported by no social force worthy of note. It was feared by nobody and loathed by all. On the other hand, there was a working class, militarily trained, a Socialist Party which had gathered to its support two-fifths of the whole of the Austrian and two-

* H. Laski, *The State in Theory and Practice*.

thirds of the total of the Viennese population. They had never yielded an inch to Fascism; their spirit remained, under the dictatorship, as strong as ever; their underground movement was amazingly vigorous. Nevertheless, the Austrian workers, as a class, never attempted to revolt against the Fascist Government once it was established, because it commanded a great military and police power. The Nazi insurrection of July, 1934, was armed, financed, and in every way supported by the vast power of Hitler Germany; yet it failed entirely. The history of the social struggles in Europe since 1789 has clearly proved that revolutions cannot succeed unless the machinery of State is disintegrating.

It may be retorted that the Austrian workers did fight, at least before Fascism seized power. They did indeed. But it should be noted that they resisted an assault; that they fought when they were clumsily provoked by the armed forces of the State; that they shot back when Dollfuss actually opened fire on the workers' dwellings. Then the Austrian workers—to be exact, a small minority of them—replied bullet for bullet. They acted spontaneously, like a man attacked by a highway bandit. But on the historical 15th March, 1933, when Dollfuss scrapped the institution of Parliament and with it the constitutional foundations of the Republic, they did not rise. That was a case for deliberate action. The Executive of the Austrian Social Democratic Party would have had to decide upon an armed insurrection. There is not the slightest doubt that the working class would have responded to the call to arms—in fact, they were expecting the Party signal for armed rebellion and general strike. A joint meeting of the Party Executive, of the Executive of the Trade Unions and the Social Democratic members of parliament had assembled to deliberate on action. But in the face of overwhelmingly superior armed forces, they shrank from invoking the certainty of bloodshed and destruction. They agreed to continue exploring all the legal means of retrieving the situation. I was myself a party to this decision, so I must share the responsibility for a fateful error—as I now see it in retrospect—which we all committed. None of us could see any prospect of success in an armed fight against the armed forces of the State, which were then undoubtedly loyal to the Government, and so none of us had the audacity to begin a battle which seemed foredoomed to failure.

A similar situation emerged in Germany when von Papen deposed the Prussian Government in July, 1932. His action was an open counter-revolutionary *coup d'état*. The German Labour movement had to decide how to meet it. It was confronted with the Army, loyal to the counter-revolutionary Government; with the main part of the police force; and with 400,000 armed Nazi

Storm-troopers. The Labour camp, on the other side, was split and demoralised, and there were more than 6,000,000 workers on the dole. In eleven days time the German people would have had the opportunity of a plebiscite, as the General Election was fixed for the end of July. So the Labour leaders decided to leave it to the people. We know now that this decision was one of the greatest disasters in history. It was probably the last chance of saving Germany from Fascism. I personally have not the slightest doubt that millions of German workers would have downed tools and that thousands would have fought if the call had sounded.

It seems, therefore, not quite justifiable to dismiss the German workers as cowards for their failure by pointing to the heroism of the Viennese and Spanish workers, who fought in self-defence against direct and brutal attack. Von Papen was cunning enough to avoid such a clash of arms as Dollfuss deliberately provoked in February, 1934. Von Papen even had a precedent for his action, as Ebert had replaced the constitutional Government of Saxony and Thuringia by a Reich Commissar. In the case of Spain the workers were defending a constitutional Government when it was treacherously attacked by perjured generals. When they fought they acted on behalf of the constitution and the law; they were led by a legal Government which had the power to issue orders legally binding on the Army and the people. In Spain, the Government was united in purpose with the working class, the peasants, and the loyal section of the middle class. In Germany, on the other hand, the Government authorised to command the Army was counter-revolutionary, and the Prussian Government, with the Socialist Otto Braun at its head, was no longer in power, although it was still in office. (It had been defeated in the General Election shortly before von Papen's putsch.)

POLITICAL WEARINESS OF PEOPLES

There was perhaps another reason which might have made the German Labour leaders subconsciously hesitate to venture on an armed insurrection. That was the political weariness of the masses. For years and years the working men had to encounter, often in street-fighting, the Nazi challenge. There were times when almost every day a few of their comrades fell in such a clash, or were murdered, or beaten up. But all the sacrifices appeared to be in vain. The tide of the reaction rose, and the working-class, divided as it was, seemed helpless to stem it. It may be that the German Labour leaders, perhaps weary and faint-hearted themselves, feared that an appeal to the workers for the last supreme effort would not be answered powerfully enough.

Every people has experienced times of profound weariness in its history; also the English. There were years when the life of the English people was subdued by a veritable reign of terror of a tyrannic king, and his Cabinet, a group of the "King's servants" in fact as well as in name, and a Parliament, the pensioner of the royal bounty; when Pitt, alarmed by the rise of the French revolution, by suspending the Habeas Corpus Act and repealing the Bill of Rights, "cut up", as Fox stated in the House of Commons, "the whole of the Constitution by the root, by changing our limited monarchy into an absolute despotism". It was a time, as H. T. Buckle described it, when "the ministers of the day, turning a struggle of party into a war of conscription, filled the prisons with their political opponents, and allowed them, when in confinement, to be treated with shameful severity."* Indeed, whoever opposed the Government was proclaimed an "enemy to his country"; even those who opposed slave-trade. They were kept in prison for years without inquiry. Anticipating Hitler's Gestapo methods, the Government was then at pains, as Fox testified in the House of Commons, "to erect any man, not merely into an inquisitor, but into a judge, a spy, an informer,—to set father against father, brother against brother". Whoever was merely suspected as an adversary of the Government's policy "was watched at every turn, and his private letters were opened as they passed through the post office". The Press was stifled and public meetings were strictly prohibited. Pitt's Combination Acts rendered Trade Unionism illegal, punished all combinations of wage-earners, put the workers into the master's hand. Under Castlereagh, despotism became still worse. Shelley cursed him then, as we curse Hitler now, "a monster of tyranny"; he branded his régime in words which ring today as powerfully and devastatingly as they did generations ago:

I met Murder on the way:
 He had a mask like Castlereagh,—
 Very smooth he looked, yet grim,
 Seven bloodhounds followed him!
 All were fat, and well they might
 Be in admirable plight,
 For one by one and two by two
 He tossed them human hearts to chew.†

And yet, "although the measures of the Government caused a disaffection of the most serious kind", the people suffered the extermination of their liberties without resistance: "They patiently reserved their force till a better time", says Buckle. The Com-

* H. T. Buckle, *Civilisation in England*.

† Shelley, *Masque of Anarchy*.

bination Acts remained law for nearly the whole of a quarter of a century.

Another time of weariness of the English people was noted by Cobden when he complained, in 1861, that the working men were "so quiet under the taunts and insults offered them". In despair he cried out, as we are crying out now: "Have they no Spartacus among them to head a revolt of the slave class against their political tormentors?" * Cobden explained the political inertia of the workers as the result of the exhausting struggle, "follies", and defeat of Chartism. But only a few years later the British working class regained its strength; it was soon in full activity for suffrage reform, and already in 1867 in possession of the franchise. Stirring events in the sphere of international policy—the American Civil War and the Polish insurrection—had kindled anew the fighting spirit of the British workers.

No people is free from the visitation of political weariness. The French working class needed almost a quarter of a century until it had recovered from the crushing defeat of the Commune in 1871. The defeat of the Russian revolution in 1906 stupefied the revolutionary movement in that country for almost a decade. The progressive frustration of the German Revolution had already in 1932 paralysed the working class; in fifteen years of fierce struggle against fearful odds it had spent its strength. It was virtually exhausted when the supreme test came.

GUILT AND RESPONSIBILITY OF PEOPLES

If the German people are to be condemned for not having resisted the Nazi régime by an armed insurrection, then we must also indict many other nations. If the German people are made responsible for the acts of their Government, then all nations alike must be judged by this same criterion.

We should have to begin the procedure with the Italian people, since Fascism was first devised and established in Italy. When Mussolini seized power, the Italian Socialist Party had 122 deputies and was the strongest single party in Parliament. It was, in fact, the strongest party in the country. It had altogether more than 216,000 members, in addition to the General Confederation of Labour, which counted 2,150,000 members—750,000 peasants among them. The Socialist Party was further supported in its struggle against Fascism by the Catholic *Partito Popolari Italiani* (Popular Party), with 920,000 peasants among its members and 107 deputies in the Chamber. These two parties, together with the sixteen Communist deputies, numbered 245 members in the

* John Morley, *Life of Cobden*.

Chamber as against only thirty-five Fascists, when Mussolini took up the reins of government.

The Socialist workers and the Catholic peasants resisted the Fascists, sometimes even with arms, until Mussolini came to power. And many thousands of them sacrificed their lives for the sake of freedom. Nevertheless, when the National Fascist Party announced publicly its intention to "march on Rome", at its Naples meeting on 24th October, not a finger was raised to offer resistance to the threatened Fascist *putsch*. And when the Fascists actually marched on Rome, on 29th October, they were unopposed. The day before, King Victor Emanuel had appointed Mussolini Prime Minister. The Socialists and Catholics accepted the *fait accompli* without much ado. The Popular Party later even joined the Government, and the majority of the Chamber accorded Mussolini plenary powers and approved an electoral reform which assured him the domination of Parliament. The Socialists confined their opposition to normal Parliamentary measures. Even when their renowned leader Giacomo Matteotti was murdered, and the country was swept by deep indignation and burning rage, and—perhaps for the first and the last time—a psychological revolutionary situation arose which, if properly exploited, might have brought about the downfall of Fascism, the Socialists still hesitated, and did not fight. This assertion implies no reproach; it is simply a statement of facts.

Mussolini then launched his first aggressive adventure against the unarmed, helpless people of Ethiopia, in flagrant breach of treaties and in defiance of the fifty-two nations of the League; the Italian people, to all appearances, docilely supported this shameless outrage. Mussolini next kindled civil war in Spain, and sent thousands of Italians to the Peninsula to shed the blood of a people with whom they had no quarrel. The Italian people connived at this crime too. Mussolini then attacked Albania, declared war on France and Britain, and fell upon Greece. The Italian people remained obedient. If the thesis should be accepted that peoples are responsible for the acts of their governments, the Italians must be brought to judgment as well as the Germans.

We were bound, further, to punish the people of Japan for all the blood they have shed for more than five years in China; for the most abominable criminal devices which the Japanese Government has applied in China to poison the body and mind of a whole nation"by systematic distribution of opium; for cruelties without precedent inflicted by Japanese soldiers on Chinese prisoners of war.

We should have to condemn the Hungarians, who, first, shared the spoils of dismembered Czechoslovakia, then treacherously fell

upon the distressed Serbs, and, finally, marched into Russia and murdered people who had never harmed them. We should have to indict the Bulgarians, who, as the hangmen of Germany, massacred Serbs in their tens of thousands when they were desperately fighting for their independence. We should have to persecute the Rumanians, who appear as the most detestable mercenaries, perjured, covetous, corrupt to the core. We should have to convict the Croatian people, who looted and burned Serbian villages and towns and put their inhabitants to death, men, women, and children alike. We should have to impeach the Slovaks, perhaps also the Finns, and surely the Austrians, who, since their subjugation by the Fascist machinery, are now passively forging in the factories the weapons for Hitler's war against the freedom of the world, just as are the German workers: and for all we know, Austrian soldiers have fought in Norway, Greece, Crete, and Karelia just as gallantly as the Germans. We should have to proscribe the Danes, who did not even attempt to join the front of humanity against the powers of darkness.

Should we accept Lord Vansittart's assumption that "the many" are responsible for the acts of "the few", we would have to blame the Jews too, were they not already so cruelly punished by Fascism. For it must not be forgotten that there were numbers of Jews who actually supported Fascism so long as their support was accepted and the Jews tolerated: that is, so long as the Fascist régime, leaving the Jews alone, confined its activity merely to the suppression of Democracy and Socialism. Italian Jews occupied in the Fascist hierarchy and State machine most conspicuous positions; Emil Ludwig, the distinguished German writer of Jewish origin, published as late as 1933 an amazing 70,000-words interpretation of Mussolini; Karl Kraus, the brilliant Viennese satirist of Jewish origin, vindicated in a ferocious attack against Social Democracy the extirpation of the Rights of Man by Dollfuss, and many (mostly well-to-do) Jews rallied with timid and servile cunning behind the Austrian Clerico-Fascist régime. There also were individual German Jews who supported even Hitler himself with money, although he never concealed his intention to exterminate the Jewish race altogether. "The few" have been, partly, genuine Fascists, because they genuinely hated Social Democracy; partly, they hoped to be spared from persecution by deserting "the many" of their brethren in their ordeal. Would it not be gross injustice to indict the many for the follies and baseness of the few?

Adopting the assumption that the peoples are responsible for the acts of their Governments, we should perhaps have to blame every people in the world, not excluding the British, for (if I

may quote the exact words in the Preamble of the Labour Party Declaration of February, 1940): "the shortsighted weakness of the British . . . Government over a term of years". When the British Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, declared, a fortnight before the invasion of Austria by Germany: "We must not try to delude ourselves, and still more we must not try to delude small and weak nations into thinking that they will be protected by the League against aggression . . .", public opinion in Great Britain was behind him. And so it was when Chamberlain said after Munich: "How horrible, fantastic, incredible is it that we should be digging trenches and trying gas-masks here, because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing". George Orwell confirms my own impression when he says: "However much one might hate to admit it, it is almost certain that between 1931 and 1940 the National Government represented the will of the people. . . . In spite of the campaigns of a few thousand Left wingers, it is fairly certain that the bulk of the English people were behind Chamberlain's foreign policy." * What this policy meant in terms of humanity may be expressed in John Ruskin's stirring words (in *Sesame and Lilies*) on a similar occasion: to "see noble nations murdered, man by man, woman by woman, child by child, without an effort or a tear. . . ." Mr. Chamberlain, and with him the British people, probably thought, as Lord Beaconsfield once said, "The world is a wheel, and it will come round aright". The wheel, however, broke, and the world crashed, burying under its debris the happiness of two thousand million human beings.

I, therefore, doubt whether this approach to the problem of the responsibility of nations leads anywhere; it certainly does not lead to the finding of truth nor to the triumph of justice. Surely, in a deeper sense, we must all share the responsibility for the disaster that befell humanity. We may all feel guilty for not heeding the profound truth, preached tirelessly by Pericles almost 2,000 years ago, that the secret of liberty is courage—both intellectual and moral courage. The other day I re-read the stirring lament of Shakespeare's *King Richard II*:

Though some of you, with Pilate, wash your hands,
Showing an outward pity—yet you Pilates
Have here delivered me to my sour cross,
And water cannot wash away your sin.

I feel that I myself have sinned, that we all have sinned. And perhaps all of us deserve "to bear the whips and scorns of time".

* Georg Orwell, *The Lion and the Unicorn*.

THE WORLD REVOLUTION

When the material productive forces of society have advanced to a certain stage of their development they come into opposition with the old conditions of production, or, to use a legal expression, with the old property relations, under which these forces have hitherto been excited. Instead of continuing to serve as institutions for the development of the productive power of society, these antiquated property relations now become a hindrance. Thus begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic bases the whole vast superstructure undergoes, sooner or later, a revolution.—KARL MARX, *Critique of Political Economy*.

IF I am correct in my assumption that the German people alone are not the cause of the troubles of our time, then we ought to search after other possible causes of its disease. They must be somehow hidden beneath the world's surface, and a diagnosis would surely not be easy. But the causes must necessarily be explored, otherwise the disease cannot be cured.

Again, on the assumption that neither the Germans, the Italians, nor the Japanese are the source of the evil, one thing seems to be so abundantly clear that it amounts to a sheer truism: that the present world war must, in its deeper sense, have been caused by a crisis in our society that has not been solved either by the first world war or during the interlude between the two world wars.

The immediate causes of the first world war, as well as of the second, are, I submit, entirely irrelevant to an understanding of the nature of the contemporary crisis. Who still remembers that actually the assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo let loose the cataclysm of unparalleled human suffering? Or that the rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Russia for ascendancy over the Balkans brought about the war? Or that Germany's bid for sea-power and colonies had created the tension between Britain and Germany that exploded in war? All these incidents are almost obliterated from the people's memories, because they explain hardly anything of the character of the upheaval that engulfed humanity.

Nor will Hitler's aggressive attack on Poland, or Japan's rapacious attack on the mainland of Asia, have more than an episodic significance in the history of the contemporary crises.

When the first world war began in 1914, no one was sufficiently farsighted to visualise its actual outcome; to predict that four great autocratic dynasties which for centuries had moulded the shape of the world—the Hapsburgs, the Hohenzollerns, the Romanoffs, the Osmons—would be overthrown by revolution;

that in Europe after the war little would still remain of the Europe of 1914.

The war of 1914 released gigantic subterranean forces which had hardly been noticed before the war began. It is clear that the significance of these forces was not recognised even after they had already started working on a universal scale. Most of the men of our destiny—statesmen, labour leaders, industrialists, economists, politicians, publishers, bishops, bankers, men of letters—acted on the assumption that the economic, political, and ideological foundations of the world after 1918 were essentially the same as they had been before 1914. They were not prepared, for instance, to acknowledge, and neither did they understand, the historical meaning of the change of society that had occurred in Russia; they considered that great event merely as a criminal venture of only ephemeral importance. Bolshevism—as later Fascism—was regarded as something outside normal conditions, and normal conditions were recognised only as the structure of a society based on the principle of *laissez-faire* capitalism and strict parliamentary Liberalism. The “dead hand” of the nineteenth-century conception of economy and State organisation still swayed their minds. They did not comprehend that on that fourth day of August, 1914, the avalanche of a world revolution was set in motion. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 was merely its first visible sign; the national revolution in Central and Eastern Europe in 1918 its second; the advent of Fascism its third; the second world war its fourth; the Indian crisis its fifth: we are in the midst of a rapid process of transformation, at ever-increasing pace. If people still wonder whether this war will be followed by a European revolution, they are perhaps not quite aware that revolutionary processes on a universal scale have already been at work for a quarter of a century.

The revolutionary processes are dialectic. They set loose revolutionary forces as well as counter-revolutionary forces; they produce new contradictions and tensions; they do not proceed evenly, but by fits and starts.

Let us briefly examine a few of the subterranean forces that generated the world revolution, of which the Armageddon of our days is only one phase in its processes.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The primary event that shook society to its foundations in the twentieth century was the great technical transformation of industry and agriculture which originated during the last war from the need to utilise man-power, material, and energy to the utmost.

The pace of the slow evolution in the field of production was suddenly evidently accelerated. This quickening evolutionary process, directed by the limitless needs of the belligerent States, became so universal that it effected a total revolution in the conditions of life.

The first industrial revolution in modern history was caused by technical inventions: by Arkwright's invention of the cotton-spinning frame in 1769, by Watt's invention of the steam engine in 1776, by Cartwright's invention of the mechanic loom in 1786. What occurred in the sphere of production, and in its scientific organisation, during the last war and the decade that followed it, was termed by many economists the second industrial revolution. It was not due to primary technical inventions, but to technical inventions necessitated by a political emergency: by war on a world scale which had the character of a "total war". Its conditions required the total exploitation of the full industrial power of the nation to attain the maximum of output with the minimum of energy. The pressing need to save man-power, material, and energies forced the different nations ceaselessly and systematically to revise their methods, technique, and organisation in all branches of industry and agriculture; a revision that was—during the war—free from considerations of profitability.

For our purpose, it is hardly necessary to demonstrate the technical processes of this industrial revolution. It may, however, be useful to illustrate its significance with a few examples for which I am indebted in the first place to Otto Bauer's *Kapitalismus und Sozialismus nach dem Krieg*.*

Just as the first industrial revolution in the last quarter of the eighteenth century set free man-power on a vast scale by substituting mechanical power for it, so the second industrial revolution in the first quarter of the twentieth century freed enormous masses of man-power by new inventions as well as by scientific organisation of the industry.

Let us look at the production of power. Before the last war, electrical power was on the whole produced from coal. During and since the last war many countries turned over to the production of electricity from water-power. For the production of one unit by water-power, only one-twentieth of the human power necessary for the production of one unit from coal is needed. Italy alone, for instance, by turning to the hydro-electric generation of power, saved 9,000,000 tons of coal which she had hitherto imported from Britain. Norway, Canada, and Switzerland produce nearly all their electrical power by hydro-generated methods, Japan produces nine-tenths of her electrical power,

* *Capitalism and Socialism after the War*.

Sweden more than three-quarters, France and the United States two-fifths. The labour of millions of coal-miners was replaced by utilising the energy produced by water.

At the same time the technique of heating economy made great progress. The amount of coal necessary for the production of one kilowatt hour was decreased in Great Britain from 3.40 per cent to 2.06 per cent; that meant that Great Britain, which needed in 1939 only 9.6 million tons of coals for the production of electric power, would have needed in 1920, under the not yet fully developed technique of heating, 14.4 million tons for the production of the same amount of electrical power. Thus Great Britain saved, thanks to these processes, almost a third of the amount of coal. But at the same time, the amount of man-power required to produce coal was enormously reduced by the introduction of mechanical devices. In his pamphlet, *Coal*, James Griffiths illustrates, with a few striking figures, the implications of the industrial revolution on coal production. The output per person in employment per shift of eight hours in 1913 was 20.23 cwts. In 1935, in a seven-and-a-half-hour shift, it was 23.35 cwts. Thanks to the use of cutting machines and conveyers in the British pits, "we could produce", says James Griffiths, "a total output of 250,000,000 tons in 1935, with 170,000 fewer persons than we could in 1913, on account of the increased output per person employed".

How the development of fuel economy affected the coal trade is further illustrated by James Griffiths: thus, for instance, in 1933, the gas industry in Britain produced 36 per cent more gas than in 1930; but used only 2½ per cent more coal. In 1933 the total number of units generated by the electrical undertakings in Britain was 189 per cent greater than in 1920; but the consumption of coal by those undertakings increased by only 44 per cent. In short, between 1913 and 1930 the coal consumption per industrial unit was reduced in Great Britain, Germany, and France by 15 to 20 per cent, in the United States by 28 to 30 per cent. These four industrial countries alone saved between 220,000,000 and 243,000,000 tons of coal through fuel economy. In 1933 Great Britain produced 207,110,000 tons of coal. Now the saving of 220,000,000 to 240,000,000 tons of coal means far more than the saving of the total annual British production of coal, which amounted in 1933 to 207,000,000 tons. As a result of the fuel economy of the four great industrial countries, the labour of 1,000,000 coal-miners became redundant.

The methods of saving man-power transformed every branch of industry. The following figures * indicate the extent of the recent industrial revolution:

* Given by the President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (for 1926).

- 1 man, with 1 bottle-making machine, replaces 54 men
- 1 girl, with 6 rib-cutting machines, replaces 25 girls ;
- 2 men, with 1 coal conveyer, replace 50 men ;
- 1 man, with 1 window-glass machine, replaces 20 men ;
- 1 man, with 1 cigarette-wrapping machine, replaces 100 men.

Before the technical changes set in, the Thyssen Foundries in Hamborn employed 10,000 workers for the production of 75,000 tons of steel ; before the present war they produced 170,000 tons of steel with only 9,900 workers. The output per working man an hour has increased in the United States since 1914 * by 210 per cent in the automobile industry, by 211 per cent in the tyre industry, by 58 per cent in the cement industry, by 28 per cent in the leather industry, by 26 per cent in the paper industry, and by 17 per cent in the boot industry. The industrial output of the United States was in 1927 30·8 per cent larger than in 1919 ; but the number of employed workers was 8 per cent smaller. During the ten years from 1919 to 1929 the output per worker increased in the United States † by 51 per cent. In 1929 less than half of the number of workers was needed to produce the same volume of goods as in 1919.

Even clerical work has been largely replaced by machinery. In the London City office of one of the "Big Five" banks a machine was installed in 1933 which, operated by a girl, dealt with 60,000 separate ledger entries in an hour, recorded the code numbers of the client and the cheque, the amount paid in or out, and the total balances and interest due.

By the substitution of modern machine technique for primitive methods these technical processes also transformed agriculture. Thus, in the United States the number of man hours of labour required per acre for all processes of cultivation and harvesting was estimated for the year 1924 as follows: ‡

	Actual farm average	By using the best machine methods
Wheat	15·5	1·6
Hay	10·7	1·6
Cotton	118·5	45·0
Potatoes	90·4	50·0

The harvesting combine machine reaps, shocks, loads, hauls, stacks, and threshes on the same day. In the morning the grain

* According to the report of the Hoover Committee, *Recent Economic Changes in the United States*.

† According to the International Labour Office publication *Social Aspects of Rationalisation*.

‡ I quote the figures from Colin Clark's *Condition of Economic Progress*.

is still growing; in the evening it is ready for the elevators. It takes two days' hard work for a farmer to spray 40 acres of potatoes; but only twenty-five minutes by using an aeroplane. The boll weevil used to destroy nearly half the world's cotton crop each year. With the old mule-drawn anti-pest machines only 30 acres a day could be treated; now aeroplanes, fitted with poison-gas tanks, are able to drench 300 acres in a single hour. Or, to take another instance: a single Californian hatchery, with an incubator capacity of 50,000 eggs at a time, hatches 3,000,000 chickens a year by electricity. Again, four to six cows can be milked at one time with an electric milker, of which there are many hundred thousands in the United States alone.

These examples demonstrate to what extent technical methods, if systematically applied, could, and partly did, replace human labour. Professor Sody estimated that 4000 men equipped with modern machinery could produce the whole of the United States wheat crop. In fact, only a small section of agriculture works as yet with modern machinery. It is, however, worthy of note that while the area under the plough increased in the United States from 300.6 million acres to 353.7 million acres from 1909 to 1928, the agricultural population working on the land decreased during the same period from 31,400,000 to 27,700,000. The output per head of agricultural workers increased by 30 per cent from 1913 to 1925.

The transformations in the sphere of production also caused a revolution in applied chemistry. The production of natural dyes and fertilisers has been largely replaced by synthetic production. The replacement of natural nitrates by synthetic nitrates has reduced Chile's export by half since 1923, and has flooded the world with food-forcing chemicals. Synthetic materials have to a great extent replaced natural silk and natural textile fibre, and to a lesser, though considerable, extent rubber and petrol.

Hand in hand with mechanisation and applied chemistry went the rationalisation of production, considerably increasing the productivity of labour alone by scientific division, and stricter control, of work.

These few instances may suffice to indicate the magnitude of the second industrial revolution. It enormously increased the productivity of human power. It changed the conditions of production. But it did not change the pattern of society.

The ever-increasing productive power of human labour requires a corresponding increase in purchasing power in order to prevent mass unemployment. If demand does not increase in proportion to the increase in output—that is, if the rise in the standard of living does not keep pace with the rate of growth of

productive power—an ever-increasing number of workers must become superfluous.

In order to secure work for the working people, the industrial revolution would have required, if it were not to cause a social crisis, a complete change of the economic conditions of society; it would have required a system which, by social planning, maintained the level of demand of goods with the volume of goods which society was able to produce by the employment of the whole population; it would have required planned economy aiming at abundance.

The industrial revolution indeed brought about a planned system, at any rate in certain sections of the economic life. But it was a planned economy aiming at scarcity.

The rapid scientific advance which revolutionised the conditions of twentieth-century economic technique, combined with the policy of all great countries to increase the industrial war-potential, hastened the tendency to restrictive monopoly capitalism. In order to maintain profits, the rulers of economic life were not so much concerned with the increase of production as with the prevention of so-called over-production. It was in their interest to produce less at a high, rather than more at a low price. A vast national and international machinery was set in motion compulsorily to limit output by quota arrangements, by closing factories, mines and shipyards, by non-utilisation of new technical inventions, by burning crops, by the restriction of the land under plough, by keeping idle the savings of whole nations in form of hoarded gold in the steel cellars of Wall Street.

The contradiction between the increased productivity of labour and the unchanged social structure of the capitalist system caused the devastating economic crisis and social tension that ultimately exploded in the second world war.

THE NATIONAL REVOLUTION

Centuries ago the British, French, Spanish, and Dutch people achieved their national unity in nation-States; the Italians and Germans as late as the second half of the last century. But many nations, dwelling on the vast lands stretching from the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea to the Baltic Sea and the Forests of Bohemia, were before the last war still deprived of their national unity, national independence, and statchood. Nearly all of them were subjugated by the Hapsburgs, Russia, or Germany.

However, in face of the stupendous power of these three great empires, the national aspirations of many of those small, split-up, helpless nations seemed rather fantastic. They could only be

achieved by the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary and by a crushing defeat of Russia and Germany in a European war. Yet all these three events appeared, till July, 1914, beyond the bounds of possibility. The statesmen of the *Entente* did not believe even early in 1918 in the possibility of the liquidation of the Hapsburg Empire. Woodrow Wilson demanded, when he proclaimed his Fourteen Points on 8th January, 1918, for Serbia only access to the sea, and for "the peoples of Austria-Hungary . . . the freest opportunity of autonomous development"; next day Lloyd George, in his speech in the House of Commons, proclaimed only national autonomy for the nations living under the Hapsburg sceptre. The Czech National Council was recognised by the French Government only as late as 29th June, 1918, and by the British Government on 1st July. The creation of national States was not implied, as is commonly assumed, in Wilson's Fourteen Points, and was at any rate until the beginning of 1918 not a war aim of the *Entente*.

The national aspirations of the southern Slavs, the Czechs, the Poles, were subterranean forces. They were irresistible, revolutionary forces. They altered the face of Central and Eastern Europe. But their magnitude was hardly understood before 1918. Otto Bauer has shown that, for instance, the national revolution of the Czech people "began not as late as 1918, but actually as early as 1897",* when the Czechs launched their final struggle for national equality and autonomy by paralysing the Austrian Parliament. But the rulers of the Hapsburg Empire regarded the national drive by the Czechs, as well as by the southern Slav people, merely as a nuisance; the heir to the throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand—who was murdered in Sarajevo in June, 1914—advocated a war against, and the conquest of, Serbia as a remedy for the national aspirations of the southern Slavs, and a military *coup d'état*, forcibly imposing a new constitution, as a remedy for the national aspirations of the Czechs.

Clearly the "remedy", as visualised by the Hapsburg rulers, would only have quickened the pace of the national revolution if the war had not entirely changed the situation. The driving force of the national revolution would not have been stemmed even if the Austrian Emperor Charles had in fact succeeded in his negotiations—through Prince Sixtus of Parma—for a separate peace with the *Entente*. Just as all the German Princes were deposed and Germany became a Republic, although the *Entente* demanded only the abdication of Wilhelm II and the Hohenzollern Crown Prince, and not of the other German dynasties, so—regardless of the outcome of the peace negotiations—the southern Slav people

* Otto Bauer, *The Austrian Revolution*.

under Hapsburg rule would have joined Serbia just as the Polish people under Hapsburg rule would have joined the resurrected Polish State, the Rumanian subjects of the Emperor would have joined Rumania, the Italian subjects Italy, the Czechs would have founded their own State, and Hungary would have severed her connections with Austria—even if the *Entente* had consented to the retention of the Monarchy. The opportunity for transforming the Hapsburg Empire into a Commonwealth of free, self-governing nations was finally lost in 1905.

It is the more surprising that democrats and representatives of democratic people—like Woodrow Wilson and Lloyd George—should have underrated the force of nationalism. The idea of nationality springs clearly from the same source as the idea of democracy: from the idea of the equality of men, as Saint-Etienne, more than 150 years ago, pointed out. “The Declaration of the Rights of Nations is”, he said, “equal to the Declaration of the Rights of Man. . . . This truth is”, he added, “premature, but it is a truth.”

But this truth still appeared to be “premature” even at the beginning of 1918, although long before “all respectable people were democrats, and even the best kind of king was democratic”, as Leonard Woolf observed. Thus petrified States must burst asunder and be shattered by the dynamic forces of nationalism.

The national revolutions broke up the economic unit of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and split it into three small economic units. They also tore Finland, the three Baltic States, and the manufacturing centres, particularly the textile industry of Poland, and fertile Bessarabia, away from the Russian economic unit. Finally, they tore away the mining centres of Poland from the German economic unit. About 80,000,000 people, dwelling in a vast expanse of territory with great natural resources, had previously been incorporated into three big economic entities. The national revolutions destroyed one of the three entirely, weakened the other two economically, and formed eight new small economic entities instead.

The progress of the industrial revolution was bound up with large economic units. But the progress of the national revolution was bound up with the destruction of large economic units. Thus the national revolutions set in motion processes which presently frustrated their aims. They achieved, to be sure, the emancipation of peoples from an inferior status; but they became at the same time one of the sources of the economic crises producing universal economic insecurity. The conflict between national claims and technical and economic necessity was an additional factor in

bringing about the economic crises and the social and political tension between the two world wars.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

Mankind passed through the furnace of human sufferings of the first world war. Eleven million human beings were killed or maimed on its battlefields; uncounted millions died premature deaths from starvation and disease caused by the privations of the war; the livelihood and happiness of hundreds of millions were destroyed. For what? This question has haunted millions of minds.

Men have seen the world war as a great historical catastrophe; but at the same time they felt that it was the beginning of a new epoch, an entirely new start in life, the dawn of a millennium of happiness. For how could they otherwise have endured its misery, if they had not been inspired by the expectation of a better life to come after the war? The vision of a new world order lurked behind the promises of the belligerent Governments, and also of the leaders of the revolutionary movements, Socialist and nationalist as well, when they opposed the war. Whether he was told to fight "to make the world safe for democracy", or "for freedom", or "for a lasting peace", or "for the right of self-determination", or "for the rights of man"—the ordinary man vaguely understood only one thing: that when once the war was over he would be free and would live in a just and happier world.

Further, the war had burst the fetters of law and order and established authority, and had shaken age-old traditions. Millions had, for the first time, understood the use of force; they had learned to use the weapons of force; they were subconsciously resolved to use force for their own ends.

Such was the subterranean trend of feeling, at least among the peoples of the defeated countries. The revolution released this feeling. The people had been told that freedom, democracy, and national self-determination were the roads to happiness. So they dethroned the great imperial Houses of Hapsburg, Romanoff, and Hohenzollern; they enforced national self-determination; they instituted freedom and democracy. "The simultaneous elimination of the three Kaisers, and the disintegration of their dominions, marked the veritable end of an epoch", wrote Professor F. J. Hearnshaw; and he expressed—and obviously shared—the same expectation that inspired the masses when he said of that event: "It held out the hope of the advent of a new age marked by international amity, social solidarity, established

peace, federated peoples and universal law. . . . The day of liberty, equality, and fraternity had at last arisen." *

Yet the peoples were cheated in their hopes; the happiness they had expected failed to materialise. The war was presently followed by famine, unemployment, inflation, insecurity.

The masses, still hoping for the miracle that democracy would work, braved the turmoil of the war's aftermath; they expected that if freedom and democracy were once consolidated, then there would also be security.

But the freedom and democracy which they achieved were still only the political superstructure of a capitalist society, essentially based on the negation of the principle of security. The capitalist society rests on the principle of competition, on the conflict of private interests, on the principle of insecurity. It is, therefore, in its classical theory, opposed in principle to any infringement of *laissez faire* by State interference, social legislation or trade unionism, although it accepts, very reluctantly, State interference and "social burdens" as an insurance against unrest and revolution by the disinherited. It is fundamentally in irreconcilable conflict with every tendency towards the establishment of security, because security can be provided only by an economy planned for plenty and not by an anarchic individualist economy for private profit. When, as Charles A. Beard records,† at the height of the economic crisis in the United States President Roosevelt introduced his first measures of the New Deal, Senator G. W. Pepper closed his argument before the Court against the Adjustment Act with the exclamation: "I pray Almighty God that not in my time may 'the land of the regimented' be accepted as a worthy substitute for 'the land of the free'!" But capitalism cannot escape the trade cycle with a crisis as its climax—mankind has passed through no less than fifteen major depressions in the last hundred years—engulfing humanity again and again in a sea of misery.

Thus, the short interlude of prosperity between 1924 and 1929 was followed by the hurricane of a new crisis. It crushed, perhaps finally, in Central and Eastern Europe, the expectation that democracy, or at least political democracy alone, would be able to relieve mankind from insecurity. The economic crisis gave rise to a devastating crisis of democracy.

DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS

It was an amazing spectacle to watch how millions of people in Germany were, from the beginning of 1930, fighting passionately

* F. J. Hearnshaw, *Democracy and Labour*, published in 1924.

† C. A. Beard, *America and the Mid-passage*.

for the abolition of democracy. Millions of Communist workers longed for a Bolshevik dictatorship; millions of small peasants, shopkeepers, artisans, *petit bourgeois*, but also hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers, yearned for a Fascist dictatorship. About half of the German people were united in their revolt against democracy. Because they had expected so much from it, they had been utterly disappointed with it. They felt the flight towards authoritarianism was preferable to the torments of insecurity.

To seek the clue to this phenomenon in the serf-like nature of the German people would be, to my mind, a grave mistake, because it would divert our attention from the essentials of the deadly menace that threatens democracy everywhere. "British democracy is rapidly approaching the same conditions", observes Stafford Cripps.* The crisis of democracy is universal, because the economic insecurity of man is universal. It was not confined to Germany alone; and it has by no means passed, because insecurity has not been eliminated and becomes worse. The extent of the crisis of democracy in various countries is certainly determined by the extent of the economic insecurity of their people. It has not, fortunately—as yet—shaken the foundations of British democracy, because this country has hitherto been spared the crisis of inflation that devastated the middle class, to be followed after a short interlude by a universal crisis that brought destitution to the working and peasant classes. But experience has proved that economic insecurity can shatter the foundations of democracy everywhere. No people is immune from Fascism or another form of authoritarian régime. Every people can lose its freedom if it does not succeed in transforming the economy of insecurity into an economy of security.

Emile Vandervelde once defined authoritarianism as the political system of an economy of animal power, and democracy as the political system of an economy of mechanical power. German Socialists, when they looked at Italian Fascism, used to reassure themselves with the reflection that "Germany is not Italy", and that "it can't happen here"! We Socialists on the Continent were imbued with the idea of freedom. We believed profoundly that the idea of intellectual and social liberty was inherent in the human mind. The appeal of Socialism reverberated so powerfully in the hearts and minds of working men because it displayed the vision of a society of which the very structure promised the certainty of the unlimited progress of human liberties. Socialism without freedom was simply inconceivable to us. Never did the thought enter our minds that the working class, that struggled for Socialism as the gateway to economic security as well as that of freedom,

* Sir Stafford Cripps, *Democracy Up-to-Date*, published 1939.

would be prepared to submit to a social order providing economic security without freedom. We were not aware that the psychological revolution had profoundly changed the scale of values. Once the cry was "Rather death than slavery!"; it is now: "Rather slavery than starvation!"

For thousands of years mankind accepted the principle of inequality: privilege of birth, property, and power. Only for the last 150 years have people refused any longer to accept the inferior status of political inequality; but they still accepted economic inequality: the privilege of property for the few, and poverty and insecurity for the many. Remember, for instance, how the workers in Britain reacted to the first Industrial Revolution: with the Luddites, Chartism, Owenism, and Trades Unionism. The infuriated workmen rendered destitute by the Industrial Revolution attempted first to destroy machinery in order to regain security. Failing in the attempt to turn back the pages of history, they then submitted to and even accepted capitalism. They strove for the abolition of their inferior political status and for the alleviation of their economic plight. But they did not strive for a structural transformation of society which would provide economic equality and universal security. Richard Crossman observed, that "The British industrial worker . . . leaves to the ruling class, without demur, the privilege of power. On the whole, he neither demands nor feels the need of either political or economic equality. . . . The scope of his ambition (and after all the ideals of political and economic equality spring chiefly from this motive) is limited to immediate practical objectives. . . . The vast majority in any one class remain contented within that class. . . . The worker recognises the class difference between himself and a member of the upper class. . . . He recognises a difference in status on the same economic level and accepts it as a proper part of the system."* And G. K. Chesterton explained: "Our people like to be ruled by gentlemen. . . . They were always yielding there and patching things up somehow. . . . It was the very soul of our old aristocratic policy that even a tyrant must never figure as a tyrant. He may break down everybody's fences and steal everybody's land, but he must do it by Act of Parliament and not with a great two-handed sword. And if he meets the people he's dispossessed, he must be very polite to them and inquire after their rheumatism. That's what kept the British Constitution going—inquiring after rheumatism. . . ."†

But the equilibrium of the social classes, as here described, was broken up in Central and Eastern Europe, and even partly in

* *Political Thought in the European Tradition.*

† G. K. Chesterton, *The Return of Don Quixote.*

France, by the devastating impact of the inflation crisis immediately after the war, and entirely upset by the economic world crisis. That can happen everywhere.

In contrast to the British industrial workers, the workers in Germany, Austria, France—in fact nearly all over the Continent—were for the most part conscious Socialists, or at any rate, anti-Capitalists. They were by no means content with the present social system; they wanted to alter it. They were not any longer prepared to resign themselves to a cycle of life, as described by the American poet Carl Sandberg in these three words:

Born,
troubled,
died.

In particular, the Socialist conception that charges the State with the responsibility for the security of its citizens, became a more or less general trend of thought. When democracy in Germany—but not in Germany alone—proved unable to provide security and to redress the misery of the people, great sections of the people abandoned democracy altogether.

The British and American workers might, perhaps, as Richard Crossman has shown at least for the British workers, not yet be imbued with the Socialist idea on the Continental pattern; their outlook on life might not be influenced by the Marxian conception of evolution of capitalist society. But their minds became, after all, slowly permeated by the perception of economic inequality, upsetting the political equality in capitalist democracy.

And above all, a new principle has gained ascendancy everywhere: that society, as organised in the State, is charged with the moral obligation of securing the livelihood of its citizens. They feel what President Roosevelt explained when introducing the Emergency Relief Bill in 1933: "While it isn't written in the Constitution, nevertheless it is the inherent duty of the Federal Government to keep its citizens from starvation". The workers in Britain, or in the United States, or elsewhere, might perhaps not yet have conceived as clearly as the learned President of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler, the historical significance of the contemporary world revolution, when he explained, in 1931: "The period through which we are passing . . . is a period like the fall of the Roman Empire, like the Renaissance, like the beginning of the political and social revolutions in England and France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. . . . It is in some ways more powerful than all of them; and it holds more of the world in its grip than any of them, but it certainly resembles

them in its epoch-making character.” * But all of them feel definitely what Roosevelt expressed in a very straightforward phrase in his message to Congress in April, 1938: “No people, least of all a democratic people, will be content to go without work or to accept some standard of living which obviously and woefully falls short of their capacity to produce”. Not only the whole “moral climate” has changed; but also the climate of the mind. These changes herald a great transformation in the fabric of human society.

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

The industrial and the psychological revolutionary processes, in progress for a quarter of a century, have set in motion social revolutionary processes. Their stream is in full flow. For a quarter of a century, capitalist society all over the world has been subject to great transformations. On one sixth of the globe capitalism has been altogether replaced by a planned Communist economy; in many of the European countries—Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, and the Scandinavian countries—the considerable extent of social legislation, social insurance, public education, housing policy, social welfare, and the system of taxation, transformed the State from an instrument solely of the vested interests into a social-service State. Where, later, as in Germany, the democracies failed in the essentials of social transformation by instituting public control over economic forces, the Fascist régimes at least succeeded in subduing economic power to the authority of the State, and in substituting for *laissez-faire* capitalism a planned economy. But even in the old countries of extreme capitalist individualism—Britain, France, and the United States of America—“the eternal foundations of sound economy” were greatly infringed upon. Even in 1932, when in the United States there were already about ten or twelve million people unemployed, President Hoover refused to sign a bill of \$25,000,000 for relief. A mere \$25,000,000! “I am opposed to any direct or indirect Government dole,” he declared, “because it would threaten the American system of individual initiative and communal responsibility.” Contrast Hoover’s attitude with Roosevelt’s New Deal, and you can measure the depth and the width of the social change that is now transforming even the country of “rugged individualism”, a capitalist society where vested interests are more powerfully entrenched than anywhere else in the world. Sir William Beveridge judged the magnitude of this event as not less than a revolution, because “it represents a complete change of ideas in the United States about individual

* N. Murray Butler, *Looking Forward*.

responsibility and the function of governments; it makes a change even more startling in what people used to think was the unchangeable American Constitution".*

Yet the social revolutionary processes did not keep pace with the industrial and psychological revolutionary processes; they lacked synchronisation; outside Russia, they did not transform the essentials of capitalist economy. The sources of wealth are still in the hands of private owners, and the motive of private profit is still the keystone of the arch.

But the conditions inherent in capitalism are in conflict with economic equality and security. To the working people, democracy is losing its meaning, because it fails to free them from want and fear. "Liberty will no longer seem of paramount interest to the masses, unless it raises the banners of liberation from the economic as well as from the political domination of the more fortunate", says Professor E. H. Carr.† It was the discrepancy between expectation and reality, between the actual and potential wealth of human society, and the frustration of the many, that produced the social crisis from which emanated Fascism and, ultimately, war.

ASIA IN REVOLUTIONARY TRANSFORMATION

The present war is speeding up and extending all over the globe all the revolutionary processes started by the last war.

The last war was the final stage of the European peoples' national revolution. But the national revolution of the peoples of Eastern Europe was, in fact, started by the national revolutions in Asia.

It was the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, the destruction of the Russian Fleet, the defeat of the Russian army, the expulsion of the Russian Power from the Gulf of Petchili, which awakened the national sense of the peoples of Asia. For the first time in history a great Power—a white nation—was conquered by the arms of coloured men. Japan demonstrated that the European domination of the Asiatic nations could be broken if only the corrupt aristocracy were swept away.

Under the impact of Japan's victory, the revolutionary movement in China wrested, as early as 1906, at least the promise of a constitution from the Empress; six years later, China was proclaimed a Republic; the most ancient of the great military monarchies in the Far East fell to pieces. In India, as early as 1907, the revolutionaries gathered under the leadership of Tilak and Gandhi the majority of the National Congress. In Persia, in

* Sir William Beveridge, *Planning under Socialism*.

† E. H. Carr, *Conditions of Peace*.

1906, the Shah was murdered, and his successor was subjected to the control of a popularly elected assembly, the Medjlis. In Turkey, the Young Turk Party, in 1908, compelled the Sultan to restore the constitution of 1876, based upon a popularly elected Parliament.

But at the same time the national revolutionary movement of the Young Turks kindled the national spirit of the Balkan nations under Turkish domination, and, in turn, the national spirit of the Slav nations under Habsburg rule. These collective anonymous forces of nationalism were, undoubtedly, one of the main causes of the last war.

While, however, the last war ended with the final triumph of the principle of nationality in Europe, the nations of Asia—with the exception of Turkey—have yet to achieve it. The twenty years' crisis between the two world wars were years of internal and external wars in China and of ever-increasing nationalist ferment in India. They rapidly developed the nascent nationalism of the Oriental people.

The present war has given a new impetus to these processes. China, until the Japanese invasion, was merely a cultural and geographical expression. In her war of national defence against foreign domination the Chinese nation was born. India's struggle for independent statehood has reached its climax in this war; it can also fairly be predicted that the age of the white man's rule over the Malayan people is closed. It seems almost as certain that the present war will mark the final stage of the national revolution of the people of Asia, even as the last war secured national independence for those peoples of Europe who were still under foreign sway. We are witnessing a gigantic historic spectacle: 800,000,000 coloured people are re-entering the historical scene as free, self-determining nations. The world revolution sweeps indeed over the whole earth.

METAMORPHOSIS OF NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

But perhaps of still greater importance is the repercussion of the revolutionary impact on the national sentiment of the European nations.

No one knows how, to use Leonard Woolf's term, the communal psychology of the nations, conquered and oppressed by Nazi Germany, will react to its ordeal. But their experiences of the last twenty years have revealed with staggering impressiveness the utter political impotence and the international economic interdependence of all European countries. Even a Power of the first rank, like France, was conquered in less than eight weeks, let

alone the smaller nations which were simply erased by the "mechanised Attila".

Is it not reasonable, then, to assume that the peoples might wonder whether the principle of national independence and statehood has not lost its meaning in the face of the modern technique of warfare and economy? What all people desire above all is peace and prosperity: to be freed from fear and want. Is it really unlikely that they should have perceived that, by maintaining national independence and sovereignty, no device of economic collaboration can save the smaller nations from a repetition of the economic plight which they experienced before the war; and that no system of alliances or machinery of the League can save them from a repetition of the horror of invasion and occupation, which they have experienced during the war?

One thing above all is clear: that, as C. R. Attlee exclaimed: "Europe must federate or perish!"; that, however paradoxical it appears, the people's national liberty can be preserved only by sacrificing their national sovereignty; that their national security can be protected only by their merging, or "mixing together", in an international community.

The conquest of Europe by Hitler, while revolting the national conscience of the oppressed peoples, has at the same time undoubtedly driven home the sense of the community of purpose and destiny of Europe. For the first time since the European nations gained national independence, Europe has become a political and economic entity. It is, today, the entity of the oppressed under the rule of an omnipotent Power. Hitler's New Order of Europe is but a "blood-stained charter of all woe". But the disgrace of the idea of Europe united by Hitlerism has by no means killed the very idea itself; the liberation of the oppressed nations from German domination will not necessarily foster their desire to return tomorrow to a Europe split up once more into twenty-seven countries, militarily, politically, and economically impotent.

It is, indeed, inconceivable that the terrific ordeal through which the European nations are passing should not, also, have moulded their national conscience; that the concept of nationality, as developed in the nineteenth century, should not after the turmoil be brought into a new system created by the technical developments of the twentieth century; that, finally, while all values have passed through rapid processes of metamorphosis, the idea of nationality should escape transmutation.

THE RESIGNATION OF FRENCH NATIONALISM

We have only recently witnessed a fantastic phenomenon: the resignation of French nationalism. Here is a nation with a most

glorious past; a nation that felt its vocation as the heir and custodian of the ancient Roman civilisation and its universal political idea; a nation that has for centuries imprinted its culture on Europe; that has been accustomed, for generations, to dominate Europe and to be respected as the first Power of the world. There was no prouder nation on earth than the French. Yet too heavy was the price the French people had to pay for the retention of France's greatness. Once more in the glittering Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, French nationalism revelled in triumph. But soon afterwards the French people became weary of their nationalism; they began to feel that sentiment was futile and vain. Half of the French nation, even when threatened by Fascist Germany's ascendancy, became definitely resolved to preserve peace at any price, be it at the price of sacrificing their greatness and the position of France in the world. That split tore asunder all classes and parties. Paul Fauré's pacifism, backed by exactly half of the Socialist Party, joined issue in practice with high finance and big business, which preferred to yield rather to a France dominated by Hitler than to a France governed by Léon Blum, and which opposed the war because it bred social revolution in the wake of war. When the hour arrived, the French waged war only half-heartedly and, without much ado, they accepted conquest, the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and of Indo-China, the final loss of France's position as one of the first Powers in the world, and the utter humiliation of the German occupation. The spirit of 1792, of the Paris Commune, or even of 1914, had entirely vanished. The French nation will, of course, find its soul again; yet it will probably be not the soul of Gambetta and Clemenceau, but rather the soul of Jean Jaurès and Léon Blum. The idea of French nationality, once resurrected, will seek its universality not in the sphere of nationalist power politics, but in the sphere of international community. The metamorphosis of the French national conscience is one of the great events of our time.

Processes of transformation of national psychology are, however, not confined to the French people alone; for instance, the British people also, though once imperialistically-minded and extremely insular and isolationist, are, in their bearing towards world and imperial affairs, manifesting a genuine spirit of universalism and international solidarity.

TRANSMUTATION OF GERMAN NATIONALISM

I, for one, am certain that the psychology of German nationalism is, and still more will be, subject to profound changes. Whatever one may think of German nationalism, two observations can hardly

be contested: first, that the pattern of that sentiment differs according to the social composition of the German nation: the national psychology of the German miner is clearly different from that of the mine-owner or of the civil servant. Second, German nationalism as an expression of communal psychology is conditioned by social and political circumstances, and, as rapidly as these change, so the mind of the German people changes. I submit the possibility of sudden and great changes in the German mind. I even submit that these processes of the German people's national psychology have already made great progress. One has only to compare the gloomy war mood of the German people in 1939 with their enthusiastic war mood in 1914 and 1870. Their complete indifference to all news of the most glorious victories in the German High Command *communiqués* since 1939 is another indication. The German people are simply "fed up" with "glory and nationalism". So it may be, in fact I am almost sure, that the crushing defeat which Germany will suffer at the summit of her triumph will be followed swiftly by a rousing awakening to the perception of the fundamental error of her violent nationalism in the past.

That was, at any rate, the great experience of November, 1918. The overwhelming majority of the German workers and peasants, even of the mass of the middle classes, suddenly became aware of the madness of aggressive nationalism. Suddenly they conceived that they had sacrificed hecatombs of lives to false gods. They were then, with all their hearts, ready to turn to an entirely new way of life, a life of truly international brotherhood. To all who experienced these fateful few years, it appeared as though a sacred fire had suddenly sprung up, had consumed the sins against the light, had pierced the darkness of the past. This was the great chance for the Germans, as well as for all the peoples of the world. For it was Germany who became the destiny of the world.

This chance was missed. Soon the bleak dawn of disillusion appeared. After a desperate struggle of the powers of Socialism and progress against the powers of reaction (internal and foreign as well), the dark powers of nationalism once more swept over Germany.

However, a new chance may arise. No nation is inclined to swifter changes of mood and mind, because no nation is as profoundly disunited, as deeply split up and, as a body, as little mentally balanced, as the Germans. "I can conceive of no people more dismembered than the Germans", lamented Hölderlin. If the Germans again experience the futility of their national aspirations and in the same breath the blessings of an international way of life—as a free people among free peoples, as an equal

member of a community of equals—then their stupendous energies, devoted today to the pursuit of vainglorious nationalist dreams, would with an equally fervent passion be consecrated to the common good of the international commonwealth.

Yet the same events that are shaping the national psychology of many people towards a higher stage of humanity and universalism, have aroused, it is true, opposing reactions in the national psychology of the oppressed peoples: we are witnessing a formidable recrudescence of national hatred. But I wonder whether a closer examination of the national psychology of, for instance, the Dutch, the Belgian, or even of the Polish, Czech, or Serb people, would, perhaps, not reveal that the atavism of nationalism that is visiting them is not more strongly determined by their hatred of their German oppressors than by the freedom of national assertion. They want to get rid of the invaders; but it might be questioned whether they will insist on returning to the independent national statehood that served its purpose so ill.

THE END OF AN EPOCH

The revolutionary processes, in progress for a quarter of a century, have shattered the foundations of nineteenth-century society. They shook its economic edifice: the economic history of the last two decades is the history of economic convulsions. They destroyed its ideological superstructure: democracy is in the melting-pot of crisis. They broke up its basic principle of national sovereignty; national independence has become the grave of national liberty. The capitalist society in its nineteenth-century pattern, that still appeared two or three decades ago as stable as the earth on which it was founded, is beset by processes of disintegration which, in turn, have produced universal discontent and insecurity. Harold D. Lasswell defined war and revolutions as "avenues of discharge for collective insecurity". It follows from this definition that wars and revolutions will not end until collective security is attained. The economic and political organisation of the nineteenth-century world, based on capitalism and nationalism, has caused two major political catastrophes, apart from fifteen major economic depressions, during the last century. It follows from this experience that the principles of capitalism and nationalism are obsolete. "The architects of ruin," to use Edmund Burke's phrase, have completed their work; they must abdicate, if the world is to be spared more catastrophes with increasingly devastating effects. The epoch of capitalism and nationalism is finally closed, at least in its European dominion.

Every epoch in human history died from the contradiction

between the economic system on which it was based and the needs of the community. They died hard. The processes that disintegrated the old society and gave birth to the new have always caused grave catastrophes. For the vested interests in every society have as yet always refused to abdicate voluntarily and to adapt economy to new necessities. In their death struggle they have always involved the whole of humanity in disaster. The dissolution of the Roman civilisation, based on slave economy, depopulated half of Europe in wars and civil wars and famines, reduced the standard of living, destroyed treasures of knowledge and art, collected through eight centuries. The Dark Ages followed. The dissolution of the feudal society in processes of anguish and agony produced the long chain of revolutions and wars, leaving great misery in their wake. The processes of the dissolution of the capitalist society caused the devastating economic crises and the civil wars following the first, and the cataclysm of the second, world war. The capitalist society is at the end of its time. The interlude before a new society has taken shape may be marked by ever-increasing armaments, wars, Fascism, and civil wars, laying waste the earth, rendering destitute humanity and destroying its civilisation. But it could, if the people understood the significance of this historic hour, open an epoch which would witness the transformation of the capitalist and nationalist society into an all-embracing commonwealth of nations, enjoying everlasting peace and ever-increasing prosperity, an epoch that would realise the deeper social and economic meaning of freedom and would unite humanity in its pursuit of common ends.

CHAPTER SIX

SOCIETY IN TRANSITION

The only thing I doubt, is whether if I were God, I should not say: "This boasted civilisation . . . is so abominable that I will sweep it away".—EDWARD GREY, *Letter to Katharine Lyttelton*.

A NEW WAVE OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

THE FABRIC of human society in transition will be conditioned primarily by processes in the sphere of production.

It is very strange that total wars, for all their terrific destruction, effect only a temporary impoverishment of human society. In the long run they enrich society, because they immensely enlarge capital equipment and increase the productivity of human labour by causing the rapid extension of heavy industry. The impetus

which industry, mining, and agriculture gained from the first total war in 1914-1918 is also operating in the present war on a vastly greater scale. The damage that, for instance, Great Britain has suffered by air raids and shipping losses is probably, from an economic point of view, more than offset by the growth of her potential wealth owing to her increased productive power. The United States will be able to produce, according to a statement of Admiral Vickery, vice-chairman of the Marine Commission, 25,000,000 tons of shipping in one year alone—that is more by about a quarter than the total of the English merchant fleet at the outbreak of the war, which was built up over half a century! Still, the war is not yet over, and the extent of future destruction is not measurable. But meanwhile human productivity is constantly being increased. So it can perhaps be fairly said that the growth of human productive power is relatively greater than any possible exigency of destruction. Let us think of the industrial development of America, Canada, Australia, Mexico, India, and South Africa, or of the expansion of heavy industry in Germany and Japan! War is not all waste. The war certainly impoverishes the middle classes: but it immensely extends the resources of man. Human society will be potentially richer after the termination of hostilities than before it entered the war.

POVERTY IN PLENTY

Yet in a society with almost limitless potentialities of abundance, it is still the spectre of poverty and insecurity that haunts men. That even a blessed part of the earth like Britain is for the many a place of so much poverty was strange to me. When I arrived in England six years ago I was deeply impressed by her universal liberty and abundance. My honest delight at British freedom and democracy increased the longer I studied, and the better I understood, its essentials. My belief in the abundance of this country was, however, profoundly shaken when I studied, for example, Mr. and Mrs. Cole's *Condition of Britain*, the most comprehensive analysis of the social structure of British society that I have read. I learned with surprise that even in this opulent Britain, nearly two-thirds of the breadwinners—11,600,000 out of 18,869,000—had until the outbreak of war an average income of only £2 per week, and that only slightly more than a quarter of the breadwinners had an average income of £4 a week.

If that is so in Great Britain, second in wealth and resources only to the United States, then conditions all over the world must be terrible. In fact, the figures provided by Colin Clark in his *Conditions of Economic Progress* reveal a gloomy picture of poverty-

stricken humanity. More than half—53 per cent—of the world's population, more than 1,000,000,000 people, enjoy a real income per head (in terms of English currency) of less than 16s. a week. The average real income per breadwinner in China is about 5s. a week, in India only 4s. In fact, the average income, calculated not by wage-earners but per head of the population, of India is, according to careful examinations of India's national income made by Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, only about £5 17s. a year, or 2s. 3d. a week. Four-fifths of the world's workers earn less than £2 a week. Even in highly industrial Germany the average real income of the working population was, from 1925 to 1934, only £2 10s. per week. "Summarising these figures," Colin Clark observes, "the world is found to be a wretchedly poor place. . . . More than half of the world's population must immediately be placed in the poorest category of all, with a real income insufficient to provide subsistence."

But from this evidence, and after careful investigations of potential productivity, Colin Clark concludes that nothing can be done, and that the "oft-repeated phrases about poverty in the midst of plenty, and the problem of production having already been solved if only we understand the problem of distribution, turn out to be the most untruthful of all modern clichés".

THE RICH AND THE POOR

It is clear that the problem of poverty is not primarily a problem of the distribution of wealth. But gross inequality of property and income is in itself an intolerable challenge to the principle of equality from which the spirit of democracy arises. From the *Distribution of National Capital* (1924-30) we learn that, of the people of Britain aged twenty-five and over, between 76 and 79 per cent, each owned £110 worth of property or less—i.e., altogether 3.6 per cent of the national capital—that 15-17 per cent, each owning property valued between £100 and £1,000, held collectively 10-11 per cent of the national capital; and that the rest, a tiny group of people, each of whom was worth £100,000 or more, owned no less than 23 per cent of the national capital. This group together with the group below it—people possessing between £25,000 and £100,000—formed not more than 0.35 per cent of the population and owned 42 per cent of its property.

We learn further from Cole that 310,000 income-receivers in Great Britain take exactly the same proportion of the national income as the total received by the 11,600,000 income-receivers in the lowest income group. Britain has grown enormously richer in the last three-quarters of a century; but the total share

of the national income received by the wage-earners has, in fact, fallen heavily, and is now only about 40 per cent of the total, as against 55 per cent in 1860.

We learn from the investigations of B. S. Rowntree that in Great Britain nearly one half of the children are under-nourished. That, as Sir John Orr points out, "something like one-third of the population were subsisting on a diet which could not maintain them in full health"; that "the infant mortality rate, which is directly affected by the feeding of the mother and child, is more than 100 per 1000 among the poorest", while "less than 20 among the well-fed and well-housed"; that the "death-rate from respiratory tuberculosis, resistance to which is profoundly affected by diet, is 125 per 100,000 among the poorest and falls to half that rate among the well-to-do".*

Still worse is inequality, and its repercussions, in the United States. According to a *Report on National Wealth and Income*,† 1 per cent of the American people owned 59 per cent of the national wealth, while 87 per cent of the population owned barely one-tenth.

The effect of this maldistribution is reflected in the investigations conducted by the Department of Agriculture in the United States which were summarised by Henry A. Wallace, then Secretary of Agriculture (in 1939), as following: "Fifty per cent of the people in the United States do not get enough in the way of dairy products, fruit and vegetables to enjoy full health and physique, and a large proportion of them do not get enough because they cannot afford it". Two years later, in another publication of the Agricultural Department, Milo Perkins stated: "It has been estimated that 45 million of our people are living below the poor-diet danger line".

These glaring contrasts in wealth and health could certainly be modified by a rigorous system of progressive taxation, designed to improve the conditions of the poor. But even a more equitable distribution of the national dividend alone could not solve the problem of poverty.

NON-UTILISED HUMAN POWER

The problem of poverty can only be solved by a vast increase in productive power. This problem is not primarily technological, for that, in fact, has been solved. The genius of scientists and engineers has stood the test in this war as in the last; their research

* Sir John Orr, *Fighting for What?*

† Issued by the United States Federal Trade Commission during the boom.

work has multiplied the productive power of human labour and the industrial output of society. Our generation knows how to make rubber out of sulphur, clothes out of glass, aeroplanes out of soya beans, fertilisers out of air, and gelatine out of hoofs and horns. What we have still to learn is how to adapt society to its productive possibilities and its economic needs.

The problem of poverty is, economically, a problem of the organisation of production—that is, the problem of exploiting non-utilised human power and natural resources; it is, socially, the problem of organising the economic system upon which society is based: it is, morally, the problem of substituting the social motive for the profit motive in the productive machine. If the private profit motive remains the sole driving force of economic activity, the harnessing of non-utilised resources in human power and natural wealth will be limited by their earning capacity. If, however, the economic activity of society is guided by what is needed, the harnessing of non-utilised productive power becomes a technical problem of the organisation of production.

Colin Clark indicates that the expansion of productivity is limited simply by the number of workers available in the industrial countries, and, accordingly, he measures the extent of non-utilisation of productive power by figures for the unemployed working population. He recalls that in the worst years of the last depression unemployment was over 30 per cent in Germany and the United States of America, and between 9 and 22 per cent in the other industrial countries. On this basis the utilisation of potential productive resources was, as Colin Clark points out, rather narrowly limited.

Even in the industrial countries, however, the actual reserve of workers is far larger than the total of workers employed plus the number of workers registered as unemployed—as is impressively shown by the enormous increase of workers employed in all countries in the war effort. But planned economy on an international scale would also have to take into account the vast reserves of workers in agricultural countries. For instance, in the belt from Poland to Greece, inhabited by more than 100,000,000 people, there is a surplus population amounting to roughly one-third, or even one-half in the poorest areas (South Poland, South Yugoslavia, Ruthenia, East Poland, and Transylvania). The population meanwhile is increasing by 1,000,000 a year. The surplus population in India and China numbers hundreds of millions. The non-utilised productive reserves of man-power are almost limitless. They can be absorbed. The conditions of semi-starvation under which these people live can

only be overcome by industrialising these territories—that is, by the vast expansion of society's industrial activity.

15,000,000 FAMILIES IN THE U.S.A. ALONE

But even in highly industrialised countries there is still a big margin of non-utilised resources. For instance, the findings of the Brookings Institution * showed that the percentage of non-utilised capacity ranged in the period between 1925 and 1929, distinguished by prosperity, from 10 to 30 per cent. Translating its findings into monetary terms, the Brookings Institution estimated that "this increased productivity would have approximated fifteen milliard dollars. Such an increase in the national income would have permitted the enlargement of the budget of fifteen million families to the extent of \$1,000 each, adding goods and services to an amount of \$765 to every family having an income of \$2,500 or less, producing \$608 worth of additional well-being for every family up to the \$5,000 level, raising the income of 16.4 million families whose income were less than \$2,000 up to that level, increasing all family incomes below the \$3,500 level by forty-two per cent, adding \$545 to the income of every family of two or more persons, or giving \$125 to every man, woman and child in the country". To this statistical presentation of unrealised powers, the Brookings Institution attached a document on *America's Capacity to Consume* which indicated the extent of the human needs unfilled by applied science and industry. In 1919 about one-fifth of the families in the United States—the great area of prosperity—had incomes of less than \$1,000 a year, while "nearly twenty million families, or 71 per cent, had incomes of less than \$2500".

But the significance of the figures of unrealised power can only be divined if they are looked at in relation to their potential creative power. For instance, if we learnt that only 48 per cent of the capacity of the clothing industry was utilised, we would conclude that since 52 per cent more than was actually produced could have been produced, many people were not as well-clothed as they could be. But if we learnt that only 40 per cent of the capacity of the locomotive industry, or only 64 per cent of electrical engineering, or only 60 per cent of the iron and steel industry, was utilised, then we would conclude that some 30 per cent less than was possible was produced of the capital equipment necessary for the increase of the production of commodities, and some 60 per cent less of the means of transport required for the distribution of raw materials.

* Published in *America's Capacity to Produce*.

The extent of the non-utilisation of potential productive resources measured by the degree of modern technical methods applied might be illustrated by a few more figures, collected by Harold B. Butler, Director of the International Labour Office.* Mr. Butler recorded that, for example, "if 200 out of 1,357 boot and shoe factories in the United States worked full time, they could satisfy the whole existent demand, and the remaining 1,157 establishments could be closed down. Similarly, 1,487 out of the 6,057 bituminous coal mines could produce all the coal that was needed." Some idea of what might be possible by planned exploitation of the resources can be gained from the American experience of the last war, when production in minerals was expanded by something like a quarter above the levels of 1913-14, which were relatively prosperous years; that technology applied in America succeeded in increasing, from 1920 until the war, the number of electric units secured from a pound of coal by 115 per cent, from a gallon of petrol by 200 per cent, the amount of light from a unit of electricity by 55 per cent, and the efficiency of lubricating oil by 85 per cent.

These estimates still ignore the enormous potentialities of production which could probably be utilised only by a planned economy on an international scale. Colin Clark points to investigations which reveal that, for instance, out of 700,000,000 acres of potentially arable land in China, only 190,000,000 are actually used, because the remainder could only be profitably cultivated by tractors, since its semi-arid nature, as cultivated by ordinary Chinese methods, would not provide even a bare subsistence for man and beast. In his analysis of agricultural productivity, Colin Clark draws attention to the astonishing variation in output per acre. It ranges from about £489 in New Zealand to £24 in Japan, £17 in Russia, and £9 in China. South Africa, for example, has four-fifths as many cows as New Zealand and Denmark together; but only one-fourteenth of their butter and cheese output. But we need not go even so far as China or South Africa. It is well known that the Eastern European countries could flood the whole world with grain if the Polish and Rumanian peasant ploughed the soil two inches deeper; that, further, by irrigating the Danubian plain in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Rumania—an area 20,000,000 acres larger than the ploughed land of Britain—not only would grain yields be doubled, but lucerne and other fodder crops would become a regular feature of rotation, building up soil fertility and providing for an expansion of the livestock industry. But even in the highly industrialised United States of America, only 14 per cent of the

* *International Labour Review*, March, 1931.

farmers use tractors, only 16 per cent electricity, only 19 per cent motor lorries.* In the south-east of the United States, with half of the total farming population, only 2·4 per cent use tractors. There over 1,000,000 tenant farmers, and five times as many other persons, most of them white, use no capital and too little land, eke out an existence and earn a subsistence from cotton and tobacco which would be considered inadequate by an unemployed worker in West Europe.

In fact, the human power of perhaps nine-tenths of the working population of the world, and immeasurable resources of natural wealth, are barely utilised. They could be developed to full capacity, and produce increasing abundance, if there were in existence a super-national authority which would systematically, on the basis of international planning, organise the exploitation of potential resources, regardless of their immediate profitability. The limits to the exploitation of potential productive resources lie not only in the extent of resources of man-power, or raw material, but primarily in the extent of our will and power to organise and use them. The problem of poverty and insecurity is mainly a problem of the economic organisation of human society: a problem of will—that is, of the moral forces of man.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE DAWN OF A NEW AGE

“It becomes easy to dismiss the hope of a free and equal community as an illusion of childhood.”—KINGSLEY MARTIN, *French Liberal Thought in the Eighteenth Century*.

ECONOMY FOR PLENTY

AT LEAST 1,000,000,000 people now live under a system of planned economy. In Great Britain and in the Dominions, in the United States of America, in the Soviet Union, on the Continent of Europe and in Japan, the whole of industry, agriculture, and transport, as well as the whole resources of man-power and raw materials, are organised and directed by the State's requirements. In these countries the Governments determine the types of goods required to satisfy the needs of the individual as well as those of the community in its pursuit of specific aims. Planning boards, set up by the Governments, organise national resources in order to satisfy the demand for war production. They order the build-

* According to C. J. Hitch, *America's Economic Strength*.

ing of new plants, the production of capital equipment, the ploughing of uncultivated land. They restrict or increase the output of certain commodities; they control purchasing power by means of taxation and price regulation; they transfer workers from one occupation to another and from one place to another, as the needs of the community dictate.

This planned economy has even transcended national boundaries: it has become world-wide. The British Empire and the United States have pooled their material and industrial resources and are co-ordinating production to obtain maximum output. Even closer economically is the unification on the Continent of Europe. In effect, Europe is now a single economic unit. The whole of European transport works as a single system. Investments throughout Europe are controlled by a Board in Berlin. The vast industrial and agricultural machinery of two dozen countries, formerly economically independent of each other, is now integrated into a single economic system. On the other side, the Lend-Lease principle has, to a remarkable extent, eliminated the monetary factor in the exchange economy. Foodstuffs, raw materials and arms worth thousands of millions of pounds sterling have been exported from the United States to Britain and Russia, who need the goods, but are at present unable to pay for them.

This vast system of planned economy serves today one purpose only: to exploit to the utmost the entire man-power reserves and natural resources for waging war. Planned economy had to be instituted and production freed from profit motives to obtain the maximum effect.

But what can be done in pursuit of war aims can clearly be done in pursuit of peace aims.

THE STORY OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY

It might perhaps be interesting to recall the story of the Tennessee Valley, one of the most fascinating chapters of Roosevelt's New Deal. The project to reconstruct this neglected corner of the United States illustrates the immensity of creative forces which could be set in motion by eliminating the profit motive in economic affairs.

Tennessee is one of the forty-eight States of the United States. Though it is four-fifths the size of England, it is inhabited by only 2,500,000 people. But it could easily feed ten times that number, and 25,000,000 could live there in prosperity, and even in plenty. For Tennessee is not only one of the loveliest, but also one of the most favoured spots on the earth. It is rich in coal, iron, phos-

phates, and petroleum—it is called the “American Ruhr”. It is rich in timber; 18,000,000 acres are forest land. It is rich in corn, cotton, tobacco, and cattle; three-quarters of its area—an area four-fifths of the size of England—is arable. It is rich in potential electric power; the Tennessee River, with its tributaries, could produce hundreds of thousands of kilowatts. And the people who live in the beauty of its mountains and valleys are of the finest stock in the United States.

Yet this country did not attract capital investment. It is said that John Bull can stand anything but 2 per cent; still less can the Americans tolerate it. At any rate, Wall Street did not deem it sufficiently profitable to invest money in the exploitation of the resources of the Tennessee Valley. Meanwhile, the waters of the Tennessee River and its tributaries flooded the land; of the 742,000 acres in the Clinch River watershed, 445,000 acres have already been rendered permanently useless for agricultural purposes. The flooding of the Tennessee River alone causes an estimated annual damage of about \$1,780,000.* The country's mineral resources are largely undeveloped, while its soil and timberland have been wasted by erosion due to flooding and uncontrolled cutting of forests.

The country thus became a distressed area. People lived there in a state of primitive poverty; hookworm and illiteracy were rife. A survey in 1933 showed that the average cash income per family per year was \$45 (that is, about £11), while a family comprising father and mother and six children in receipt of \$100 (£25) a year was doing relatively well. It should be remembered that these conditions were the conditions in a State belonging to the richest country in the world.

Now, among the public works devised by Roosevelt's administration as part of his New Deal, was one to save the Tennessee Valley from the ruin caused in the short space of 100 years by uncontrolled individualism. By an Act of Congress a body—the Tennessee Valley Authority—was appointed and granted the money necessary to foster, in the words of the Statute, “an orderly, proper physical economic and social development of the said area”; in particular, to provide afforestation and to construct dams, reservoirs, power-houses, and transmission lines on the Tennessee River and its tributaries, to produce the phosphate fertilisers so badly needed by the local farmers, by exploiting the vast hydro-electric plant at Muscle Shoals, which was erected during 1917–18 for the war-time production of nitrates, but never used, and left derelict. The Act also aims, by co-operation with

* According to E. M. Hugh Jones and E. A. Radice in *An American Experiment*, a comprehensive analysis of the New Deal.

agricultural experimental stations, at introducing more diversified farming in order to raise the farmers' standard of living. But the Act's main object is to produce cheap electric power in order to increase "the use of electricity in the homes, the farms and the factories of the United States—in fact (to create) an electrified America". Julian Huxley, who has studied the Tennessee Valley scheme on the spot, observes that the scheme is "the biggest and best experiment in general planning in any democratic country. . . . This plan has been worked out on thoroughly scientific lines; and takes in agriculture, the composition of soil, the production of water power, the exploitation of mineral wealth, and of game and of forests; health, diet, housing, education, development of farming and of rural industries by means of cheap power, amenities and the tourist industry." *

The Tennessee Valley scheme indicates the spirit and methods with which the problem of world reconstruction will have to be approached. There are many, and far bigger, Tennessee Valleys scattered all over the earth: in China, in India, in Eastern Europe, perhaps even in Great Britain. These distressed areas with rich potentialities can be transformed into flourishing settlements by an international planned economy.

WORLD ECONOMIC PLANNING

Let us picture a world consisting of five or six vast economic units, and not, as before 1938, of fifty-seven or even more units. These five or six economic units might again be integrated, for the purposes of economic development, into one international economic unit. An International Reconstruction Board, consisting of the most brilliant brains and the most notable experts, would, in co-operation with the National Reconstruction Boards of all countries, define the immediate needs for the reconstruction of devastated Europe and Asia, and the additional equipments for the exploitation of sources of wealth hitherto neglected. It would, for instance, show that a China provided with tractors could transform her 500,000,000 acres of fertile but so far uncultivated land into a source of life for millions; that an Eastern Europe equipped with machine tools for agricultural machinery and with a knowledge of irrigation and scientific methods could transform this poverty-stricken corner of the earth into a flourishing garden for 100,000,000 people; that a Russia, an India, and a China provided with railways would enable new resources of raw materials and foodstuffs to be tapped. It would also show that in Great Britain alone about 1,000,000 families need proper

* Julian Huxley, *Democracy Marches*.

houses, worthy of the people who saved the world from the catastrophe of Fascism. (In Scotland alone, as Sir John Orr points out, 250,000 houses are still needed, though during the seventeen years of governmental housing schemes 280,000 houses were built.) It would show that on the Continent of Europe there are 20,000,000 families still living in hovels; that in India and China there are about 300,000,000 human beings who are actually starving. There is no end to the enumeration of humanity's requirements.

Today the industrial countries of the world altogether produce high-powered engines for aeroplanes at a rate of perhaps 100,000 a year, in addition to about 500,000 engines for tanks, and several million engines for lorries. Henry Ford, in one of his newly built plants in Detroit, alone turns out one four-engined bomber every hour. This productive apparatus, adopted to peace needs, could turn out tractors at a rate of 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 a year, in addition to enough agricultural implements to flood the industrially backward countries of the world. The metallurgical industry of the highly industrialised countries of the world, now vastly expanded for war-time production of guns and armour plating, could flood the world after the war with all the railway and bridge-building equipment that could be needed.

The task of the International Planning Board, then, would be to organise the production of capital goods in industrialised countries according to the needs of industrially undeveloped countries and, conversely, to organise in the raw-material-producing countries the production of primary goods and food-stuffs according to the needs of the industrialised countries. The wealth of the nations can be increased and the standard of living raised only by expanding industry all over the world and by utilising modern technology.

Imagine the result if planned economy on an international scale were to be applied to world reconstruction, and if the world's practically unlimited resources of man-power and materials were to be organised with the sole aim of an ever-rising standard of living for the whole community.

Undoubtedly it is possible; it lies within the capacity and power of man. It *must* be done if civilisation is not to perish in a never-ending series of wars. "Civilisations before us", says A. R. Orage, "have died in the midst of their ignorance; but our civilization, if it is doomed to perish, will have the evil distinction of dying not only with the cure at hand but on the eve of such a life as has never been known since the days of Eden." *

* A. R. Orage, *Political and Economic Writings*.

PLANNED ECONOMY v. CAPITALIST ECONOMY

The reconstruction of the devastated world and the exploitation of non-utilised resources by means of planned economy are, however, incompatible with competitive capitalist economy.

Planned economy is directed by the needs of the community. Capitalist economy is directed by the expectation of profit. "In the modern exchange economy", writes Professor F. A. Hayek, "the *entrepreneur* does not produce with a view to satisfying a certain demand—even if that phrase is sometimes used—but on the basis of a calculation of profitability." *

Planned economy need not necessarily include all trades; it need not be a total system of economy. The most highly developed capitalist society of the twentieth century, in Great Britain, still contains powerful relics of feudalism in its political, social, and even in its economic aspects. Even in the United States—that country of mammoth capitalism, in which capital concentration has reached its peak—there is still room for artisans and small business men in addition to the industrial and commercial corporations and trusts. Planned economy need not cover the whole of economic activity; but it necessitates the nation's command of the essential industries. Planned economy need not necessarily abolish "tithes and tithes" to private ownership of the means of production; but it demands national control of industrial power. The private owners of the key industries may receive royalties for the use of their property or receive compensation; in a planned economy they can, however, not be left in control over their property. Planned economy is the realisation of economic democracy, where, to use Sir Stafford Cripps' definition, "the power of vested interests and finance have to give way to the right of the common people". † Planned economy is still not Socialism; it must not be bound up with the common ownership of the land and the factors of production, though it must, when applied in democracies, ultimately lead to, at least, the nationalisation of the key industries. But planned economy contains one essential element of Socialism: for, like Socialism, it produces for use—capitalism produces for profit.

THE MORAL CLIMATE OF SOCIALISM

Planned economy, like Socialism, requires—and creates—a fundamental change in the moral climate of society. The moral climate of capitalism is, at best, a respectable selfishness. The

* Prof. F. A. Hayek, *Monetary Theory and Trade Cycle*.

† In a broadcast on May 3rd, 1942.

moral climate of planned economy, like that of Socialism, is solidarity. For planned economy demands sacrifices from the better-off for the benefit of the worse-off.

Let me illustrate this premise by a few examples from the economic policy of Vienna's Socialist Government. This Government pursued a policy of planned economy, limited in scope and resources, for the good of the community. The most urgent need with which the Socialists were confronted when they came into power was housing. Vienna was notorious for its slums. The Socialist Municipal Government resolved to build a progressively increasing number of dwellings, beginning with 5,000 in the first year; in the course of ten years they built in fact 65,000, which were both well-designed and modern in every respect.

How did they finance that vast undertaking? The houses could obviously not be produced "on the basis of a calculation of profitability", because the workers for whom they were built could not have afforded them. The rent the municipal tenants were charged covered only the upkeep of the buildings; it did not include interest or capital repayment. In practice, the flats were let for nothing.

What, then, was the financial foundation on which the houses were built? It was a special tax levied on all houses and flats, increasing progressively according to their size, and its proceeds were ear-marked for the production of new dwellings. Every tenant, poor or rich, had to pay it. It was a heavy financial burden, but its justification was simple and convincing: those who enjoyed the blessing of a home had the moral obligation to help those who were homeless. The people of Vienna recognised this duty, and in fact the "Tax for the Building of Dwellings" (*Wohnbausteuer*), as it was termed, was the most willingly contributed tax. When people looked at the gigantic Karl Marx Hof, a block of beautiful dwellings accommodating over 1,000 families, they had the moral satisfaction of having contributed to the happiness of 5,000 men, women, and children.

With similar methods the Viennese Municipality financed many undertakings. There was a special tax levied on entertainment for the benefit of particular children's hospitals; a special tax on people employing more than one domestic servant for the benefit of hostels for neglected children. The whole system of taxation was founded on the moral principle that the more fortunate (including the workers) should contribute to the well-being of the less fortunate. But there was also a system of taxation to encourage production. For instance, a tax was levied on electricity in order to build a gigantic hydro-electric power-station which afterwards provided a considerable proportion of

Vienna's electricity requirements. When the station was finished, not only was the tax repealed, but even the price of electricity per unit was reduced, because the new power-station had reduced the cost of producing electricity.

This system worked miracles. The break up of the Hapsburg Empire left Vienna bankrupt. It was cut off from the economic resources of a big country; it was a poverty-stricken city. But it soon recovered, thanks to the planned reconstruction which was instituted.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTOR OF SOCIALIST ECONOMY

The achievements of Socialist Vienna were praised everywhere. But the greatest achievement lay, to my mind, in the sphere of communal psychology. English friends of mine who visited Vienna at that time frequently expressed their admiration for the spirit of enthusiasm they saw among the Viennese workingmen. There was still a great number of unemployed in Vienna; the workers were poorly clad and housed, and many lived in distress. But the poorest among them would proudly show the foreign visitor the stately blocks of flats, and the lovely garden cities, the children's bathing-pool, and the newly laid-out parks, and would say: "See what *we* have done". And he would go on to describe what "*we* were going to do during the next two or three years". And he would enumerate how many more garden cities, how many more flats, and how many more electrical power-stations were to be built. "That *we* have planned, and that *we* will certainly carry out", he would say, and would perhaps wistfully add: "I think in a year or two I myself shall be able to live in a fine building like that".

This spirit illustrates two important elements in communal psychology: firstly, a sense of solidarity, and secondly, a calm expectation. The poorest Viennese worker felt that he had in some way contributed to the increased happiness of the whole community and the beauty of the town. At the same time he had the certain anticipation that he himself would increasingly participate in this communal happiness. "The power of life lies in its expectancy", to use Philip Brooks' phrase. It also provides the clue to the miracle of Vienna. For I call it a miracle that a community of about 2,000,000 people should time and again, with a two-thirds majority of the electorate, agree to an economic policy which taxed to the limit of their capacity the better-off workers, as well as the middle class, for the benefit of the poor. Vienna did not undergo a crisis of democracy. The Communist movement remained negligible from beginning to end, and

the Nazis, even when Hitler was already in power in Germany, polled barely 10 per cent of the total votes cast, as against the 63 per cent of the Socialists.

In Palestine also I have observed the creative power of social justice. I have seen the marvels of blossoming orange groves, vineyards, and orchards, wrested from the desolate swamps and deserts by the pioneers of Socialism in that country. I have witnessed with delight the enthusiasm of the hard-working people in the agricultural communities—the Kvutza—who have somehow materialised the ancient dreams of communism based on community of property.

Experiments such as those which were attempted by Robert Owen and Abram Combe more than 100 years ago with small Communist colonies in England, Scotland, and America have been tried on an almost national scale in Palestine. While, however, the former came to grief, the collective settlements in Palestine achieved wonders. Forty thousand souls, out of a total of less than 500,000 Jews in that country, live now on the soil which is national property; in some of these settlements all property is held in common and all work is pooled; in others, although the holdings are individual, hired labour is prohibited and replaced by the co-operation of producers' and consumers' co-operatives. But this is only the beginning, the effect of hardly twenty years of work. The goal is to cover almost the whole country with Socialist villages, partly purely Communist, partly co-operative.

But the Socialist village is only one mark of a Jewish Socialist State in the making. The Jewish Labour movement in that country is one of the biggest industrial concerns. There are Labour guilds which have built great parts of the towns; there are Labour co-operatives which run the transport in many districts of the country; there are marketing societies, and insurance and banking institutions, controlled by Labour; there is hardly any branch of industry and trade which is not stimulated and supervised by organised Labour. Further, the whole of the social insurance and the organisation of medical aid is under Labour control. The finest hospitals in the country were founded, and are run by Labour. And upon this basis is built a splendid super-structure of cultural Labour institutions, embracing the whole life of the workers.

This achievement is remarkable for two reasons. First, because it was attained by people who became workers only during the processes of the reconstruction of Palestine. Before they entered the Promised Land, they were mostly middle-men and petty traders, shopkeepers and clerical workers; there were but very

few agricultural and industrial workers among them. More than four-fifths of the emigrants changed their pursuits in Palestine. There was no Jewish working-class in Palestine; it had to be created.

Secondly, this achievement could be obtained only by great sacrifices on the part of every member of the movement. It is a great thing for townspeople to turn agricultural workers, to live one or two years in flimsy and tiny tents without any comfort at all, often in a semi-desert, and, after having cultivated the land, to give up part of it for additional settlers. That was how the settlements increased in extent and numbers. I noticed, when I came to visit them, how little was the food and how poor the comfort which they enjoyed after a day of back-breaking work—a kind of work to which the former tradesmen and lawyers were not accustomed; but I also noticed the sparkle in their eyes when they showed me the flourishing plantations of citrons and bananas, the clean cowsheds, the workshops and, foremost, the *Kindergarten* and the fine libraries. The driving force of those people's activity, the reward for their toil and sweat, is the welfare of the community, small and big, of the village as well as of the whole country.

The examples of Palestine and Vienna vividly demonstrate the change in communal psychology brought about by a change in the economic system.

THE RUSSIAN LESSON

Nowhere has this change been more profound than in the Soviet Union. It manifested itself in three great trials in her history: first, when the utterly exhausted Russian people defended their revolution against the counter-revolutionary generals, Denikin, Wrangel, Yudenich, Petliura, the invading Western Powers, the Czechs, and Japan, from 1918 to 1921; secondly, when, hardly seven years later, a truly gigantic plan of reconstruction of society was set into operation; and finally, when the Soviet peoples, with unparalleled devotion, rallied to the defence of their country when it was assaulted by Hitlerite Germany.

Most of the European Social Democrats—I myself among them, I frankly confess—when watching the momentous processes of the Russian Revolution, were bewildered by the increasing severity of the dictatorship, exasperated by the Communist splitting and sapping of the European Labour movement, and incredulous of the effects of the Five-Year Plans. We did not, perhaps, fully appreciate the tremendous odds against which the Revolution had to struggle, a struggle which necessitated a

dictatorial régime. The complete collapse of the entire economic life during seven years of external and internal wars, the disintegration of the machinery of State, the rapid decline of the agricultural output, the cultural backwardness of the peasants – of course we have heard of all these calamities, but perhaps we did not grasp the full measure of their enormities and did not quite understand the dynamics of needs which enforced, step by step, a series of daring actions which appeared to many of us as premature in their degree and reckless in their prosecution. Before November, 1917, Lenin never contemplated the full socialisation of industry, still less the collectivisation of the land. Both these transformations were imposed upon the Revolution by necessity. The New Economic Policy (NEP), introduced by Lenin, had to be abandoned, otherwise the cities would have perished by starvation, because it proved impossible to collect from 27,000,000 individual peasant holdings the food necessary to feed the towns, and to induce the freeholders to produce a sufficient surplus. At the same time, it was an inescapable necessity to increase rapidly the output of industry in order to supply the villages. Russia had to build up industry from the bottom. The Russian Revolution was, then, faced with a dilemma: either to restore capitalism, in fact the domination by foreign capitalism, because the national capitalist classes had vanished, or to build up with its own strength the industrial apparatus—that is, to perform itself the painful task of “original accumulation”. Once the Bolsheviks had decided against the restoration of capitalism, Russia’s course of development was on the whole inevitable, as all serious students of the Soviet Union agree. But most of us were not students of the Soviet Union. We were party men who had to defend the unity and independence of our Labour movement against the Communist onslaught; we could not, of course, judge Russia with the ease of scientific impartiality.

We also certainly under-estimated the acuteness of the feeling of insecurity which to a high degree determined the internal and economic policy of the Soviet Union. After Hitler’s advent to power and, above all, after the Spanish war, which was instigated and waged by Italian and German Fascism as well as by Spanish Fascism, the Soviet Union felt justly threatened by the imminent danger of a Fascist invasion which might perhaps be supported by the Western Powers. From this moment her economic and domestic policy was almost exclusively dominated by the fear of aggression. Life in Russia became like life in a besieged fortress before the assault. The ruthless extermination of every vestige of opposition against the régime, as well as the hypertrophy of the armaments industry, appear, in retrospective, as attempts to

meet an imminent menace. But we, watching these events from abroad, were inclined to see in them symptoms of the decay of Bolshevism and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Only the Russian war of defence revealed in a flash how deeply the whole life of Russia during the last six or eight years was ruled by this sole consideration: to be strong enough for the hour of the supreme test to come. We have seen with amazement that Russia—this Russia, utterly exhausted by seven years of wars and famines and unspeakable misery, this Russia which only a decade before began to build up with her own strength any industry at all—that Russia had not only forged the arms to foil the designs of the most redoubtable military Power in the world, but that the vast multitudes had been imbued with the acuteness of this danger and with the determination to conquer it.

Finally, we did not perhaps fully appreciate the magnitude of the inspiration which sprang from the Revolution, and, above all, from the idea of the Plan to rebuild society and, at the same time, to remould man for the task of Socialist fulfilment; for what stimulated the Soviet people to the highest hopes, and what encouraged them to boundless sacrifices, was the idea that man can consciously shape his history and fashion himself to his purpose. This fascinating idea engendered that invincible optimism with which the atmosphere of Bolshevik Russia is impregnated and which is a characteristic feature of every society in the re-making.

The coherence and intrinsic strength of a social order are illustrated not by the efficiency of its economic institutions nor by the economic conditions under which the people live, but by the willingness of the common man to toil for it and to defend it. The standard of living of the French workers and peasants was far higher than that of the Russians, but the French obviously felt that the social system of France in 1939 was not worth the sacrifice needed for its survival. Only people who feel that they have a stake in the social system under which they live are prepared to make sacrifices for it. The ordeal of war which the Russian people are undergoing is the supreme test of the inner strength of the new communal psychology born from the Communist system. It is an impressive demonstration of its living force.

For, after all, what we saw during Russia's first year of war showed us that Communism has generated powers of emotion among the millions of Russians so overwhelmingly strong that they have been able to defy the most formidable war machine ever built up in history. Ill-disposed observers who regard Russia merely as the country of "Stalin and the G.P.U." might derive from the amazing spectacle of her resistance to aggression the proof of the

efficiency of Stalin's machine for coercion. But the unsurpassed tenacity displayed by the Red soldiers, the astounding deeds of the Red guerillas, the reckless "scorched-earth" policy carried out by the common men in the villages, are hardly to be explained by Goebbel's fairy tales of the Red Commissar holding a pistol to the back of the soldiers and peasants. Nor is the argument convincing that the German soldiers have performed parallel feats of heroism. The difference between the war efforts of the two peoples is simply this: that on the German side only the war machine is operating, whereas on the Russian side, besides the war machine, nearly half the whole population of Russia has to face the invading army. The civil population of Germany has as yet not experienced an invasion. No one knows whether the German people would also be prepared to scorch their land before an invading Russian army, to blow up their towns and villages, and to stand a siege of Berlin or Leipzig as the Russians stood the siege of Moscow, Leningrad, Sebastopol, and Stalingrad. But if the German people were not willing to fight to the bitter end, as the Russians are, then no Gestapo terror could enforce active civilian participation in the defence of their country.

It is neither the "terror of the G.P.U." nor the "People's Commissar with the pistol" at the back of the Red guerillas, but only the gigantic determination of millions, that can explain the heroic feats for self-defence that we are now witnessing in Russia.

This grandiose spectacle confirms, and demonstrates, that the Soviet Union is held by the great mass of the Russian workers and peasants to be an achievement worthy of any sacrifice. To my mind they are inspired, not, as it is sometimes asserted, by a national sentiment of a traditional nature, but by a social sentiment of a modern kind: it is rooted, in the first place, in the tradition of the Revolution which the Russian workers and peasants have carried out, and secondly, in the achievements they have accomplished. It is certainly a sentiment of patriotism which glows in the hearts of the masses; but, like the patriotism of the Viennese workers when Vienna was still theirs, and the patriotism of the Palestine workers, it is rooted in pride and love for their own social achievements. "Since November 7th (1917), we are patriots", said Lenin, who can hardly be reproached for abandoning international principles. "We are for the defence of the fatherland. But", he added, "the patriotic war towards which we strive is the war for the socialist fatherland, for *Socialism which is our fatherland*, for the Soviet Republic which is a detachment of the international army of Socialism." The workers and peasants of Russia feel that the Soviet system which has abolished the privileges of birth and property embodies, for all its imperfections, the

principle of equality and dignity of men. They believe, further, that the economic progress of the community will increase the standard of living of every individual member. They are thus linked together in unity in defence of their achievements. Professor Laski is right when he says: "A society in which men can perceive the operation of just principles creates in them emotions which reason may hope to permeate and control. It will be prepared for sacrifice; it is prepared to endure hardship."*

THE MORE FORTUNATE AND THE LESS FORTUNATE NATIONS

A Socialist economy requires, and at the same time creates, a sense of solidarity. It moreover satisfies to an ever-increasing extent the people's expectations of improved conditions. By transforming political democracy into economic democracy, it fosters the foundation of freedom.

If we translate the experience of Vienna and Palestine, still in a capitalist environment, into a world perspective, we would produce "nationally and internationally a world consciously planned for better standards of living, for the great masses of people", in the words of Sir Stafford Cripps. "The sense of planning is", according to *The Times*' comment on Sir Stafford's speech, "the necessity to fit the interest of the individual into a wider framework of common need; and this is not less true of nations than of individual men and women. The searing horrors of this war have branded on the consciousness of the populations of Europe the knowledge that the assertion of narrowly conceived national interests against a wider common good leads only to a common misery. This is the true international revolution which has made the return to the Europe of the past unthinkable."

The realisation of this requires sacrifices by the better-off for the benefit of the badly-off on a national as well as on an international scale. Nationally, it means taxation of the more fortunate in order to provide the less fortunate with the necessities of life. Internationally, it means taxation of the more fortunate nations in order to provide the less fortunate with the necessities for developing their own economic life. The standard of living of the nations in the agricultural countries in, for instance, Eastern Europe or, on a much larger scale, in China, cannot be raised without the introduction of new industries. But these countries are too poor to provide themselves with the necessary capital; it must come from the richer countries. Should, however, the capital be provided on the expectation of a profitable return, the payment of interest on it would greatly reduce its benefits. The vicious circle

* Harold J. Laski, *Democracy in Crisis*.

can be broken only by a system of Lend-Lease—that is, in practice, by gifts of capital goods on a large scale. That would mean that, say, Great Britain would produce, at the British taxpayer's expense, tools which would be sent to, say, Yugoslavia, Poland and China, to equip new industries there. This would mean sacrifices by the British, American, French, German, and Dutch peoples for the benefit of the Poles, the Serbs, the Chinese, and the Indian peoples.

But sacrifices on this scale are the unavoidable price we shall have to pay for the maintenance of our former freedom and the building of our new freedom. Sir Stafford Cripps in his broadcast pointed to the "new sense of equality and comradeship" born in this war. "No one dreams today", he said, "of grading the value of individual contributions to our war effort by such old-fashioned standards as those of wealth or class". This moral atmosphere must also prevail in the relations between the wealthy and the poor nations. Just as the British people will no longer tolerate the existence of distressed areas in Great Britain, so the rich nations of the world must no longer tolerate distressed areas on the globe.

But these sacrifices have good effects immediately. That once-famous saying, "Lancashire would prosper if the Chinese peasants could only be persuaded to wear their shirts just two inches longer", is of universal validity. British industry will prosper only when the whole world prospers, when, above all, the standard of living of those hundreds of millions in Eastern Europe and in Asia is raised to such a level that they can afford to buy shirts at all. Colin Clark* considers the rapid industrialisation of Asia as the necessary condition for the prosperity of Europe. "The whole equilibrium depends on the economic development of the Asiatic countries, particularly India and China, and their emergence as consumers of foodstuffs", he says.

We have experienced the grim truth of G. R. Lowell's line:

"If there breathe on earth a slave,
Are ye truly free and brave?"

We have now to pay heavily, with the sacrifices of war, for our indifference to the fate of the people who were enslaved. We must finally realise that if the more fortunate nations remain indifferent to the fate of the less fortunate, they will perish altogether in the vicious circle of slump and war.

* In his most recent book, *The Economics of 1960*.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DESTINY OF FREEDOM

Our life is turned
Out of her course, wherever a man is made
An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool
Or implement, a passive thing employed
As a brute means, without acknowledgement
Of common right or interest in the end.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

SECURITY AND FREEDOM

IT is almost inconceivable that freedom could survive in a society inherently unable to assure security.

In the competitive economic system in which we live, everyone must "make a living"—if he can; if he cannot, he will perish, with or without the dole. In the worst period of the last depression, there were in Europe and the United States about 30,000,000 people unable to make a living, much as they wanted to, because they could not obtain work. In America, between 1920 and 1933, one farm in every four was sold to pay off debts and taxes. The 7,000,000 people hit by the agricultural slump would have preferred to continue to till the soil; but they could not make a living that way.

Now, there are experts like, for instance, the Acting Director of the International Labour Office, Mr. E. J. Phelan, who think it possible that when war ends there may be 150,000,000 to 200,000,000 people unemployed in the world. These millions will be unable to make a living in a competitive system that produces on the basis "of a calculation of profitability". But it is doubtful whether these millions will perish without revolting against their plight. They will probably revolt against a political system that appears responsible for their plight. If democracy and freedom prove unable to prevent want and frustration, then democracy and freedom are meaningless terms.

It is interesting to observe that the capitalist school of thought sees freedom imperilled by the attempt to substitute production for profit by production for use. "The alternative to the profit motive is not 'use'; the alternative is dictatorship and terror", asserts Gustav Stolper,* a German economist, now exiled. He denies that "individual freedom can exist apart from private property".

* Gustav Stolper, *This Age of Fable*.

PRIVATE PROPERTY AND INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

It must be emphasised that private property is not always identical with effective ownership and "freedom", derived from it. The hundreds of thousands of small shareholders in big companies have in practice not the smallest part in wielding the economic power held by the directorates.

Take, for instance, the United States Steel Corporation, one of the most powerful economic and political forces in the United States. This Corporation is "owned" by 160,000 persons, of whom, it is asserted, at least one-quarter are employees in this great industrial enterprise itself. The power, however, resides not in these 160,000 people, but in the six or eight members who form the Board, if not in the chairman alone. Three hundred thousand persons "own" the Standard Oil Companies, a force which has played a fateful part in foreign affairs. Who played this part? The President of the Company alone through his control over the money of the 300,000 small shareholders. The wide dispersal of shares has the effect of rendering it impossible for any combination of shareholders to oppose the autocratic control by the directors.

Of the total business property in the United States, 78 per cent is corporate. There are over 500 corporations, each with assets of over \$100,000,000. The 200 largest of these corporations control 49 per cent of all the corporate wealth in the country, which includes thousands of small corporations. Nearly 40 per cent, then, of all business wealth, both corporate and private, is controlled by these 200 corporations. .

Adolphe Berle and Gardiner Means * comment on these figures as follows: "The big corporations' political influence may be tremendous. Therefore, if roughly half of corporate wealth is controlled by 200 big corporations and half by smaller companies, it is fair to assume that very much more than half of industry is dominated by these units. This consideration is made even more significant when it is remembered that as a result of it approximately 2,000 individuals out of a population of 125,000,000 are in a position to control and direct half of industry." These 2,000 people control the wealth of a little under 6,000,000 investors—a ration of one to 3,000. They control in fact the wealth of the whole of the nation.

There are, to take another example, 36,000,000 people in the United States, with deposits in their own name in saving banks amounting to more than twenty-one milliard dollars. Although in the United States there are 15,000 banks of all sizes,

* Adolphe Berle and G. Means, *Modern Corporation and Private Property*.

this money was in practice controlled by "Wall Street"—that is, by a dozen, or even fewer financial magnates. These men wielded power over the economic forces of the nation—the chief officers of seven of the J. P. Morgan banks alone, in 1933, held between them 2,242 directorships in industrial corporations; they made decisions with no regard whatever to the economic, social, or political wishes of the mass of small savers. For example, the overwhelming majority of these 36,000,000 small savers must have been in favour of Roosevelt's election and of the New Deal, since they represent such a large section of the electorate; otherwise Roosevelt would not have been elected. But Wall Street threw the stupendous economic and political power, which it wields through the savings of the 36,000,000 people, in support of Roosevelt's opponents and sabotaged the New Deal.

"It is almost true to say", observed Keynes, "that there is no class of person in the Kingdom of whom the Governor of the Bank of England thinks less when he decides on his policy than of his shareholders"—except, it could be added, the people who hold no shares at all. But his decisions determine the destiny of whole countries, of whole nations, even of the world. Without consulting the electorates, the Governor of the Bank of England together with the President of the Federal Reserve Board of America decided, in 1920, a joint policy of deflation in England and America which spelt ruin to millions of people all over the world. *The Times** was probably right in writing: "It is no exaggeration to say that the economic reconstruction of Europe owes more to the Governor of the Bank of England than to any other single person". Considering, however, that "the economic reconstruction of Europe"—for which, we are told, the Governor of the Bank of England was more or less solely responsible—in effect brought about the economic deterioration in Europe which resulted in the second world war, people may, perhaps, begin to doubt the soundness of a political and economic system that leaves a few individuals with a power over the ebb and flow of trade (as the moon rules the tides) and which regulates business, rations employment and determines the happiness and misery of humanity.

The interrelation between financial and political power became palpably clear in Germany, where the President of the Deutsche Reichsbank, Hjalmar Schacht, now a Nazi, smashed the Weimar Republic by demanding from the Reich Government, at the height of the financial crisis at the end of 1932, an entire change of State policy before granting loans, and by enforcing a stern policy of deflation. It was his control over the nation's

* November 8, 1927.

finance that made Hjalmar Schacht, or the financial magnates of Germany, master of the destiny of the nation.

What, then, remains of the "freedom", derived from private property? The small investor, who saves a little money to fall back on in sickness or old age, has not the slightest influence upon production, nor political power derived from economic power, nor any kind of "freedom" derived from private property. Ownership by a corporation is passive, as Berle and Means term it. Where real and personal property once meant an extension of the owner's personality, that is no longer the case. "With the corporate revolution, this quality has been lost to the property-owner much as it has been lost to the worker through the industrial revolution. The individual's wealth is no longer an expression of his own efforts. The moral significance of this is obvious. Wealth is now conditioned by those in actual control of business. 'The owner' in the corporate system of industrial wealth is left with a mere symbol of ownership, while the power, responsibility, and the substance of ownership which were an integral part of ownership in the past, are being transferred to a separate group in whose hands lies the control."

Private property was morally vindicated because, as Locke argued, the owner "hath mixed his labour with it". As late as 1848, even property in land, the most sacred type of property, John Stuart Mill thought was "valid only in so far as the proprietor of land is its improver"; he most emphatically refuted the state of things in which "the proprietor of land should be merely a sinecurist quartered on it". When the American Constitution and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man proclaimed the sanctity of property, they defeated the claim of the Leviathan State and its ruling feudal classes to the fruits of the toil of the peasants, and the master craftsmen, and the merchants. The doctrine of the sacred right of property was developed in the struggle against an omnipotent unconstitutional monarch who treated the property of his subjects as his private property; it was forged as a revolutionary weapon in the fight of the rising middle class and the peasantry—the "third estate"—against the feudal tithes and privileges. In the times of Locke, Turgot, and Adam Smith, private property was indeed to a great extent a condition of individual freedom.

But since then the institution of property has undergone a transformation of bewildering rapidity. Ownership has largely been divorced from creative work. The ownership of any substantial share in the national wealth has become concentrated in the hands of a small minority. The feudal *seigneur* has been replaced by the capitalist *seigneur*, who reaps the harvest others have

sown and who wields an incomparably greater power over the limb, life, and happiness of the multitude than the lords in their castles and mansions in the times of Henry VIII.

The contemporary apologist of the absolute right of private property, when defending its blessings against "communist dictatorship and terror", very often presents the small craftsman or shopkeeper or small freeholder as the typical owner. They are, indeed, the majority of the owners, but they own in fact an infinitely small fraction of the national wealth, and are as much dependent upon the big owners as the property-less classes. In the conditions of modern industrial civilisation it is not the property in tools and stocks with which the craftsman works, but the share, which represents the commonest of all types of property; and it is the big shareholder alone who enjoys "individual freedom", derived from private property.

Planned economy need not necessarily abolish "passive" private property. The inequality in the distribution of the national dividend can be fundamentally corrected by a social system of taxation and rigorous death duties. Planned economy must, however, abolish private control of economic power; it must subordinate it to the control of the nation. The heads of the banks and industrial corporations must be the servants of the commonwealth, responsible to the nation represented by Parliament and Government; the industrial processes must be controlled by the working people themselves who produce the goods, and by the people who consume them. The control of investments and the control of industrial activity must be vested in the community.

PLANNED ECONOMY AND DICTATORSHIP

The people of America as well as of Britain are living under a planned economy. It is by no means, however, a Socialist economy. It is hardly a complete planned economy. But it contains, at any rate, the essentials of a planned economy. Certainly many "freedoms" are restricted. For instance, the freedom of consumption; yet the severity of the restriction of this sort of freedom is not mainly caused by planned economy, but rather by the exigencies of war that have placed Britain in a state of siege. Certainly the freedom of capital investment and profit-making is considerably restricted; the State has to assume control over investments and profit. Even the freedom of choice of employment is greatly narrowed.

But taking into account the many restrictions of many kinds of freedoms, to which the people of Britain are subjected, it cannot, accurately or fairly, be maintained that they are living under the

sway of "terror and dictatorship". For those freedoms which Mr. Stolper rightly regards as essential, freedom of thought and freedom of speech, and, above all, the freedom of the people to control its destiny, remain unrestricted.

It is indeed hard to understand why planned economy, controlled by the nation and subject to the unfettered criticism of public opinion, should necessarily entail terror and dictatorship. Precisely the opposite is the case, as proved by history. Freedom and democracy perished in Germany not under the impact of a planned economy, but under the impact of a chaotic economy. It was the social tension, produced by the conflict between the capitalist economic system and the necessities of life for the great mass of the people, which shattered the Weimar Republic. In Germany the reign of terror and dictatorship was instituted long before competitive capitalism was harnessed by some measure of planned economy. It was, then, not planned economy, but competitive capitalism, that brought terror and dictatorship to Germany.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF FREEDOM

Freedom is indeed a "celestial article", as Tom Paine said, and tyranny a scourge. Freedom of thought and speech is like the fresh air, without which there is no healthy and happy life. But people can obviously not live by fresh air alone. If health and happiness are imperilled by the implacable dread of unemployment and want, freedom of thought and speech loses its splendour. When a society of free men is unable to prevent life becoming unbearable, the evaluation of freedom becomes subject to redefinition. "In 1940 America, the rich want liberty, and the poor ham and eggs", observed L. Dennis.*

That is a new and most heartrending experience. Our outlook on life was essentially based on the assumption that freedom was the ultimate goal of man's strivings; that freedom was an end in itself. Indeed, many pages of the history of human civilisation testify to man's longing and struggle for freedom. But we must also remember that freedom is a very late offshoot of the human heritage—its most beautiful, yet fragile, blossom. The record of man's struggle for freedom is magnificent; but the record of man's acceptance of bondage covers an infinitely greater period of his history. In the life of the peoples freedom has been only a comparatively short interlude in an unending despotism. Only a century and a half have passed since the principles of freedom became a political force, slowly shaping European civilisation in

* L. Dennis, *Dynamics of War and Revolution*.

the two hemispheres, in an interminable struggle against frequently victorious forces of oppression. Freedom is not yet a powerful and ancient growth, deeply-rooted in the soul of man. The blast of economic collapse may destroy it for many centuries to come.

Freedom is gravely imperilled by the economy of insecurity and inequality that is inherent in the competitive capitalist system. It would, to my mind, be a grave error to assume that with the military defeat of the Axis Powers, Fascism as an organisation of society will be obliterated from the earth for ever, and "that the world will be made safe for democracy". The victory of the Allies might break the predominance of German Fascism in Europe. But the potential Fascist menace to democracy would by no means be eliminated. For the threat does not lie in Hitler nor in the nature of the German people; it lies in the foundations of the competitive capitalist organisation of society that is inherently unable to provide security. If the world after the war should return to the economic principles that reigned before the war, and if an economic slump on a scale more devastating than any we have known hitherto should visit the world—as appears almost inescapable owing to the vast dislocation of economic life and the rapid development of technology produced by the war—it could happen even in Britain, let alone in America, that a destitute people itself might bring Fascism, or a similar type of authoritarianism, into power by using the instruments of democracy. It was the plebiscite that in France, in 1852, legalised the dictatorship of Napoleon III, and in Germany in 1933, the dictatorship of Hitler. It is a vital error to solace oneself comfortably by saying: "Britain is not Germany". The Germans used to say: "Germany is not Italy"; and yet it happened there all the same.

I submit that the choice with which human civilisation is faced is neither competitive capitalism nor planned economy, but the transformation of competitive capitalism into a planned economy either by democracy or by authoritarianism. The re-fashioning of the existing economic organisation of society is inevitable, because man has lost faith in it as an instrument of providing security. Its transformation into an instrument of security can be effected by democracy. It will otherwise certainly be effected by authoritarianism, which subdues the economic power of society to the control of the State. Wherever authoritarianism obtained a hold on society, planned economy was, to a greater or lesser extent, introduced.

If my interpretations of the economic and psychological trend are correct, it follows from them that if democracy fails to reconstruct the economic foundations of society, freedom will perish in

“the bleak heat of distress”. It should also be clear that if once freedom is lost in Britain it will be lost almost everywhere. Then the time would be at hand when the sun would rise no longer on free men. For the authoritarian system that would be able to achieve what democracy failed to achieve—namely, social security—might also, wielding the monopoly of moulding the minds, produce a type of man that would forget the great concepts of human dignity, as the thought of ancient Greece became obliterated from the memory of many generations during the Dark Ages. After only twenty years of Fascism, the Italian people have already lost their sense of liberty.

This consideration indicates the extent of the responsibility with which the present generation is burdened. And as, owing to the predominant position that Britain will occupy in the affairs of the world after the victorious termination of the war, it will be the British people who will have to bear the main responsibility for the shaping of the world to come, its decisions during the next few years will be of momentous importance for centuries. Upon its magnanimity, firmness, and energy depends the destiny of freedom.

CHAPTER NINE

INTERNATIONAL CONDITIONS OF FREEDOM

Go, wondrous creature! mount where Science guides,
Go, measure Earth, weigh air and state the tides;
Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
Correct old Time, and regulate the Sun;

Alas, what wonder! Man's superior part
Unchecked may rise, and climb from art to art;
But when his own great work is but begun,
What Reason weaves, by Passion is undone.

ALEXANDER POPE, *Essay on Man*.

THE GERMAN problem is dwarfed to insignificance by the task of re-fashioning the world, a task as awe-inspiring in its magnitude as it is universal in its claims. There are 80,000,000 Germans: but the fate and happiness of more than 2,000,000,000 human beings dwelling on the globe that is our world are at stake. There are gloomy speculations about the demoniacal spirit that has infested the German soul; but the forces which have brought humanity to the brink of ruin are of quite a different nature. Reflecting on a human cataclysm similar to that we are experiencing now, but on a far smaller scale, Burke, refusing to appreciate its historical

significance, complained in despair: "Everything seems out of nature in this strange chaos of levity and ferocity, and all sorts of crimes jumble together with all sorts of follies". But in this extremely complicated world of to-day we cannot yield to despair unless we are prepared to accept defeat before the real struggle against the chaos that threatens to devour all of us has begun. Nor can humanity act like Coleridge's cyclops, with one eye, and that at the back, because if humanity fails here and now in designing the shape of things to come, it will fail altogether in the hour of decision.

The catastrophe of this war has thrown into tragic relief the recognition of the fact that attempts at re-making the world after 1918 failed, because the men of destiny, in Leonard Woolf's words, poured the molten metal of the twentieth century into the worn-out matrix of the nineteenth century. If this war has any meaning at all, it appears palpably as the violent disruption of an old matrix by powerful social, economic, technological, and psychological forces, which were latent in the human society before the last war and which have gathered momentum during the crisis between the two world wars. Should these forces again be fettered, and once again not find their appropriate mould, they must necessarily burst again into a scourging deluge.

HOW TO LOSE THE PEACE

The international mould appropriate to the new needs of human society must clearly be fundamentally different from the mould that burst into pieces in this war. Professor E. H. Carr, in his *Conditions of Peace*, and G. D. H. Cole, in his *Europe, Russia and the Future*, have with so much wisdom, creative imagination and lucid commonsense discussed some of the crucial problems with which all of us are faced that I would feel it impertinent to venture similar suggestions.

But it might be worth while to contrast the obvious needs of an international organisation of the world with schemes for the organisation of Europe as outlined by influential sections of public opinion in the camp of the United Nations. They revolve round Germany. It seems, therefore, urgent to reflect once more on the German problem in connection with certain peace aims.

It would, I submit, be a grave mistake to assume that Germany is the sole problem that matters in the world. Germany is certainly a great problem, but Europe is a far bigger one. The German problem is of general interest only in so far as it is involved in the European problem.

Thus it would seem reasonable to examine the German problem in connection with, and as a part of, the economic and political problems of Europe. This method requires first the securing of political and economic conditions for a new European organisation, and then the elaboration of plans as to how Germany could be fitted into this system.

A certain school of thought, with disciples in many of the oppressed nations, is, however, inclined to regard Germany as the main problem. It regards Germany as the problem, as such, and seeks a solution for it in isolation from the complex universal problem of Europe.

It should, in the first place, be noted that the proposals for some form of unification in Europe that were elaborated with so much inspiration and fervour by British and American public opinion, did not find any encouraging response whatever from representatives of the oppressed European nations. There have been, so far as I have observed, no statements by members of the exiled Governments, or even by responsible Socialist refugees (except, perhaps, by some lonely German or Austrian Socialist or other), indicating an unequivocal acceptance of the conditions for a New Europe. At best, the idea of the unity of Europe is regarded as a naïve Utopia to which, with due cautiousness, respect might be paid, but which is not to be taken seriously. At the worst, it is derided, and even rejected with hostility, for it implies the incorporation of Germany, as an equal member of a community of equals, into an international organisation of Europe.

Deep down in that attitude there certainly glimmers the possibility of a world-wide co-operation, but, to be sure, a co-operation excluding the German nation. The German people might perhaps be admitted, if it appears unavoidable, to some form of international collaboration in the economic sphere. The concept, however, of international co-operation with the German people in the political sphere has, so far, been firmly rejected. Imbued with the conviction of the bellicose nature of the German people, this school aims at an organisation of Europe designed—as it believes—to prevent for ever the resurrection of German greatness. This aim, it might be emphasised, is supported by an influential section of public opinion, and is advocated by some British Socialists as well as by some British Conservatives, and also by some German refugees from different political camps. It might be termed the opinion of the traditional school.

This school has produced hosts of suggestions as to how to deal with Germany. They would have very grave consequences. They need, in the first place, clear exposition; they need no

less careful examination. No one must be left in the dark. Everyone must have full knowledge of the facts and their bearing on the future. The German problem concerns not only the Poles, Czechs, French, or Belgians; it concerns no less the British, the Americans, the Russians, the Indians, the South Africans. It has become a world problem. Whoever regards a policy of coercion and force towards the Germans as essential ought to know, in the first place, its consequences and, in the second place, the price that he and everyone might have to pay for it.

The suggestions in respect of the future of Germany can, roughly, be divided into two groups of problems: first, those concerning the relationship between Europe and Germany, and second, those concerning the internal economic and political conditions of Germany. Let us analyse them briefly.

THE SPLITTING UP OF EUROPE

Since Germany is regarded as a sinister Power aiming at world domination, the traditional school suggests the rallying of the forces of Europe against Germany. The combination of the anti-German countries against Germany might take a variety of political forms. Some of these countries—such as Czechoslovakia and Poland—might form a confederation or—as Greece and Yugoslavia—a federation. It is considered desirable to extend the regional confederations to some of the Danubian and Balkan countries. Some other of the smaller countries, such as Belgium, the Netherlands, or Norway, aspire to a close alliance with Britain as much as some of the Eastern European countries expect to be protected by a close alliance with Russia. The immediate aim of these groups is to strengthen militarily the smaller countries around Germany in confederations, and to integrate them in a European military system of alliances, resting on the two powerful pillars, Great Britain and Russia. To a restored League of Nations would be allocated the task of co-ordinating the system of alliances through the instrument of collective security and to maintain it in the sacred name of international law.

We must note, in the first place, that these suggestions aspire to the re-establishment of the States of Europe on a nation-state basis; that they aim at the old Europe, divided again, as before, among a score of independent States, endowed, as they were, with national sovereignty which might somehow be limited so as to create the necessary conditions for security and international co-operation. But sovereignty implies, conversely, the right of the sovereign States to retain full power whenever they deem it necessary. Even the idea of an international force is

contemplated only as composed of national contingents recruited from national armies. What the traditional school is aiming at is, essentially, the restoration of a world of competing nation-States. For, even if the sovereign States consent to certain limitations of their sovereign "rights", as long as sovereign nation-States remain in being, they remain a law unto themselves. That law cannot but be the law of the jungle, as history has proved. The nation-State itself is, as Lord Acton pointed out some seventy years ago, an inherent absurdity; and one of the great founders of a national-State, T. G. Masaryk, never ceased to emphasise this truth. Technology has annihilated space: the art of modern warfare enlarges immediately and inevitably a local conflict to a world-conflagration; economic interdependence has merged together the destiny of all peoples: how absurd indeed it would be to divide into conflicting states a world which is, in fact, an indissoluble entity!

It is difficult to see how the re-establishment of independent, sovereign nation-States can be brought into accord, firstly, with a planned economy on an international scale, and secondly, with an international organisation of collective security. This consideration becomes clear if we contrast the essential conditions indispensable for a sane reconstruction of the world, and for European security, with the "rights", inherent in the very notion of sovereignty. These two sets of rights have been enumerated by G. D. H. Cole *; he justly regards the necessary conditions for ensuring prosperity and peace as follows:

(a) The provision of a unified and efficient system of transport of men and goods, by rail and road, by water and by air, designed to promote the easiest possible conditions of exchange between areas producing farm goods and raw materials and areas producing finished manufactures, and also the easiest possible conditions of movement for men and women between country and country, on journeys of business and of pleasure, and, above all, of mutual exploration of the human mind;

(b) The development of productive resources, irrespective of the area in which they happen to be situated, in such a way as to contribute as largely as possible to the generalised improvement of European standard of living; and

(c) The abolition of national armies, navies and air forces, and perhaps of national police forces as well, as far as they are instruments of political power, and the substitution of supra-national forces under unified commands, which are made up not of national contingents owning separate national allegiances,

* *International Socialist Forum*, April, 1942.

but in accordance with the requirements of the supra-national state.

And these are the prerogatives of sovereign States :

(a) The right to regulate the movement of things and persons across its frontiers, including the right to impose customs, tariffs and quotas and to enact laws regulating migration, passports and the position of aliens within its territories ;

(b) The right to control its own monetary arrangements, and to regulate its own systems of transport up to its frontiers, the use of its ports and airfields, and so on ;

(c) The right to control the use made of its resources of raw materials, and the processes of capital investment and economic development within its frontiers ; and

(d) The right to enforce its rights, not only by exclusive control of its own police, but also by meeting force with force, if in the last resort it cannot agree with its neighbours.

This confrontation makes it plain that the maintenance of national sovereignty is bound to frustrate any serious attempt at creating the conditions necessary for the economic and political organisation of Europe.

POLICY OF THE BALANCE OF POWER

The system of regional federations and alliances, as proposed by the traditional school, is based on the assumption that the Powers that today stand in arms against Germany are permanently bound together by the supreme interest of keeping Germany down for ever.

But it is conceivable that, in ten or twenty years' time, an international situation may arise in which one State or another—or even a group of States—might be highly interested in seeing Germany once again strong and in coalescing with Germany against another group of Powers. There was a time when the Soviet Union supported the rearmament of Germany, seeing that country as a potential ally against the Western Powers. Then came another time when, conversely, Britain and France wanted a strong Germany as a barrier against the Soviet Union. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that Russia once again considered a strong Germany to be in accordance with her interests, or that the Czechoslovak-Polish Confederation wished to substitute for its collaboration with Russia a collaboration with Germany. Poland, in 1934, changed her alliance with France over-night for an alliance with Germany. France, to take

another example, deserted over-night her defensive treaty with Czechoslovakia in exchange for an agreement with Germany. Or, remember, Great Britain and France, bound by the Treaty of St. Germain—let alone the Covenant of the League of Nations—to uphold the independence of Austria, did not lift a finger when Hitler invaded and annexed her. Changed circumstances change the meaning of treaties and alliances. The sentiment of hate that today governs the traditional school might after a time decline; it will, in any case, be subordinated to national interests. If, then, the “holding down” of Germany appears today to be in the interests of certain individual states, in ten or twenty years time it may not any longer correspond with the vital needs of the same States.

If it is agreed that the condition of lasting peace is a stable European equilibrium, it cannot be created by a system of alliances of sovereign States, balancing the weight of European Powers, because the system of the balance of power is the very negation of stable equilibrium. It is an exigency of which Mercier de la Riviere observed more than 150 years ago: “People arm against each other and cut each other’s throats according to a system invented to prevent throat-cutting”. As history has shown since then, Mercier’s observation was not altogether wrong.

European equilibrium must clearly rest— if history proves anything—on an all-embracing international organisation of nations, which confers that part of sovereignty that concerns the relations between the nations upon an international authority.

The new Europe, as visualised by the traditional school, would thus look very much like the old Europe. Its security would be essentially based on a system of the balance of power. But that is a very fragile foundation, because it is bound, in virtue of changed circumstances, to be upset at any moment by changed alliances. Thus, the traditional school, in adhering to the principle of national sovereignty and power policy, would not be able to effect the conditions for a lasting peace.

DISARMAMENT AND OCCUPATION OF GERMANY

Europe’s security, indeed, requires the utter defeat of Nazi Germany and the destruction of her social and economic forces of militarism and imperialism. Disarmament and temporary occupation of Germany are certainly necessary means to this end.

But they will achieve their ends only if they are carried out in the spirit of reconciliation of Europe with the German people. They will assuredly defeat their ends if they are carried out in a spirit of revenge.

They will, in the first place, defeat their ends if the problem of the disarmament of Germany is dealt with as a merely technical problem. The disbanding of the German Army, the confiscation and destruction of her armaments and navy, and even—as is seriously considered—the destruction of the German heavy industry, would be of no avail if the social fabric of German militarism and imperialism remained intact. The problem of the disarmament of Germany is only in the second place a technical problem. It is primarily a social problem. It is not solely a destructive problem; it is, fundamentally, a constructive problem. It requires, primarily, the destruction of the economic power of the military caste; that is, the breaking up of the great estates of the Prussian aristocracy. It requires, also, the destruction of the economic power of the iron and steel magnates and financiers; that means it requires the nationalisation of the key industries and the large banks. It requires the purging of the old judiciary and bureaucracy. It requires a complete change of the German people's class-relations. It requires a profound transformation of the structure of society:—a social revolution.

Yet it also requires the construction of a new Germany, a Germany that is governed in the interests of, and ruled by, the power of the common people, who fear and hate war as every people does. The disarmament of Germany can, in truth, be finally achieved only by the construction of a peaceful Germany.

That is a tremendous task, which can hardly be mastered by the German people without foreign help. The collapse of the Nazi régime will bring chaos. The whole edifice of the German State is permeated with Fascism. It will collapse with the Nazi régime. There will be a void until the "Other Germany" has found a way to organise the State. And then the whole machinery of State and society will have to be rebuilt from the bottom to the top. In this chaotic period of transition, the German Revolution will need the help of the victorious democracies. It will need not only food; it will also need power.

Viewed from this aspect, the problem of the occupation might be of crucial importance for the future of Europe, whether it is meant to serve constructive purposes or whether it is meant merely to serve as revenge.

A constructive policy of occupation would, in the first place, have to impress upon the German people that the occupation was regarded, not as a measure of castigation, but as an instrument of aid; and that it was a temporary measure for the period of Germany's transition, and neither more nor less.

It would, then, have to foster intentionally the revolutionary forces in Germany against the counter-revolutionary forces. It

would have to assist the revolutionary authority not only in the disbanding of the German army, but also in the disbanding of the whole of the Nazi machinery. The revolution which will follow the collapse of the Nazi system will probably take the form of violent civil war in every town and village. The Nazis, in their millions, will certainly not yield to the new authority without resisting—as the ruling class did in 1918—for they know that they will not only be deprived of their economic and social privileges, but that they will also be brought to account for all the wrongs they have committed; they will fight desperately for their skins and to the bitter end. They are trained in arms; they are accustomed to the ruthless use of weapons; they will fight. They will be aided, so long as the fight is not finally decided, by the vast machinery of the State, permeated, as it is, by Nazis. The revolutionary authority, on the other side, will hardly be able to command an armed force immediately which will be strong enough to deal with the forces of the counter-revolution. They will need the assistance of the victorious democracies.

A constructive policy of occupation further would have to support the aims of the revolution, designed to bring the essential industries and banking capital under the control of the nation, and to break up the big estates. Germany's militarism and imperialism are rooted in these three domains of vested interests. Germany cannot be de-militarised and pacified so long as the vested interests remain entrenched in these domains.

As I cannot see how the working class by its own strength alone will be able to wipe out the forces of Nazism, militarism, and imperialism in Germany, I consider the armed help of the victorious democracies to be a cogent necessity.

Conversely, because the victorious democracies will not be able, solely by a defeat of the German army, to eradicate German militarism and imperialism, they must assist the social revolution in Germany, the aim of which will be, by the transformation of the whole economic and social fabric of society, to uproot the forces of militarism and imperialism in Germany. If the United Nations really desire the creation of a peaceful Germany, they must ally themselves with the German revolution.

Therefore, the occupation of Germany appears to me necessary if its declared purpose is the reconstruction of a peaceful Germany, in co-operation between the victorious democracies and the Government which will emerge from the revolution in Germany.

However, should the policy of occupation under the pressure of vested interests, terrified by the aspect of a victorious Socialist revolution, aim at the fostering of the counter-revolutionary forces in Germany, it would foil the supreme and immediate

aim of the United Nations—namely, the destruction of German militarism and imperialism. If the occupation is designed to set up and to back a military dictatorship in Germany in order to protect the capitalist structure of Germany against its revolutionary transformation into a predominantly Socialist commonwealth, then the United Nations themselves will bring back into power those social forces which by virtue of necessity will ultimately revive German militarism, imperialism, and nationalism.

It must be realised that German militarism and imperialism cannot be broken by external power alone. Germany might be militarily defeated. But if the economic, social, and political basis of German militarism and imperialism were not also exterminated—that is, if the core of German nationalism were not also destroyed by the transformation of the whole social and economic fabric of German society—"the German danger", the old danger of German aggressiveness, would arise again.

If the world wants a pacifist Germany, it must want a Socialist Germany. If the United Nations want the destruction of German militarism and imperialism, they must aid the Socialist revolution in Germany. If world security is the paramount goal of the gigantic struggle of our time, its attainment must not be frustrated by the vested interests. If the policy of occupation is conceived as the last operation of the war in order to secure the military defeat of German imperialism in the field by uprooting German imperialism in its own country, it must co-operate with the German revolution.

Only if the military forces of occupation appear to be helping the German people in its struggle for liberation from the domination by the militarist, imperialist and National Socialist caste, only then can the revolutionary Government be free from the odium of being a Quisling Government. For only if the occupation were meant, not as an act of retribution, but as an act of assistance, only then will it be accepted as a necessity by the anti-Nazi section of the German people.

Such a constructive policy of occupation must take into account its psychological implications. For even if there were agreement in the aims of co-operation, it is obvious that the psychological atmosphere created by the occupation will be different according to the countries from which the forces of occupation come. It will make a tremendous difference whether Germany is occupied by forces from Great Britain and the United States, which have not suffered the horrors of invasion and occupation, or by troops from nations that have been tortured by the Nazis. It is quite natural that the feelings of hatred and vengeance which obsess the forces of the latter countries would induce them to regard their

mission of occupation as a mission of revenge, and not as a mission of reconciliation and reconstruction—how could it be otherwise? But in this atmosphere no national Government in Germany would be able to exercise moral authority, because it would be stigmatised with the responsibility for the disgrace and hardships that the German people would have to suffer. The nationalist propaganda would represent the German revolution as the mainspring of the humiliation and privations of the German people. The revolution would, from its start, be compromised and frustrated. German nationalism would again find its opportunity.

RETRIBUTION AND RESTITUTION

It need not be emphasised that the natural sense of justice requires the punishment of the guilty who have committed the most bestial crimes that even stained the annals of humanity. Guilty are, in my view, not alone the authors of those crimes, but also their henchmen and, though perhaps to a lesser degree, those who accepted the moral responsibility by voluntarily joining the National Socialist Party, and, particularly, its terror organisations, the S.S., the *Waffen S.S.*, and the Gestapo.

There are two sets of crimes, and, accordingly, two instruments of retribution, which must be considered.

There are crimes to be punished which the Nazis committed against German citizens—Socialists, Catholics, Liberals, Jews. These crimes ought to be dealt with by German People's Courts, set up by the revolutionary Government. These People's Courts will have to try not only the authors of the atrocities, but also their executioners who tortured and put to death the victims of Nazism. It will also be the task of the German legislative authority to deal in an appropriate way with the whole body of the members of the Nazi Party, the S.S., the *Waffen S.S.* and the Gestapo, who have, in my opinion, to bear a collective responsibility for the crimes of the Nazi system. It would, for instance, be sheer madness, once civil liberties are restored, to let the Nazis enjoy them immediately, as they would use them again as instruments for the destruction of these liberties. The German law for certain offences provides the additional punishment of depriving the culprit of civic rights (disenfranchisement, ineligibility for the Civil Service, and so forth) for a number of years. This law ought to be applied in dealing politically with the whole body of the Nazi machine.

There are, then, the crimes to be dealt with which the Nazis have committed against the citizens of the occupied countries.

These crimes ought to be tried by international court-martials in every one of the countries concerned.

The same distinction should be observed with regard to reparations. The Nazis have robbed hundreds of thousands of German and Austrian Jews of their private property. It is clear that the responsibility for the looting of the Jewish population rests collectively on the whole body of the Nazi Party and on every one of its members. There may be, perhaps, some among them who have disagreed, at the bottom of their heart, with the abominable robbing of the Jewish people; but by joining voluntarily, and by remaining members of, the Nazi Party, they have to share the responsibility for all the Nazi Party has done officially. Accordingly, they will have to be brought to account collectively, and will have to restore the robbed property collectively, perhaps by levying a special tax on their property and income.

On a far greater scale will be the restoration of property of individuals and States, looted by the Nazi authorities in the occupied countries; they have stolen furniture from civilians, paintings from public galleries, libraries from scientific institutes; they have dismantled factories and brought their machines to Germany; they have robbed Polish and Czech peasants of their cattle and lands—all these things will have to be paid back by the whole of the German people.

However, retribution and restorations of stolen property ought to be regarded as acts of war, as its final operation, carried out with utmost speed and liquidated in a spirit of reconciliation. It should be remembered that "Amnesty", as Victor Hugo once said, "is the noblest word in human speech". The victorious nations should endeavour to bring home to the German people the common sense of justice with which the procedure of repayment will be directed, and that only the guilty men, and not the German people, shall be punished.

POLICY OF COERCION

Yet since the traditional school does not believe in the "Other Germany", it cannot see any reason why it should avoid imposing humiliation and hardships on the German people. It has no interest in the success of the German revolution; still less in the Socialist reconstruction of Germany. The German problem appears to this school of thought purely as a power problem. "Eyeless in hate", it is bent to mete out to the Germans the doom of revenge.

It is certainly in accordance with the principles for which the democracies wage war that Germany shall, as President Beneš

suggested, retain not a single square yard which Hitler annexed by force or threat of force. Yet it is contemplated to apply the detested Hitler method against Germany, once she is defeated and prostrate. There are Polish politicians who suggest the annexation of East Prussia; they even suggest the annexation of Silesia and the territories stretching to the river Oder with Breslau and Stettin. In this area nine million Germans now live. As many of them as possible would be deported to Germany.

There are Czech politicians who suggest as a solution of the German minority problem of Czechoslovakia the deportation of most of the 3,000,000 Germans who live there to Germany, and the transplanting of the rest of them from the border districts to the interior; the remaining Germans to be deprived of their political rights as equal citizens.

It is suggested, for instance, by the German historian Veit Valentin* and the English economist Paul Einzig,† that Germany should be dismembered. Mr. Paul Einzig recommends the breaking up of Germany into the thirty odd States of which she was composed before 1871; he even advocates that "the ruling dynasties in these various States should be restored". Apart from the political implications of his proposition, its economic aspect immediately becomes clear if we imagine what would happen to the people of Great Britain if not only Scotland and Wales, but also a score of English counties were to become independent States with their own currencies and tariff systems. It would mean the disruption of the entire economic life of the nation; and probably a third, or even more, of the people who dwell in the British Isles would become "surplus", without any hope of ever again obtaining work and bread, while the standard of living of the rest would be lowered below starvation level.

Yet Mr. Paul Einzig thinks that even this operation might not suffice to render the German people weak and powerless for ever. He intimates that "defeated Germany should be de-industrialised to a considerable degree. All the war-industries should be stamped out and industries which could be converted for the production of war materials, or even for the production of machinery necessary for war industries, should be restricted. . . . Germany should also be deprived as far as possible of the means of producing essential raw materials and fuel. . . ." This suggestion amounts, in fact, to the utter destruction of the whole industry in Germany, for almost every industry can be converted for the production of war materials, and there cannot be industrial production at all without a tool industry. The de-industrialisa-

* *Contemporary Review*, February, 1942.

† Paul Einzig, *Appeasement: Before, During and After the War*.

tion of Germany "to a considerable degree" means the destruction of the livelihood of perhaps 30,000,000 people.

But there is still another aspect of this problem. The war necessitates the speedy annihilation of as great a number of Germans, and the destruction of as big a portion of the German industry, as possible. But after the termination of hostilities, every worker, including the German, and every tool, including those which the German industry can produce, is an asset to the whole of humanity. No serious economist will contest that the destruction of the industry, and particularly of the vast capital goods and raw-materials industry in Germany, which to-day serves war-purposes, but which after the war could contribute enormously to the reconstruction of the world, would impoverish disastrously not the German people alone but all people everywhere.

Finally, having Germany dismembered and crippled, some disciples of the traditional school suggest in addition that Germany be occupied for one, or two, or more generations and that she be transformed for all practical purposes into a condominium of the victorious nations. "Hecatombs of broken hearts, with fear and self-contempt and barren hope" shall be left to the German people for the crimes of their rulers.

Surely, from the point of view of Nazi morality, no objection can be raised to such aims. The Nazis have devastated half the Continent; they have dismembered many countries; they have plundered and destroyed their industries, they have slaughtered whole nations or at least degraded them to slaves. Their "New Order in Europe" is intended to be the undisguised German domination and exploitation of Europe; it is "the blood-stained charter of all woe".

But neither the realisation of the Nazi aims nor the realisation of the aims of the traditional school is likely to achieve a Europe of free nations—free, in the first place, from fear and want.

Firstly, the sentiment of nationalism—that source of strife and discontent—which actually is waning among the German as well as among the French people, would revive in its most violent and malicious form. The great opportunity of replacing it by the sentiment of international solidarity, a process that has been in progress since 1919, would be entirely lost.

This policy would further necessitate the continuation of rearmament of all countries—except of Germany—on a large scale. Disarmament of one Power does not make the people of the armed countries feel free from the fear of attack. Remember that the Maginot Line was built when Germany lay prostrate and

entirely disarmed. Maginot Lines everywhere would be erected. The French would complete theirs by fortifying the Franco-Belgian frontiers; the Russians would build one, the Dutch, the Belgians, the Czechs, the Poles. Europe would be criss-crossed with fortifications. It would bristle with arms. An ever-increasing proportion of the national income would be wasted on the piling up of weapons of destruction. The people would not be freed from fear of wars.

Nor would they be free from want. Reconstruction requires, in the first place, the pacification of Europe. But the pacification of Europe requires first of all the psychological no less than the material pacification of Germany. Yet a policy of revenge is hardly likely to pacify Germany morally. Germany would become a permanent danger spot in Europe, spreading unrest, suspicion and fear over the whole world. The reconstruction of Europe is, also, hardly conceivable without the wholehearted collaboration of Germany. A disgraced Germany would scarcely be prepared to collaborate with anyone. The degradation of Germany would from the start frustrate any serious scheme for reconstruction on an international scale.

We should, perhaps, recall the manifesto of General Smuts on his departure from Europe after he had protested against the Treaty of Versailles, in which he said: "The brutal fact is that Great Britain is a very small island on the fringe of the continent, and that on that continent the seventy odd million Germans represent the most important and formidable national factor. You cannot have a stable Europe without a stable, settled Germany, and you cannot have a stable, settled, prosperous Great Britain while Europe is weltering in confusion and unsettlement next door. In our policy of European settlement, the appeasement of Germany, therefore, becomes one of cardinal importance."

Thus, the great opportunity of reshaping the world would be missed if the peace settlement were based on revenge and not on reconciliation. Nothing could be gained by a policy of revenge. For a policy of coercion of Germany must in the long run inevitably fail. There is no Power in the world strong enough to prevent a resurrection of the national unity and the status of equality of a civilised nation. Remember Ireland, remember India, remember the struggle of the Polish, of the Czech, of the Serb peoples for their liberation. Every nation, great or small, has found the means and the historic opportunity to defy coercion. That will not prove less true for a great nation such as Germany.

PSYCHOLOGICAL REPERCUSSIONS OF A POLICY OF COERCION

There are also to be considered the repercussions of a policy of coercion and revenge against Germany on the countries of the two hemispheres, with their great numbers of German-speaking people. Outside Germany and her boundaries of 1937, there are 6,500,000 Germans in Austria, 4,000,000 in Switzerland, 3,000,000 in Czechoslovakia, 1,000,000 in Poland, scores of thousands scattered over all countries of the Continent; and there are further about 15,000,000 people of German descent in the United States of America.

AMERICA AND THE REVIVAL OF EUROPEAN ANARCHY

The bulk of the Americans of German descent are today as determinedly fighting Nazi Germany as the Americans of British descent. Take a man like Wendell Willkie: he hates and despises Hitlerism as profoundly as Roosevelt or Churchill. But he does not hate and despise the Germans; he will never admit that the German people, from whom he is descended, are an inferior or wicked race; he will never consent to a settlement degrading the German people as outcasts. He desires the utter defeat of Hitlerite Germany; he undoubtedly appreciates, and consents to, the necessity of disarming Germany; he would probably not object to the temporary occupation of Germany, provided that it were not designed as an act of revenge. But he, and many of his compatriots of German descent, would surely not agree to deny Germany the status of equality, nor "to deliver the suffering people of the world to new oppressions, subjugations and dismemberments—a new century of war". I quote here the words of William C. Bullitt—assistant in the Department of State attached to the American Commission to negotiate peace—in his letter of resignation to President Wilson. He resigned because he regarded the Treaty of Versailles as a betrayal of the "new international order based upon broad and universal principles of Right and Justice"; and because he was convinced that this unjust settlement would inevitably lead to another war. Therefore, he proclaimed that "the duty of the Government of the United States to its own people and to mankind is to refuse to sign or ratify this unjust Treaty, to refuse to guarantee its settlements, by entering the League of Nations, to refuse to entangle the United States further by an understanding with France".

It might be useful to recall that the United States did, in 1919, in fact ultimately refuse to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, and to join the League, and to commit herself to France. The reper-

cussions which this move produced might now be considered. It was, as we know now, one of the most fateful events in history. Since the United States refused to guarantee the security of France by special treaty, Great Britain refused to burden herself alone with this obligation. France after the war thus felt herself deserted by her allies; she was, on the other hand, haunted by the fear that, should Germany once recover, France would have to meet single-handed a German power, far superior in population and war potential. French post-war policy was, until the advent of Briand, designed to impede, or even to frustrate, the economic and political revival of Germany. Hence the occupation of the Ruhr Valley; hence France's endeavour to prevent any alienation of Italy; hence the failure of the League action against Italy. And when ultimately Europe became actually a victim of Hitler's aggression, the United States kept neutrality.

A vindictive, dictated peace, in itself an insult to the sense of justice, is bound to perpetuate European anarchy, bristling with the dangers of war. It would, also, create a psychologic situation, of which Big Business and Wall Street would take full advantage. Isolationism would be provided with the most effective weapon.

It is of the greatest importance to grasp the significance of American isolationism and of its bearing on the future of Europe. "Old isolationists never really died", said Archibald MacLeish, a high official of Congress of Washington: "they merely dug their toes in in a new position". And he added: "Where the old isolationism opposed the country's determination to face the war, the new isolationism opposes the country's determination to face the peace. . . . The isolationists are isolationists still, and still they seek the insulation of their country--by which they mean the insulation of the *status quo* within their country from the history of the time. If they must have war they want to have a war which would alter nothing and accomplish nothing; a war which should have neither social effects nor political implications."*

Isolationism, at this juncture, serves vested interests in the United States as a screen behind which they can strive for aims in direct opposition to all the things for which millions of men and women are fighting and suffering in this war. American vested interests want, firstly, to defeat the New Deal; and secondly, to defeat non-imperialist co-operation of the nations, as envisaged by the Atlantic Charter and the declarations of such British and American statesmen as Sir Stafford Cripps and Vice-President Henry Wallace. Monopoly capitalism clearly does not want the advent of the "Century of the Common Man"; it wants to keep

* *The Times*, July 31, 1942.

the working classes in their place, to undo the New Deal, to preserve and to extend capitalist power and its dominion. It definitely does not want a Socialist Germany, nor a Socialist France, let alone a Great Britain, reconstructed in the spirit of the New Deal. It does not want a new Europe, pacified, and united in purpose; it wants a Europe paralyzed by dissensions, in order to pursue its non-co-operative imperialism in the Far East unmolested. American Big Business and high finance consider that after the war, once Japan and Germany are crushed and Russia, Britain and France entirely exhausted and helplessly entangled in European affairs, a unique opportunity for obtaining economic and political ascendancy in China, Japan, perhaps also in India, Siam, Indo-China, and certainly in Central and South America, may arise. Thus an unparalleled opportunity for entrenching American capitalism in these vast territories, inhabited by more than half of the human race, might present itself. Wall Street and Big Business do not think that American capitalism is "in decay"; they believe, on the contrary, that its tide is rising. They do not think of abdicating in favour of the New Deal, planned economy, and social reconstruction; they believe that an imperialist expansion of American capitalism after the war will ensure prosperity, at least for American business.

The New Deal, for the people of America as well as for all peoples of the world, is bound up with a peace settlement in Europe that satisfies the sense of justice and fair play of the common man in the United States. Otherwise big business will have an easy way of denouncing Roosevelt for having shed the blood of American youth and wasted the wealth of the American nation only in order to aggravate the state of affairs in Europe. They would fight Roosevelt, the New Deal, and world reconstruction, with the slogan: "Keep clear of Europe!" They would oppose any entanglement of America with Europe. Behind the screen of isolationism, monopoly capitalism would pursue two momentous counter-revolutionary aims: first, the defeat of the New Deal, and the restoration of *laissez-faire* capitalism, on a national and international scale; secondly, the defeat of non-imperialist co-operation in order to inaugurate a new epoch of American imperialism.

What the traditional school is contemplating now is the multiplication of the errors of Versailles. Such a settlement, as suggested by the traditionalists, might very possibly create a political and emotional atmosphere in the United States in which isolationism should be able with the greatest chance of success to display its demagogic arts and defeat international co-operation.

The United States was responsible* for 45 per cent of the world total value of manufacturing production. The magnitude of this economic force with regard to the reconstruction of the post-war world becomes clear if it is contrasted with the corresponding figures of some other industrial countries of Europe. They are for Great Britain only ten, even for Germany only twelve, for France eight, for the Soviet Union five. The United States alone manufactured a greater total value than the whole of industrial Europe combined, if Soviet Russia is excluded. It is further to be assumed that, in the course of this war, the expansion of American industry, on the one side, and the destruction which the industries in Great Britain, Germany, and Russia have suffered, on the other, will increase the ratio of the United States' productive power in relation to that of the other industrial countries. Should the American isolationists after this war defeat co-operation, as they defeated it after the last war, the economic reconstruction of Europe would become extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible.

If, then, the closest collaboration in the political and economic spheres between Europe and the United States, and, particularly, the drawing together of Great Britain and the great American democracy, is regarded as the paramount condition for lasting peace and prosperity, it would be a tragedy to frustrate these aims by a passing mood.

THE ORGANISATION OF THE DANUBE BASIN

Whatever the framework may be in which Europe will find its political and economic unity, the Danube countries present complex problems interconnected with the German problem. Their intricacy would be much increased by introducing racial hatred as a guiding principle in the peace settlement.

In Czechoslovakia there are 3,000,000 Germans. It is suggested that as many as possible of them should be expelled. Even so about 2,000,000 might remain there. Then it is proposed to degrade them to a status of inferiority; to deprive them of political rights as equal members of the State; to repay to the full all the atrocities the Nazis have inflicted on the Czech people.

Everyone will understand that impulse in the heat of war. But hatred in war is not a good guide for a policy of peace. The whole body of the Czech-German community would be poisoned by malice, and by the spirit of injustice and acrimony. It is not conceivable in these circumstances that the new Czechoslovak

* According to the League of Nation's publication, *World Production and Price*, 1935-36.

Republic could prosper and develop the spirit of international solidarity which is an essential condition for that international co-operation and reconstruction which would be so much to its advantage.

But apart from the compassionate reactions that such a policy, designed to reduce the German people to an inferior status, and to disable the German minority in Czechoslovakia and Poland, is bound to arouse in countries with people of German descent, it would also greatly complicate the problem of Austria, which is at bottom the central problem of the organization of the Danubian countries.

THE PROBLEM OF AUSTRIA

For though Austria is a very small country, only a little larger than Scotland, her geographical position as the most prominent bridgehead in Central Europe confers upon her a supreme strategic importance. A powerful aggressive State which becomes master of Austria is quite capable of reducing the smaller countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe to nothingness. On the day that Hitler seized Vienna, Czechoslovakia was lost, Germany's ascendancy over Hungary was established, Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia were doomed.

Thus Austria's future, her place in the Europe to come, is a serious problem of European security.

It appears to be a settled, if not yet officially proclaimed, aim of the United Nations to re-establish Austria's independence. This aim is in accordance with the desire of all anti-Nazi Austrians, and especially of the Austrian Socialists. Austria was forcibly annexed by Hitler's Germany; that wrong must be righted; the freedom of the Austrian people must be restored.

But now the real problem of Austria emerges. The history of independent Austria has proved the truth that Austria cannot in fact exist as an independent State. We must realise that the little country of 6,500,000 inhabitants, today called Austria, is a mere fragment of the once great Hapsburg Empire of 52,000,000 inhabitants; that the economic life of that expanse of territory was rooted in an economic entity which included Czechoslovakia, large parts of Poland, the whole of Hungary, parts of Rumania, the whole of Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, and the northern fringe of Italy from Fiume beyond Trieste to Trient and the range of mountains; that by cutting away the roots of Austria's economy, by depriving Austria's trade and industry of eight-tenths of its markets within the Hapsburg Empire, her economic life was bound to wither. The absurdity of Austria's economic position cannot be better illustrated than by the single

fact that not less than one-third of her total population dwelt in Vienna alone, which had grown in the course of centuries to this size as the capital of a big empire.

The sheer impossibility of Austria's living as an independent economic entity is not merely due to her size. There are even smaller States than Austria—Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Belgium—which prospered fairly well. It is due to her particular history, which has torn asunder her highly developed economic fabric.

Austria can live and prosper only when she is incorporated into a large economic community.

In what community will Austria find a prosperous future?

THE PROBLEM OF THE ANSCHLUSS

It is clear beyond dispute that Germany is the only country in the Central European region able to offer Austria great economic advantages. Austria's reunion with Germany would, first of all, solve her agricultural problem. Austria's agriculture consists mainly of dairy produce and cattle, which Germany lacks. It is, like Swiss agriculture, based to no small extent on the revenues derived from tourist traffic, to which Germany can contribute with larger numbers of tourists than any other country. The reunion with Germany would also open to Austria's industry and commerce the potentialities of a big economic unit with incomparably greater potentialities than any other confederation of the Central and Eastern European States possesses.

Were, however, Austria to join, as is suggested, the Czechoslovak-Polish confederation, enlarged by Hungary and perhaps by Rumania, her industries would, indeed, find in these agrarian countries a certain outlet, limited, of course, by the restricted purchasing power of the poverty-stricken peasants, but her agricultural problem would become extremely difficult, because these countries do not offer markets for agriculture and cannot provide a multitude of tourists.

But although Germany is able to offer the most favourable opportunities for the prosperity of Austria, it is by no means certain that the people of Austria would be prepared to remain within Germany after the breakdown of the Nazi régime. If I judge rightly the psychological repercussions of the Nazi experience on the minds of the people of Austria, I believe that the Austrians, although they dread intensely the resurrection of the "independence" of their country because it would mean permanent and indeed hopeless mass unemployment and misery, will none the less restore her sovereignty in the initial stage of the

revolution. For the emotional pressure which the hatred of Nazism has engendered is too strong. I, for one, feel quite sure that on the very first day of the revolution in Austria, the Austrian Republic will be proclaimed.

But this hatred will decline after a lapse of time. Austria's particular misery, however, caused by her independence, will swiftly return. And again, dire necessity will force her to seek a way of incorporating herself into a big economic entity. She will seek a partner to join. The problem of the *Anschluss* will naturally emerge anew.

For the alternative to the *Anschluss* that the traditional school has to offer, namely union with the Czech-Polish Confederation, will hardly attract the German-speaking Austrians, if in the countries of the Confederation the German-speaking Czech and Polish citizens should be stigmatized and treated as an inferior race. It may be remembered that the Austrians belong to this race by virtue of their linguistic and cultural community with all Germanic peoples. They would understand that they themselves would not be respected as an equal partner in a Confederation which denies equality to its German-speaking subjects. Since Austria needs incorporating into a wider economic unit, she would in these circumstances probably prefer Germany to the Czech-Polish Confederation.

But Hitlerism has entirely changed the aspect of the *Anschluss*. It has become, partly, a problem of European security. For centuries it has been a basic principle of British foreign policy to defend the independence of the Low Countries, lest they became a "pistol pointed at England". It is highly probable that, after the experience with Austria, the restored Czechoslovakia and the countries round the Danube might similarly regard Austria as a country of particular significance to their own security, and would be resolved to prevent her union with Germany. They would perhaps either impose upon Austria the status of independence, as was done in 1919 by the Treaty of St. Germain, or force her into federation with the Danubian States.

THE HAPSBURG QUESTION

Some circles even suggest the imposition upon the Austrians and perhaps the Hungarians of the Hapsburg monarchy, the restoration of the former dual monarchy on a considerably reduced scale. That would be the worst "solution"; for it would lead directly to civil war in Austria (and most likely also in Hungary) and to permanent unrest in Central Europe. For the Austrian working class regards the Hapsburgs as the symbol of reaction; it

dreads the restoration of Hapsburg rule as the restoration of all the semi-Fascist powers in the country that treacherously strangled the Republic and forcibly deprived the working class of all its social and political achievements; it hates the Hapsburgs no less than Hitler. It would never accept that expedient; nor would the Slav nations which have been suppressed by the Hapsburgs for centuries.

ATLANTIC CHARTER AND BOURNEMOUTH DECLARATION

It should also be noted that a policy that imposes upon Austria a monarchical rule, or that prevents her joining the country that she wishes to join, would be in plain contradiction to the principles laid down in the Atlantic Charter and in the Bournemouth Declaration. For the Atlantic Charter recognises, at least by implication, the right of self-determination of all peoples—and therefore, one would assume, of the people of Austria too. The British Labour Party pledged itself unequivocally to respect especially the right of self-determination of the people of Austria. It solemnly declared: "The Austrian people, even earlier victims of Hitler's aggression, must be left free to decide, without intimidation or coercion, whether or not they will remain within the German Reich".* It furthermore stated that the British Labour Party "will oppose any attempt on the part of the victors, at the conclusion of the war, to use their military or economic power against the determination of each people to shape its own destiny".†

A PEOPLE WITHOUT NATIONAL CONSCIENCE

Until Hitler's advent to power in Germany, the problem of the *Anschluss* was—as far as the Austrian people were concerned—quite free from any national sentiment. The *Anschluss* was simply an economic and social expedient.

It might be useful to point to the strange phenomenon that, owing to their particular history, the Austrian working men, in the first place, and indeed the overwhelming majority of the Austrian people, have never experienced any national consciousness; neither German nor Austrian. An "Austrian nation" has never existed. The Hapsburg Empire consisted of eight distinct nations, with at least eight different languages and cultural traditions. Austria was a political and economic entity; but she was never a national conception. Even her official name

* *Statement of Policy*, of February 9th, 1940.

† *Report on the Problems of War and Peace Reconstruction*, issued by its National Executive Committee under the title, *The Old World and the New Society*.

was not Austria; in some Acts of State she was called: "The Kingdoms and Countries represented on the Empire Council" (*Die im Reichsrat vertretenen Königreiche und Länder*). Czechs, Poles, Italians, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Slovenes, have developed a national consciousness of their own. But the bulk of the Austro-Germans, representing a third of the total population of Imperial Austria, have, curiously enough, never known any national sentiment at all. There was the aristocracy, the upper strata of the civil servants, the officers of the army and the navy, the men of high finance and big business—in short, the German ruling class of Austria that governed politically and exploited economically the seven Slav and Latin nations of the Empire, who entertained something like an Austrian sentiment. Yet this sentiment was not national, but political; it was the expression of allegiance to the Hapsburg Crown, but not the expression of a national consciousness. Austrian in sentiment and purpose was also the Catholic Church, because it regarded the Hapsburg Empire as one of the strongest pillars of European Catholicism. But the German-speaking peasants were more regionally minded than "Austrian-minded". They felt themselves more Tyroleans, Styrians, Carinthians, Salzburgers, than Austrians. There was among them so little of an Austrian national consciousness that they attempted, after the breaking up of the Austrian Empire, to separate the Austrian provinces from the Austrian Republic, and to become either states of their own, like Tyrol, or to join Switzerland, as the Province of Voralberg wanted to do, or separately to join Germany, like the Province of Salzburg. In fact, after the Hapsburg Empire had disintegrated and its German-speaking parts emerged as the Austrian Republic, in which the working-class movement gathered strength, it became clear that such a thing as an Austrian national consciousness had never been a psychological reality.

The working class, least of all, entertained a particular Austrian national feeling. But neither did it entertain a German national feeling. The German workers of Austria had a very old tradition of an international conception of life; they fought nationalism in any colour as a device of the ruling classes to divide the working classes in order to dominate them. They fought in the first place German nationalism, as a disguise for German imperialism. Thus the idea of joining Germany, when the Hapsburg Empire split up into Nation States, did not come from any pan-German sentiment. While recognising the claims of the Czech, Polish, and other nations, of the Hapsburg Empire, to the right of self-determination, the German Socialists of Austria raised that claim for the remaining German section of the Hapsburg Empire from

sheer conviction that a small German-Austria could not exist in isolation.

But even then, when the Hapsburg Monarchy was already carved up, the "masses of the workers still disliked the idea of the *Anschluss*", records Otto Bauer.* "Their hatred of the German imperialism during the war", Otto Bauer points out, "was too strong for them to be enthusiastic about the idea of joining that same Germany. The idea of an *Anschluss* won the masses of the workers only because of the events of 9th of November (when the German Republic was proclaimed). Only when the imperial power in Germany was overthrown and the Socialist Government, supported by Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, seized power; when the German Revolution with a vast leap appeared to surpass our own revolution: then the masses of the workers came to the conclusion that the great, highly industrialised Germany would offer better conditions in the fight for Socialism than the small, half-agricultural Austria, dependent on neighbouring agricultural countries." The workers of Austria strove for the *Anschluss*, not because they desired the realisation of pan-Germanism, but because they wanted the realization of Socialism.

If, during the last war, German imperialism appeared to the broad masses of the Austrian workers as the embodiment of Germany, then in this war German Fascism appears to be the embodiment of Germany. If the Austrian workers disliked the idea of the *Anschluss* because they hated German imperialism, how much stronger must now be their dislike of the idea of remaining within that same Germany which forcibly annexed Austria and imposed Fascism and war on her!

But the problem of the *Anschluss* will appear to the Austrian working man in a different light when in Germany the working class ascends to power, as is to be expected, and blots out the hateful traces of Nazism. Such a Germany would once more attract the Austrian working class.

On the other hand, how can it reasonably be expected that the Austrian people should join, say, the Czech-Polish Confederation in which the German-speaking subjects might be treated as outcasts? While the German-speaking Austrians are still free from German national sentiment, the treatment likely to be meted out to the Germans by Czechoslovakia and Poland will probably arouse fears among the Austrians which will in the long run turn into violent nationalism.

How, then, can the claim to security of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, be reconciled with the modest claim of the Austrian people to self-determination?

* Otto Bauer, *The Austrian Revolution*.

A COMMONWEALTH OF THE EUROPEAN NATIONS

The economic problem of Austria—as of many countries in the Danube Basin and in Eastern Europe—could assuredly be solved if it were possible to organise the European countries on the basis of an economic unit. Hitler has done this by force. The whole Continent is now a single economic entity, directed more or less by a central authority. But this European economic unit has now to serve the needs of Hitler's war, and the aims of the German industrialists and financiers to establish their control over the resources and markets of the Continent. Hitler's new Europe is conceived by the Nazis as a vast colonial empire with Germany as its industrial centre, ensuring her military, political and economic domination over the peoples of Europe.

But it is possible for Europe to be organized as an economic entity based on mutual interests and the free collaboration of free nations. It should, further, be possible to establish a political framework of European countries which would confer the prerogatives of military power upon an international authority. It should, then, be possible to lay down here and now the foundations of a commonwealth of European nations. That should be possible; indeed it must be done if enduring peace and prosperity are to be ensured.

Then the intricate problem of Austria would cease to be a problem any longer. There would be no need for Austria to seek re-unification with Germany, if she were economically united with all the European countries. She would retain, as would every nation, her national and cultural autonomy. But she would have, as would every country, to transfer certain sovereign rights to a supra-national body.

Incorporated into the commonwealth of European nations, Austria would lose her strategical significance, but would win access to the springs of her economic life. She would, by being federated with many other nations as well as with the Germans, add to the German political power within the Commonwealth as little as Switzerland would add to it by joining that Commonwealth. Her policy would be determined as little by the fact that the Austrians speak the same language as the Germans, as Switzerland's policy was ever influenced by the common language which unites seven-tenths of her population culturally with the Germans.

A Commonwealth of the European nations is, in fact, the only rational way of solving the European political problem, which is fundamentally the problem of how to prevent Germany with her immense war potential from again becoming a menace to the

world. By the incorporation of Germany into a European economic and political framework, she would have to give up—as would every member of the Commonwealth—those essential sovereign rights and powers which might enable her once more to transform her economic potential into a war potential. The latent military strength, which appears to be involved in the very existence of a sovereign Germany, would by her incorporation into a large Commonwealth be eliminated once and for all. Only on the foundations of a great Commonwealth which includes Germany can arise an organization effective for lasting peace. On the other hand, only a community in which the non-German nations vastly outnumbered the German would be psychologically acceptable to the smaller nations which might otherwise fear that the Germans would obtain ascendancy within the Commonwealth. In a commonwealth, embracing all European nations, Germany would be an equal member, a member of great prominence, but not one of predominance.

If, however, Germany, humiliated by defeat, by unilateral disarmament and by foreign occupation, were left an isolated Power, surrounded and encircled by blocs of states set up in order to check the growth of her strength, then aggressive nationalism would again receive a new and powerful impulse.

But the outlawing and encirclement of Germany are exactly what the traditional school has in mind. The implications of such a policy are quite plain. Attempts to create a Czechoslovak-Polish, or Balkan federation, would perpetuate the splitting up of Europe into blocs of Powers which would cause a return to power politics with all their dangerous implications. This would in fact solve nothing: neither the problem of the international organisation of peace, the economic problems of the Eastern countries, the political problem of Germany, nor even the minor problem of so small a country as Austria.

Defeated, disarmed, and temporarily occupied by foreign armies, Germany must be, if the spirit of aggressive nationalism is to be struck down at its roots. But at the same time a great opportunity of an entirely new way of life within an international Commonwealth must be open to her, if her defeat and her humiliation are not to become a new source of nationalism.

GUARANTEES OF SECURITY

It can perhaps be contended that the expectation of a change of heart on the part of the German people is after all no guarantee against a recurrence of German aggression.

Material guarantees would, of course, be needed. Let me

enumerate some of the internal conditions for the pacification of Germany:

First, the victory of the revolution, conferring real power in the State upon the working and peasant classes. The German workers and peasants hate war and want peace, as do the workers and peasants all over the world. If they wield real power in the community, Germany will cease to be aggressive.

Secondly, an essentially Socialist Germany—that is, a Germany that has nationalised the key industries and the banks and has assumed control over the economic power of the State.

Thirdly, the breaking up of the big landed estates, now owned mainly by the Prussian aristocracy, and the distribution of the land among the landless agricultural people.

Fourthly, the internationalisation of Germany's heavy industries on an organic basis. Thus, for example, the great industrial areas of the Ruhr, Lorraine, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Holland would form an economic unit; the whole of the coal, iron, and steel industry of this area would be owned and operated by an international co-operation, the shares of which would be owned exclusively by the German, French, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Dutch Governments, with perhaps, as R. W. B. Clark suggested in a lecture to the Fabians, a large holding by the British, American and Russian Governments to ensure fair play. The same form of internationalisation might be applied to the Silesian industrial area, an economic unit of heavy industry, now politically divided between Germans, Poles, and Czechs. On this model, internationalisation could be extended to other German industries which can easily be converted to war production, as, for instance, the chemical industry.

This scheme necessarily requires co-ordination with the schemes regarded as essential conditions for international security:

First: the reconstruction of Europe on the basis of the close collaboration of all European countries, including Germany.

Second: the building of a political framework designed to unite all European nations, Germany not excluded, virtually into an economic and political commonwealth.

In a commonwealth, embracing Slav, Latin and German peoples, the national issues would recede behind the social and economic issues of the community. Nationalism as a dynamic force would wither away.

THE CHOICE

It is indeed one of the essential conditions for an enduring peace, that Europe shall be freed from the scourge of nationalism. Conversely, it will hardly be possible to maintain freedom

without the establishment of peace on the firm foundation of an organisation of Europe, designed to bind together the interests of every nation in the common interests of all nations. For should Europe be again split up into two or more blocs of Powers, war would remain a possibility. The whole political and economic life of every nation would then be ruled by the endeavour to become as strong as possible for the hour of decision. Competitive economy might nevertheless be replaced by a planned economy with an eye to the needs of a war in the future, as an instrument of preparation for the next war. Economic power might be subordinated to the power of the State, but only in order to produce the greatest amount of armaments for the next round. There would be guns, but no butter; there would be powerful fortifications across all land, but no "homes fit for heroes"; there would be armadas of bombers, but no people's cars. At the best there would be equality of poverty, but no rising standard of living for the mass of the people.

No free people, however, will consent to the sacrifices that this policy requires. The people prefer, naturally, butter to guns, peace to war. This was proved by the experiences of the great democracies, Britain, France, and the United States. None of these three great Powers was sufficiently armed to meet the emergency of war. Thus the logic of the partition of Europe that enforces never-ending armaments on a vast scale would necessarily enforce an authoritarian organisation of States everywhere.

Freedom, in modern conditions, cannot flourish without abundance. It requires a planned economy in a society free from the fear of war. It requires close international collaboration of the nations in a spirit free from suspicion and hatred. It, then, requires the replacement of an Empire of force by an Empire of reason.

Then, Socialism, henceforth unfettered by nationalism, will fully unfold its creative might.

POWER CONDITIONS OF FREEDOM

An international society, if it is to be effective, has to plan international life; and this means a disturbance of vested interests upon a scale unprecedented in history.—HAROLD J. LASKI, *Democracy in Crisis*.

THE WORLD is, however, not entirely ruled by the dynasty of reason; in fact, it is today still mainly ruled by the dynasty of vested interests. Its destiny is determined by the class-

relations of society, by the interplay of the forces that the classes which constitute the class-divided society are able to exercise.

At this fateful turning-point of history it will primarily depend on the strength and determination of the working class whether this war will open a new stage in the development of humanity, or whether many cataclysms will yet shatter it.

It was the tragedy of the Socialist movement on the Continent that it was split in the hour of its great opportunity. It would be a repetition of that tragedy on a gigantic scale, if, on entering the great struggle for a new world, Labour remained split up into separate parties, fighting each other for power within the working class.

Thus, the restoration of working-class unity, nationally and internationally, is of paramount importance; it is, in the full sense of its meaning, a question of life and death for freedom. Hitlerism may be defeated; Fascism may be crushed; the revolution may sweep over the Continent, clearing away the dark powers of reaction in every land. And yet, should the working class remain divided in allegiance, organisation, and purpose, and paralyse its own strength by a struggle for power within its own ranks, the revolution must necessarily fail and will, sooner or later, be conquered by a Fascist reaction.

The fate of Germany should be a final warning. It was the split in German Labour that frustrated her revolution, that later prevented the consolidation of the German Republic and her social and democratic achievements, and that encouraged the reactionary forces in Germany, ultimately providing Fascism with its chance. When Fascism was once in power, wielding the tremendous war potential of the Reich, the world war became imminent. It can fairly be maintained that the split of German Labour was one of the most decisive causes of the disaster in which the world is today engulfed.

THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL LABOUR UNITY

Let us visualise the situation with which Labour—mainly in Germany, Austria, Italy, and perhaps in France—will be confronted after the breakdown of the Nazi edifice. Fascism has permeated the whole social fabric, including to some extent in Germany, the Church, and at the same time has eradicated the organisation of free co-operation—the Trade Unions, the bodies of the political parties, the autonomous municipal bodies. The social edifice will suddenly collapse. But there will be no organised force ready to replace it at once. In Germany and Austria, the workers in the factories, the soldiers in the barracks, and the

peasants in the villages will immediately set up soviets, for workers', soldiers', and peasants' councils are the most suitable forms of social organisation for a society in dissolution. They will take over the local governments, and gradually the government of the whole country. They will have to strive against stupendous odds. A fury of revenge will rage in every street, revenge for the crimes that the Nazis have committed against their opponents. At the same time, the whole machinery of the State, in fact of society, will abruptly cease to work. The spectre of famine will haunt the cities, for the stores of food will be exhausted and the whole worn-out transport system will have reached breaking point.

The task of mastering that chaos and of reconstructing society will fall primarily upon the Socialists. Their success will mainly depend upon the degree of working-class unity which they are able to achieve; it will depend on the degree of unity between the Socialist and Communist workers.

THE SECOND AND THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

Since Russia became involved in the war, the split in the international Labour movement has lost all meaning. It had actually already lost its meaning when, with the defeat of the Red Army before Warsaw in 1920, and the Communist rising in Germany in 1921, every chance of a world revolution had disappeared from the European horizon. For Lenin founded the Third International only in pursuit of his grandiose concept of world revolution. When, ultimately, Trotsky's doctrine of the "permanent revolution" was replaced by Stalin's doctrine of "Socialism in one country", the international needs of the Soviet Union, no less than the actual needs of the working classes in every country, pointed to the liquidation of the Communist International. It was in Russia's interest that there should be strong Labour movements all over Europe, in order to prevent hostile alliances against the Soviet Union; and since the concept of world revolution had been abandoned, and the rising counter-revolution was sweeping over Europe, it was in the common interests of Communist and Socialist workers alike to defend their achievements and to defeat Fascism. The logic of events pleaded for the restoration of Labour unity on an international scale. Indeed, in 1925 the Communist Trade Union International took the first tentative steps in that direction. It approached the International Federation of Trade Unions with the proposal to convene a world Congress of Trade Unions with the aim of reuniting the international trade union movement. At the same time the Anglo-Russian Committee of

Trade Unions was founded. If the unity of the Trade Union movement had then been achieved, it would necessarily have led to the ultimate merging of the Second and the Third International.

These attempts failed, however, for many reasons. But they have no longer any relevance to the problem of re-unification with which international Labour is confronted today. A new revolutionary situation has emerged, a revolutionary situation entirely different in its conditions from that which prevailed a quarter of a century ago. At the same time, the working-class organisation has on the Continent to be built anew from the very foundations. There is a common basis. Shall it again be divided?

It is true that there is, apparently, no longer any International in being—neither the Labour and Socialist International nor the Communist—since the Socialist as well as the Communist Parties on the Continent, which respectively constituted the two Internationals, have been destroyed by Fascism. But the millions of workers who were members or supporters of the Socialist and Communist parties are still alive, and feel an allegiance to the institutions that were the instruments of their aspirations—otherwise they would have ceased any longer to be Socialists or Communists. Fascism could not, by abolishing the working-class organisations, also break up the framework of the working class itself. It could not destroy its texture, its social structure, its spiritual fabric—that is, its community of interests, ideals, and aims. There is still in existence the social and spiritual force with all its potentialities which embodies the living organism of the two Internationals.

But still more than that is left. In the first place, there is the British Labour Party in the one international camp and the Russian Communist Party in the other; and there are in Moscow as well as in London and New York foreign representatives and eminent members of the suppressed Socialist and Communist Parties. The machinery through which both the two Internationals used to work—their Executives—is for all practical purposes intact.

WHY DOES NOT THE INTERNATIONAL MEET?

Actually, the Executive of the Second International, when the war broke out, did not even dream of self-dissolution. When it assembled in February, 1940, in Brussels, for the last time, there was not the faintest suggestion from any side indicating the desire to abandon the activity of the International. On the contrary, the assembled Executive filled the vacant Presidency by electing

a new President, it appointed a Commission charged with the drafting of a statement on international Socialist peace aims, and it decided to meet again on the 26th May, 1940, in Paris, to discuss the draft. The Executive acted in accordance with Article IV of the Constitution of the Labour and Socialist International, which stipulates: "The Labour and Socialist International is not only an effective instrument in peace, but just as essential in war".

But since the invasion of France the Executive has not been convened. The reason for the Executive's inactivity can obviously not be found in the fact that four more of the twenty-seven parties affiliated to the International have been suppressed. Nor have there been any technical reasons which would have prevented its activity, as its three successive Presidents, its Secretary, and nearly all of its members are available in England or in America.

It is, however, contended that these members of the Executive—with the exception of the British delegation—no longer represent a living party, and that, accordingly, the Executive would not represent a living social force. That is true only in so far as a party is conceived in terms of organisation proper. But the machine of a party is only the instrument of its supporters for the pursuit of their political and economic aims and their spiritual creed. When the instrument of the Party is broken by external force, its supporters have not ceased to pursue the same aims. The destruction of the elaborate instruments of organised action has clearly not destroyed the potentialities of the millions of Socialists in the occupied countries as active forces of the International. No Socialist is inclined to question, for instance, the potentialities of the conquered nations. Everyone takes fully into account the potentialities of, say, the Dutch, Belgians, Czechs, and Poles, as factors in this war for liberation. Nor, in principle, is the moral authority of the refugee Governments contested—however imperfect and incomplete they may be—to deliberate, to speak, and to act on behalf of their people. If, then, we are prepared to recognise, at least in principle, the moral title of refugee Governments to speak and act for their nations, submerged by Fascism, how can we deny to fugitive representatives of Socialist parties the moral authority to speak and to act for the Socialists of their oppressed countries?

Nor is the argument more convincing that, because the European Labour movement which emerges from the turmoil will have been altered by fundamental changes in its social environment, the present International Labour representation might not be fit to lead the coming European revolution. Certainly, the International that arises from the new European Labour Movement will probably

be different in its organisational structure, and, perhaps, also in its spirit, from that body which represents it today. But the new International will not spring from the revolution, like Minerva from the head of Jove, in shining armour, ready to act and to lead. To prevent a chaotic void, it seems to me essential that an authority should remain in being until it is replaced by a new one. In any case, the expectation of a new International, to come after the war, cannot compensate for the absence of a body for the immediate tasks with which international Labour is confronted now.

THE IMMEDIATE TASKS OF THE INTERNATIONAL

Germany's military defeat will necessarily let loose revolutions in all parts of the Continent. They will break out spontaneously. It is unlikely that it will be possible, inside the Fascist orbit, to co-ordinate the various revolutionary risings in the occupied territories, because the Fascist machinery of suppression is in a position to prevent any organisation of the potential revolutionary forces. For the same reason the revolutions will have, at least in their first stages, merely negative aims: to get rid of the Nazis, to break their tyranny. The revolutions can be co-ordinated only by an international body outside the Fascist orbit. And only an authority of international Socialism is in a position to devise common positive aims for the working classes of Europe, inspiring them as well as guiding their power towards the desired end.

The supreme importance of the elaboration of international Socialist peace aims by an International Socialist body cannot be emphasised strongly enough. All Socialist parties—including the German, Austrian, and Italian—are united in their determination to contribute to the utmost to the defeat of the Fascist Axis Powers. That remains the immediate task. But no less momentous is the task outlined in the Bournemouth Declaration of Labour's Peace Aims: "Before the peoples are still further estranged by hatred and suffering, a lasting and just Peace may be brought nearer by stating clearly now what our immediate war purpose is, and what should be the principles and methods of the final settlement".

Three immediate needs, then, call for the reinstatement of the Executive of the Socialist International:

- (i) The need of co-ordinating the anti-Fascist forces inside the Fascist orbit, with the aim of destroying the Nazi system;
- (ii) The need of co-operation between, and ultimately reunification of, the Socialist and Communist section of the work-

ing classes, with the aim of ensuring Labour unity as a pre-condition for the reconstruction of a peaceful and free Europe;

(iii) The need of working out international socialist peace aims, as a guide, and source of inspiration, for the revolutionary masses in the oppressed countries, and as a vision of an international society, appealing to the imagination of humanity.

It would be disastrous should the representatives of international Socialism—that is, of the spiritual force which claims to be the spiritual force of the world to come—remain silent in the fateful hour when the old world is in dissolution and a new world is about to emerge.

Professor Harold J. Laski, a member of the British Labour Party's Executive, particularly urged the British Socialists "to remind themselves continually of two things:

(i) The democratic reconstruction of Europe will be successful in the degree that there are living Socialist movements in every country ready to give a lead; and

(ii) That these movements must keep in step with the one movement—the British—that has the chance of functioning effectively at the present time."*

He then suggested the re-establishment of "the International and to make it clear to our comrades in the occupied countries that their liberation is a matter never out of our minds, and that all we can do to keep alive the flame of international Socialism, we are determined shall be done".

It would indeed be inconceivable that the working of the International should be prevented by some legalistic theories. For the theory which rules out, for legalistic reasons, the taking of responsibility, that contests the authority of the Socialist body—nationally and internationally—on the ground that the source of its authority has actually, if not potentially, ceased to exist, whatever logical force there may be in it, is none the less disastrous. For it leads straight to the abdication of Socialism as a living, militant power, nationally (with regard to the countries submerged by Fascism) and internationally. The time is out of joint, but we are told to beware of doing anything to set it right—for legalistic reasons! A great darkness has descended upon the earth, but we are to understand that international Socialism must not raise the burning torch of a new destiny for mankind—for

* Prof. H. Laski, *International Socialist Forum*, June, 1941.

legalistic reasons! The discrepancy between the need of the hour and the legalistic reasoning is simply fantastic. If the mandate of the International is contested, it is the duty of the International to act without a legal mandate.

Admittedly, the reinstated Executive of the International would be an emergency body. But the whole world is confronted with an historic emergency of the greatest magnitude. Clearly, an emergency calls for emergency measures, calls for initiative. The earth is submerged by blood and tears. "There is a sea, and who shall drain it dry?" If international Socialism is not to resign as a spiritual force, it must take responsibility in the struggle of our time, and give humanity our concept of a new world.

CONDITIONS FOR THE RECONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL

Reconstitution of the International means, of course, reconstitution of an International that includes representatives of the Socialist parties of both war camps. Its indispensable premise is naturally the recognition of the German Socialists (as well as of the Austrian and Italian) as fellow international Socialists, as brothers-in-arms in the common fight against Fascism and in the struggle for a new world.

Now, there are, however, some British, Polish, Belgian, Czech, and Dutch Socialists who are inclined to regard the German working classes as equally responsible for the war as the Hitler Government, and the German Socialists as much the same as the Nazis. They refuse to distinguish between the German working classes and the German ruling classes. They doubt the possibility of constructing a peaceful Germany, even if Germany were ruled by Socialist Labour. They have for all purposes joined with the school of thought that rejects a policy of reconciliation and permanent co-operation with the "Other Germany", because they do not believe in her existence. They plead for a policy of power and force, designed to "hold Germany down", and refuse, consequently, to collaborate with German Socialists in an International. Only recently the former Socialist member of the Polish Parliament, Adam Pragier, protested against "appeasing Germany's working class".* It is clear that the Socialist International must necessarily include German, Austrian, and Italian Socialists. Since there are Socialists who want to exclude German, Austrian and Italian Socialists from the International Socialist community, it now becomes perfectly plain why there is no longer an International in being.

* Letter to the *New Statesman and Nation*, May 2, 1942.

BRITISH LABOUR AND GERMANY

It should be remembered, however, that the British Labour Party has repudiated this policy outright. In its *Statement of Labour Policy*, decided upon by the National Executive of the Labour Party on 9th February, 1940, and endorsed by the Bournemouth Conference, it declared: "History teaches that any attempt to keep Germany an outcast after this war or to deprive her of such security as her neighbours rightly claim for themselves, will fail. The most far-sighted and least dangerous policy is to seek to win the co-operation, as an equal partner, of a Germany governed by a political system whose aims and needs run parallel with ours." And C. R. Attlee, in stating Labour's peace aims, formulated the first of his six principles for a Peace Settlement in the following words: "The first principle is that there should be no dictated peace. We have no desire to humiliate, to crush or to divide the German nation. There must be restitution made to the victims of aggression, but all ideas of revenge and punishment must be excluded. If peace is to be lasting, it must result from the agreement of all, not from the dictation of a few nations. The failure of the Treaties at the end of the last war to bring abiding peace was largely due to the neglect of this principle."

The Labour Party virtually confirmed its declaration of Bournemouth by its statement at the Conference in London in 1942, declaring, "That it will be a party to no attempt to impose any peace of revenge, nor to impose upon the defeated any terms which deprive them of the right to that wellbeing which is the due reward of capacity and energy exercised in a peaceful way for peaceful ends".

The policy of non-appeasement towards the German working class is, as has been shown, certainly not the official policy of the British Labour Party.

A NEW SPLIT IN THE INTERNATIONAL

However, the division of opinion is apparently so deep that the issue of the reconstitution of the International can hardly be forced. For if there are Socialists of many countries who do not wish to see the future Germany as an equal member of a community of nations, they cannot wish to see German Socialists as equal members of a Socialist International. Since they aim at an organisation of the world in which the United Nations would be permanently arrayed against Germany, they can hardly consent to the re-establishment of an International, the most important task of which would be the working out with German Socialists of peace aims based on the principles of international socialism.

The attempts at the reconstitution of the International have failed so far not for legalistic reason or reasons of organisation. They failed because there are eminent Socialists who regard this war as a national war, and not as a phase in the processes of a world revolution; who are fighting in this war primarily to conquer the German people, and who believe sincerely that if only the German people were conquered, Fascism too would be conquered. That is, however, as I have attempted to show, a grave error. The opposite is true: if the German people are outlawed, it will be Fascism that in the end will conquer all the peoples of the world.

Socialists, however, who hold the view that this is a national war against an inferior race, are obviously not aware that they have already been spiritually conquered by Hitlerism; that they have actually submitted to Hitler's race theory; that they have, in truth, ceased to be international Socialists and have unconsciously become national Socialists.

It would be in bad taste and offensive to connect genuine Socialists, who by their past and standing are entitled to respect, with that caricature --National Socialism--which is, as Victor Gollancz once wrote, "a term as meaningless in its connotation as it is loathsome in the historic associations which have gathered round it".

But the implications of the attitude of discrimination against the German people, as adopted by some Socialists, should be considered in all their consequences.

SOCIALISM --NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL

It cannot honestly be contested that discrimination against any nation is incompatible with the very idea of Socialism. Victor Gollancz put it quite plainly when he wrote: "International Socialism means international fraternity; the brotherhood of the common people everywhere".* Indeed, whether we derive the image of Socialism from Marx's thought, or from Tom Paine's conception of the Rights of Man, or from the Gospel, the essence of Socialism is, like that of Christianity, its universalism, its internationalism.

Socialism is, again like Christianity, the idea of the equality of man. And as Christianity is the spiritual realisation of the unity of nations, so is Socialism, as an economic system, its material realisation. Socialists of every school have regarded the economic transformation of society only as a means to that end. They strove for a society of men, as Shelley visualised it: "Equal, un-

* V. Gollancz, *Shall Our Children Live or Die?*

classed, tribeless and nationless". The concept of internationalism, intrinsically interwoven with the concept of Socialism, rests, in the first place, on the solidarity of the working classes of all nations in their common struggle for the classless society; it rests, not less, on the solidarity of all oppressed peoples in their struggle for equality; it rests, finally, on the solidarity of all nations in their struggle for an international society of peace. It rests, then, on the principle of the community of interests of the working classes of all countries, and of the community of destiny of the nations of the world. All recent social and economic changes of society have only deepened the idea of international socialism.

The great thing to remember is that the concept of internationalism is the very core of Socialism. Were Socialism just a matter of ham and eggs on the breakfast table of the workers, it could not arouse the force of enthusiasm, that is, that inspiring, irresistible power without which nothing great in the world can be achieved. Men do not die for ham and eggs; they die only for a faith. Should Socialism lose its meaning as a faith, it would cease to move men.

What, then, is the deeper meaning of Socialism? Socialism is in truth the realisation, in concrete economic terms, of the eternal idea of justice and humanity. It is the modern interpretation, under the conditions of the machine age, of the age-old vision of the Stoics who proclaimed the world to be "one great City of gods and men"; it is the fulfilment of the burning desire of the Hebrew prophets for justice; it is the consummation of the three-fold ideals of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity for which the best of men have fought and suffered.

The Socialist worker in the factory probably does not know very much about the Stoics, and about the thinkers and poets who through a hundred generations have preached the gospel of justice and humanity. But it is the understanding of their ideals which glimmers in the depth of his mind. He knows certainly that once Socialism is achieved there will be ham and eggs too. But he feels that Socialism is far more than mere ham and eggs. It is to him something noble, the realisation of real decency in the social relations of men, the expression of genuine fairness, and sincere kindness, and true brotherhood, and indeed somehow "a new earth", never more desecrated by hatred, want and war. Were the socialist worker a Marxist, he would say that Socialism means the final abolition of the exploitation of men by men; the conception of the classless society; an economic organisation based on the common ownership of the sources of wealth, so as to secure the highest degree of prosperity for all. He would proclaim Socialism as an entirely new civilisation in which men are an end

in themselves, and not a means to an end, and which would unfold creative forces in the individual and in the community not as yet conceived. Then men, liberated from the bondage of the last remnant of slavery, would reach the fullness of humanity.

Both the Marxian as well as the non-Marxian Socialist worker feels, however, that Socialism is not merely the expression of the demand for a better life, but the conception of a noble life; that its scope transcends the working classes and even the nation: its idea embraces the whole of humanity. Socialism is conceivable only as international Socialism. All over the world the Socialist workers sang:

Then comrades, come rally!
And the last fight let us face.
The International
Unites the human race!

It is indeed an easy venture to contrast the international ideal of the Labour movement with its failures to achieve it in the past. Franz Borkenau, in his study, *Socialism, National or International*, spared no pains to demonstrate "that Labour internationalism has so far proved to be one of the most futile ideologies ever cherished". But it is as easy to prove exactly the opposite, and to demonstrate that it was the burning power of the international idea and its image that gave great impetus to the Labour movement everywhere. There is necessarily an eternal conflict between the ideal and the real. But the depth of that conflict indicates as much the strength of the ideal as, conversely, the strength of the ideal reflects the real needs of society. How, otherwise, could it be explained that millions of working men of many countries have cherished the idea of international Socialism? And how could it be explained that the idea of internationalism, transcending the working classes, has gathered momentum as never before in history?

We are witnessing, as I have attempted to show on a previous page, processes of profound change in national psychology, processes arising out of the economic, social, and political changes in the world. The idea of national statehood and of national sovereignty has lost much of its force. The supra-State idea has kindled the imagination of millions. Never was the idea of internationalism more impressively vindicated by the events and the trends of history than it is today.

RECRUDESCENCE OF NATIONAL HATRED

The dialectic of revolutionary events, however, naturally produces also counter-revolutionary tendencies. The recrudescence of national hatred is one of them, and the most perilous.

National hatred, that intolerable insult to all reason and justice, has been the most effective device of reaction and counter-revolution in every period of history. It was, indeed, a means, as Godwin once intimated, of making the multitude the blind instrument of crooked designs. In 1919 it served perfectly the counter-revolutionary aims of those anxious to preserve the good old world of vested interests and power politics. It may once more become the sinister weapon for crushing the great aspirations of humanity.

Socialists, indulging in hatred of the German people, would, perhaps, do well to consider for a moment the political and social implications of the anti-German campaign.

Its purpose immediately becomes apparent when we try to see Germany as the capitalists see her. They see the possibility of a socialist revolution emerging from the collapse of the Nazi régime. They intensely dreaded this danger to the vested interests when war and peace were still in the balance, because they realised that war against Hitlerite Germany—or, at all events, her defeat—might start the socialist revolution in Germany and spread from there all over Europe. Therefore they endeavoured to appease Hitler.

Now the war rages and the German revolution becomes imminent. What would the triumph of a Socialist revolution in Germany mean for the vested interests everywhere? It is clear that a working-class revolution in Germany would reverberate in every corner of the world—even more than the Russian revolution in 1918. It would inspire the working classes in Britain, France, in Belgium, Holland, Italy, and Spain. The wheel of world affairs would swing sharply to the left. And should the Socialist revolution in Germany succeed in transforming that great, industrially highly developed, country into a predominantly Socialist commonwealth, it will hardly be possible to maintain the capitalist system unimpaired in other parts of Europe. The whole edifice of a society based on private ownership of the sources of wealth would be shaken in its foundations. Then indeed the "Century of the Common Men" might begin.

That is to the privileged classes certainly a most disagreeable prospect. They are haunted by the spectre of a victorious revolution in Germany. They are, in their innermost heart, probably more concerned with the defeat of this potential danger to property and privilege than with the defeat of German imperialism. If there were a possibility of forestalling a Socialist revolution in Germany by the setting up of a counter-revolutionary military dictatorship, they would assuredly be prepared to offer honourable peace terms and to do all they can to support such a régime. But the prospects of such a possibility seem to be rather small.

Far greater appears to be the probability of a Socialist revolution in Germany. Thus the instinct of self-preservation turns the dread of a revolutionary Germany into a hatred of the German people as a whole. They proclaim: No mercy for Germany; but instinctively they mean: no mercy for a revolutionary Germany. To strangle revolutionary Germany in her cradle by crushing peace terms—that is, fundamentally, the purpose of the anti-German campaign of hate. It is, in the last resort, the campaign of the international counter-revolution designed to frustrate the revolution in Germany in order to frustrate the socialist aspirations of the working classes everywhere.

The counter-revolutionary propaganda has, however, to take into account that the British or the French workers might still make the distinction between German Fascists and German Socialists; that they might, perhaps, in a feeling of international socialist solidarity, demand a fair settlement for a revolutionary Germany. It is the purpose of counter-revolutionary propaganda to uproot such a feeling. Its tactics aim at the transformation of the hatred of the Nazis into the hatred of the German people. "Experts" of the German working class, preferably former members of the German Social Democratic Party, would testify that the German Socialists are as nationalist as the German Fascists; that revolutionary Germany would be the same as imperialist Germany, striving behind "a Socialist revolutionary mask" for the same goal of world domination as the Germany of Bismarck, the Kaiser and Hitler; that there is no "Other Germany"—there is only the old, "megalomaniac" Germany, obsessed by the "national urge to power". The counter-revolutionary propaganda cannot tolerate the belief in the existence of a peace-loving, Socialist-minded working class in Germany: the German workers must be represented as though they were as deeply permeated by an aggressive imperialist spirit as the German Fascists and militarists, and that, therefore, the advent of the German working class to power would contribute nothing to a lasting world peace.

It should be quite clear that when the counter-revolutionary propaganda speaks about the necessity of "holding down" Germany, it means in reality the "holding down" of the German revolution, in order to thwart the rise of Socialism in all countries as well as in Germany. Behind the struggle for the valuation of the "Two Germanies" is hidden the class-struggle of the vested interests for the maintenance of their economic privileges and social positions.

It is very strange indeed that Socialists, blinded by a frenzy of passion, should become (unconsciously of course) tools of the

international counter-revolution. It must be noted that Socialists who discriminate against the German people play—whether they want it or not—the game of the counter-revolution. They have surrendered to national hatred. They have surrendered, furthermore, to the racial theory and have virtually accepted the principle of the inequality of nations, that infamous belief against which the United Nations are waging war. There is hardly any essential difference between, for example, the view of the Polish Socialist Adam Ciolkosz* on the bellicose “psychology of the Germans”, and the Nazi view on the moral inferiority of the Poles, or of the Jews, or of the Czechs. There might also be Socialists who perhaps would like to outlaw the Japanese people; others would rather indict the Italians and the Rumanians; there are many people in the Fascist orbit. It should be clear that if this spirit of national hatred should prevail in the ranks of Socialists, the spiritual unity of the international working class would be broken. If Socialism should cease to aspire to “the parliament of man, the federation of the world”, its soul would perish. For if the conception of Socialism were to lose its universalism, it would lose its moral grandeur, the enthusiasm of its very principle.

It should also be remembered that modern Socialism is the guardian of a most ancient and most sacred legacy. For ages the best of mankind strove, across wars and schism, for the great cosmopolitan society.

Goe on both in hand, O Nations,
Never to be disunited,
Be the Praise and the Heroick Song of Posterity . . .

In these lines of Milton the aspirations of the noblest minds of a hundred generations reverberate. The brotherhood of peoples, the unity of men, was the foremost goal of the great thinkers of all times. But only now, under the modern conditions of technology and industrialism, did the possibility of translating this ideal into reality arise. Socialism regarded itself as the heir of this legacy; indeed it was—and perhaps still is—its heir. It strives for the Socialist Commonwealth of Free Peoples. It is, however, self-evident that from the socialist brotherhood of nations no people can be excluded; otherwise the brotherhood would become an alliance in arms against the outcast people. The discrimination between the working classes of the United Nations and the working classes of the Axis Powers violates the fundamental principle of Socialism and betrays the great legacy that gave the Socialist movement its historical significance.

There is no doubt that this great betrayal would spell discon-

* *International Socialist Forum*, January, 1942.

tent and strife within the Labour Movement everywhere and would ultimately paralyse it. For it is to be assumed that in every Socialist Party there will still remain some Socialists who might, perhaps, not be prepared to acquiesce in the replacing of an international working-class solidarity by an International of national hatred. After all, the international conception of Socialism is so intrinsically interwoven with the Socialist creed that one cannot be disconnected from the other. These faithful Socialists would probably fight the betrayal of the fundamental Socialist belief. They might even break away from a party that proclaimed Socialism but breathed national hatred. They would perhaps re-constitute a party of truly Socialist internationalism, or they would simply join the party of the Communist International that has never abandoned its international concept. Moscow radio has not ceased to sound day and night in scores of languages Marx's call: "Workers of all countries, unite!"

The first world war split the Socialist International, but did not poison its spirit. Socialists of the two opposing sides were eager during the war at their international meetings at Zimmerwald, Kienthal, and Stockholm, to keep alive the faith of Socialist internationalism. There were some Socialists in both camps who proclaimed the need for the victory of their own country; but there was not a single Socialist anywhere who preached discrimination against any nation. There was, above all, not a single Socialist who refused, with regard to the responsibility for the war, to distinguish between the working classes and the ruling classes.

"The Socialists of Great Britain, Belgium, France and Russia . . . *are not at war with the peoples of Germany and Austria*, but only with the Governments of those countries by which they are oppressed"—that was stated in the declaration of the Inter-Allied Conference of the Socialist and Labour Parties held on February 17, 1915, and repeated in reaffirmation at the Socialist Inter-Allied Conference in February, 1918—that is when the passion of war and hatred had reached its height. In both of these two Inter-Allied Socialist Conferences it was further stated: "The Conference declares that whatever may have been the cause of the outbreak of war, it is clear that *the peoples of Europe*, who are necessarily the chief sufferers from its horrors, *had themselves no hand in it*".

The attitude of various Socialists in this war is indeed novel in the history of the working-class movement. It may create a crisis in the International, for which there can be no cure. Equally it would wreck all hopes for an enduring peace settlement; for the Socialists who discriminate against Germany are striving for a settlement based upon the very principles which were the ultimate cause of the war. It would, thirdly, frustrate the revolution in

Germany which is bound to come, and for which we are hoping as one of the indispensable conditions for a peaceful Europe. It would finally weaken the forces of the working classes everywhere in their struggle for the social reconstruction of the world after the war.

If it is true that freedom cannot survive, firstly, without an organisation of the world based upon the close collaboration of all nations; and secondly, without transforming the anarchic individualistic economy of insecurity into a planned economy of abundance; and if it is also true that the success of these processes depends on the power which the working classes in every country will be able to exercise—then it is true that a policy which strives to outlaw the German people from the community of nations, and which splits international working-class unity, would frustrate the primary power conditions of freedom.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE LESSON OF HISTORY

"Little silly birds, they suffer themselves to be taken in the same nets that have caught a hundred thousand of their kind already; the follies of the fathers are lost upon the children, and do not seem to instruct them at all."—FONTENELLE, *Dialogues of the Dead*.

THIS WAR is not the first war humanity has fought "to free mankind from the scourge of war", "to make the world safe for democracy", and to establish "a new international order based upon broad and universal principles of right and justice". Those were the proclaimed aims of the last war too. It might be worth while to reflect for a moment why "the promise of new life, the victory of the great human ideals, for which the people have shed their blood and their treasure without stint, the fulfilment of their aspirations towards a new international order, and a fairer, better world"—why all that came to nought. I have found this question in General Smuts' manifesto of protest against the Treaty of Versailles which he issued before he left Europe. His protest partly answers the question.

We should perhaps study a little more closely the tragedy of the gigantic failure to redeem the 11,000,000 deaths of the last war. We should ponder a little why only twenty years after the signing of the Peace Treaty humanity was once more engulfed by a catastrophe, and we should recall the warnings that were raised then when it was perhaps still possible to avoid the disaster.

I do not know a better guide to the history of the last peace

settlement than the eighty-seven pages of the small *Handbook for Speakers*, entitled *Labour and the Peace Treaty*, published by the Labour Party in 1919.*

There was then, as today, the problem of war guilt. The Labour Party appreciated then, as today, all the implications of that problem because it was the Peace Settlement that was bound up with the problem of war guilt. The Labour Party understood that if public opinion indicted the German people, and not the German Government alone, and if national hatred swept over the country, a punitive treaty would destroy any possibility of the establishment of an enduring peace. Therefore, the Labour Party strove with all its might during the war to impress upon public opinion that a "distinction must be made between the guilt and responsibility of the German imperialist government and the German people", and that "they are not at war with the people of Germany and Austria, but only with the Governments of those countries by which they are oppressed".

In this Labour Party publication, Wilson's statements with regard to war guilt are also recalled. He said when America entered the war: "We have no quarrel with the German people. . . . It was not upon their impulse that their Government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. . . . The American people have suffered intolerable wrongs at the hands of the Imperial German Government, but they desire no reprisal upon the German people, who have themselves suffered all things in this war which they did not choose. . . . They insist that the war shall not end in vindictive action of any kind; that no nation or people shall be robbed or punished because the responsible rulers of a single country have themselves done a deep and abominable wrong. It is this thought that has been expressed in the formula: 'No annexations, no contributions, no punitive indemnities'."

Yet, national hatred prevailed over the voice of sense and moderation. Lord Northcliffe had warned against any misplaced leniency which would "spare the Huns". A member of the British Government demanded, in a speech in the Guildhall at Cambridge, the squeezing of Germany as you squeeze a lemon, "squeezing her until you can hear the pips squeak". Inspired by that noble spirit, Great Britain (and France) in an orgy of chauvinism went to the polling booths soon after the Armistice,

* Unfortunately, there are no longer any copies available (except in the British Museum), but I think the International Department of the Labour Party would render a great service to the cause of peace if it reprinted this document of wisdom, reflecting the true spirit of Socialist internationalism. For the world of today is confronted with exactly the same problems as it was in 1919, since it is, in respect of peace aims, as divided as it was twenty years ago.

and returned (against sixty-three Labour M.P.s and thirty-three Independent Liberals) 526 "hard-faced men", as Maynard Keynes described them, "who looked as if they had done very well out of the war"; their platform was, Keynes said, a "concoction of greed and sentiment, prejudice and deception". The nation accepted the platform. It was, as the late J. A. Spender observed, "a great disaster for Europe as well as for Britain herself".*

The peace terms were in accordance with the mandate that the Government had received from the country. The opinion of the Labour Party about them is summarised as follows in the *Handbook*:

"While it is true that even a Treaty strictly conforming to these principles (Wilson's 14 points) would still bear very hardly upon the German people, and appear harsh to them, it would not be a permanent bar to peace. It would stand the test of examination by Germany recovered from the bitterness of war and defeat and would ultimately be no obstacle to a better temper. If, on the other hand, these conditions are not adhered to, if, despite our implied promises to the contrary, Labour allows revolutionary and democratic Germany to be treated as harshly as would be an autocratic one; if punishments fall as much upon the innocent as upon the guilty; if all the professions (made not only by Allied Labour but by Allied statesmen) as to our fighting for the freedom and welfare of the German people as much as our own, prove vain, then we shall have closed the door to the possibility of German repentance and atonement, and have made just that peace against which President Wilson so eloquently warned us:—'victors' terms imposed upon the vanquished . . . leaving a sting, a resentment, a bitter memory upon which terms of peace would rest, not permanently, but only as upon a quicksand'."

The Labour Party then opposed with all its force the betrayal of the principle of self-determination. It stated: "Self-determination, the right of populations 'freely to choose their allegiance', is violated in the case of the Germans of Czecho-Slovakia, of the Tyrolese Highlands, important districts in West Prussia (added to Poland for strategic and economic reasons), the important district of Memel, and for a generation the Saar valley. And, in a more limited sense, by the refusal to allow German Austria to unite with the main German body, despite the declared will of that country. These cases combined will constitute a united German population many times greater than the population of Alsace-Lorraine, whose frustrated desire to rejoin France poisoned international relations for half a century."

* J. A. Spender, *Great Britain*.

The Labour Party then realised perfectly that if this "peace of violence were to be signed, it would disarm German Socialists in face of the pan-German schemes".

The Labour Party then was also fully aware of the implications, bound up with the recreation of the system of the balance of power behind the screen of the League of Nations, and predicted with an amazing accuracy not only the recurrence of war, but also the starting point of the next war. Here is the paragraph, and it is worth while re-reading it:

The Labour Party stated then: "Poland is for France the successor of Russia in Alliance arrangements. Imagine a quarrel between Poland and Germany—almost inevitable if past history is any guide—in view of the large 'unredeemed' German populations which Poland will include. France, being the ally of Poland, will be involved; and in any case, depending, as she would under M. Clemenceau's 'system of alliances', upon the Polish offset to German power, would have to side with Poland whatever the merit of the quarrel. She could not afford to see Poland beaten by German arms. If France became involved, could we remain neutral, whatever the merit of the original German-Polish quarrel? It is likely that we should have to interpret 'aggression' very broadly."

The final opinion of the British Labour Party in their statement of 1919 was expressed in a joint manifesto of the National Executive of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party on 4th June, 1919, declaring: "That the Treaty is defective not so much because of this or that detail or wrong done but fundamentally in that it accepts and, indeed, is based upon the very political principles which were the ultimate cause of the war. The Treaty involves a violation of the principles embodied in Labour and Socialist Conference decisions."

This statement was entirely in harmony with the resolution of the French General Confederation of Labour, adopted on 27th May, 1919, in which it is declared that the Treaty, "far from establishing a new world régime which would render impossible any recurrence of war, is permitting the continuance of germs of conflict similar to those which brought this great catastrophe upon humanity. Such texts will never realise the just and permanent Peace which is desired by the workers of the whole world. The peace treaty will entail a situation aggravated by territorial rivalries, growing hatred, desire for revenge, the impossibility of economic reconstruction, national lack of equilibrium. For all these reasons, we are of the opinion that principles have been affirmed during this war which the Treaty ignores, that promises have been made which are being set aside, that none of the hopes cherished by the peoples have been realised."

No one can now contest that the warnings and predictions of the Socialists have been fully vindicated by events. The disaster prophesied in 1919 came true in 1939. The peace settlement of 1919 led ultimately to the second world war of 1939. Then, in 1919, the British and French Socialists, who criticised and warned and refused to accept the Treaty, were scorned by the majority of the French and British people, as "utopianists" and idealists. The "hard-faced men", the men who "know the Huns" and "know how to deal with them", were called in to do the job. And they did it; and ruined the world. Millions must again die and the earth again be devastated to right the blunders of 1919.

It could, to be sure, be answered, as in fact it was by the traditional school, that the Treaty of Versailles failed not because it was too harsh, but because it was too lenient. If Germany had actually been partitioned into three or four independent States, as is now suggested by the traditionalists, she would never have recovered power.

It should, however, be remembered that something of the kind was actually tried, in Germany as well as in Russia. In Germany the French military authorities, who had occupied parts of the Rhineland, attempted to create an independent Rhineland Republic; the attempt was defeated by the Rhenish people. They put the Saar Valley under Allied control, assuming that the people of that district would refuse to join the impoverished fatherland; but they joined it all the same. They occupied the Ruhr; but they failed there too. In Russia, the Allies did not only lavishly furnish General Denikin and Admiral Koltchak with arms and money for waging war against the Soviets, the French also sent their fleet into the Black Sea, the British landed troops in Archangel and Murmansk, and the Americans landed troops in Siberia. Yet the French Black Sea Fleet mutinied; the American troops in Northern Russia as well as in Siberia also mutinied when ordered to fight the Soviet forces; and the English coal trimmers who refused to coal, and the dockers of London who refused to load the freighter *Jolly George* with munitions for Poland's war against Russia, set in motion such an avalanche of protests against Britain's participation in the campaign against the Soviets that it had to be stopped. Thus the policy of coercion failed; against Germany as well as against Russia.

The moral of these episodes is as simple as it is impressive. Violence does not work; it only breeds violence. The dismemberment of Germany, attempted after this war, would require vast foreign military forces which would have to keep permanently occupied every part of the country, whether separated or

not, and which would have to be permanently ready to fight all the forces of national revolt. The Germans endured the occupation of the Rhineland, because it was meant as a means of universal pacification and limited to a certain period. They revolted, however, against the occupation of the Ruhr because this occupation appeared to the German people as an unjustified brutal act of coercion. The Ruhr adventure brought economic disaster not only to Germany but also to Britain and France. A Ruhr policy, should it be adopted for the whole of Germany, after the war, as many traditionalists contemplate, would be a thousand times worse than it was in 1923. There would be a never-ending military, economic and political guerilla war, such as the Nazis are now experiencing in Norway and Poland, in Holland and Serbia.

It also appears unlikely—if history is any guide—that such a policy of permanent violence would be approved by the democratic peoples. In an atmosphere of hatred created by the heat of war, they might desire to impose terms of revenge upon the conquered—as did the majority of the British and French people do, to their misfortune, in 1919. But hatred evaporates, the sense of justice and fair play will regain ascendancy, the devastating economic repercussions of the policy will become plain. Public opinion might then demand a change of policy, the “revision of the Treaties”. But it is not possible to unscramble eggs, as a sage long ago observed. If Europe were once scrambled, it would be too late to right the blunders committed in an atmosphere of passion.

If, for example, East Prussia and Silesia were, as it has been suggested, annexed by Poland, it would hardly be possible later to induce Poland to cede the provinces. If, to choose another instance, the occupied countries were restored on the basis of national sovereign-States, it would be quite inconceivable that they would be prepared to give up, in an atmosphere of apparent equilibrium as created by the balance of power, the essentials of their sovereign rights in favour of a supra-national organisation of the world. They would prefer to muddle through. If the peace terms were to be based upon, to use the words of the Labour Party's manifesto of 1919, “the very political principles which were the ultimate causes of war”, their essentials could be altered, as history has proved again and again, only by another war. In face of the devastating experience of Versailles we should, I feel, take to heart the profound wisdom of Anaximander, preached 2500 years ago: “All things perish into that from which they sprang. They pay retribution for their injustice one to another according to the ordinance of Time”.

In 1919, a great opportunity was lost in a passing mood.

We have paid for it with the sufferings of twenty years of crisis and with another catastrophe.

Is history to repeat its error now? The war now raging, by destroying frontiers, by breaking up nations, by disintegrating the social fabric of humanity, will create another great opportunity for building up the world anew from its very foundations. Will this new chapter of history again breathe the poisonous spirit of national hatred? Will the task of settlement again be left to the "architects of ruin", to those who have learned nothing and forgotten nothing, and who are now recommending the multiplication of the errors of 1919 as the cure for the disease which their own errors have produced? "These need not be; ye might arise and will."

When General Smuts in 1919, after the signing of the Treaty, departed in despair from Europe, he implored the peoples in his manifesto: "... there must be a real peace between the nations. The word reconciliation has to be writ large on our skies. Our hearts have to be emptied of all bitterness and hatred, and the memories of war atrocities should not harden our hearts against the revival of a new international life. A new life, a new spirit is imperatively necessary if Europe is not to fall back and lag behind other continents in the great march of humanity."

His warning at that time came too late. We must prepare for peace politically and economically as well as psychologically, while war is still raging. Reconciliation, which is the paramount prerequisite for enduring peace and creative reconstruction, will not come on the heels of victory if, in the deluge of war, the hearts of men are nourished upon national hatred. We Socialists, above all, should, I feel, be profoundly conscious of our responsibility to the idea of brotherhood and international solidarity, to which we have consecrated our lives. At least we Socialists ought to uphold an ideal of sanity and humanity amid a reeling world.

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